Listen to my prayer, Lord! Because of your faithfulness, hear my requests for mercy! Because of your righteousness, answer me!

Psalm 141:1  CEB
Jesus’ prayer for the oneness of his disciples. In the Gospel of John chapter 17, Jesus says, “They may be one as we are one.”

This phrase reflects what a connectional church such as ours is all about. It affirms and celebrates the stronger and bigger mission and ministry we can accomplish as a connectional church. It also points to the mandate of unity for Christian witness as it sums up the spirit and the focus of Jesus’ prayer for the oneness of his disciples. In the Gospel of John chapter 17, Jesus repeats these words of prayer: “They may be one as we are one.”

Prayer connects the people of faith to God’s way and God’s future. Prayer is an unequivocal expression of faith that, no matter what we go through, we put our trust in God and we know that God is in charge. As we face the unprecedented challenge of the unity of our church, we are to rely on God for a breakthrough by the gift and power of prayer more than anything else.

In sync with the ardent prayer of Jesus for oneness, each year we will lift up a prayer that we offer at the Lord’s Table as a theme: 2017-18 - “Better Together: Make Us One” 2018-19 - “Better Together: One with Christ” 2019-20 - “Better Together: One with Each Other” 2020-21 - “Better Together: One in Ministry to All the World”

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I believe that God has plans to give our church hope and a future. I excitedly anticipate what God has in store for the Susquehanna Annual Conference.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace as we trust in God, so that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Romans 15:13)
Love is patient, love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things; hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends... And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. I Corinthians 4-8; 13

These words take on new meaning in this time of crisis. We are experiencing how intertwined with and dependent upon others we truly are, given the circumstances of a global pandemic. We do not yet know how long recovery will take, but we trust and believe that it will. We are called to create a new normal, where generosity and caring for the least among us is our greatest expression of love.

This pandemic has changed our day to day operations, but will not stop our commitment to those who depend on us the most for their food, shelter and protection. We will continue because, one thing is certain – the needs that we must meet for those in our care have not gone away. In fact, these needs are more important than ever. Let’s work together to keep them safe, fed and secure.

If your church receives this special offering, please make your gift at that time. If it doesn’t, make your check out to Susquehanna Conference, with Benevolent Homes Golden Cross Offering in the memo line, and mail it to:
The Finance Office, 303 Mulberry Dr., Ste. 500, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050.
I n consultation with the Cabinet and the Sessions Committee, I have approved the rescheduling of the 2020 Session of Annual Conference to Saturday, October 3, at the Williamsport Community Arts Center, 220 W. Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17701. We waited until now to officially make this decision because we had a contract with Hershey Lodge and faced penalties if we cancelled prematurely. With the State government’s prohibition of a large gathering extended beyond the month of May, Hershey Lodge and our conference have mutually agreed that the May dates for Annual Conference will not work this year.

Clearly, we are in uncharted territory. Indeed, it is true that “we’ve never done it this way before.” The October 3 session will be different from those we’ve held in the past. It will be an abbreviated annual conference later in the year than we have ever had it before. But for such a time as this, we must be flexible and open to doing things a new way.

Please give attention to the following information that will help you plan for this one-day session of the 2020 annual conference:

**We will conduct only the business that is absolutely essential.** The Agenda Committee is carefully crafting a schedule that will be as efficient as possible, so that in our limited time-frame we can accomplish what is absolutely required.

**We will hold all submitted resolutions until the 2021 annual conference.** All reports, except what is absolutely required to be acted upon this year, will be received in written form.

We regret that this year, we will not be able to hold all the special worship services that have blessed us in the past. But be assured that we will find ways to recognize appropriately our retirees and those clergy, spouses, and lay members who have died since last we gathered.

**We are also working on rescheduling clergy session,** in consultation with the cabinet and the executive committee of the Board of Ministry. We will share the new date and time as soon as we have confirmed the details.

The 2020 Annual Conference Session on October 3 will end with the Ordination/Commissioning Service.

By June 30, the Sessions and Agenda Committees will send out complete information regarding the day.

You will receive instructions for when and where to register as well as a modified workbook that will contain only the business items and reports that we must act upon at session. All other reports and information will be posted online after Oct. 3.

Please know that those already elected as members are the ones who should attend, and new Charge Conference elections are not warranted unless the member and alternate are not available.

Please also know that all decisions regarding Annual Conference and the Clergy Session are being made with the utmost regard for public safety and the health of all our participants. Particularly in this time, we all must recognize that things can change daily.

We will continue to keep you apprised of decisions as they are made.

I give thanks for each of you and the creative ways that you are offering God’s love to a hurting community. I am inspired by reports of your compassion and care, as well as your faithfulness and steadfastness. I know by your passion and perseverance that the mission of Jesus Christ continues.

Please know that the Sessions and Agenda Committees and the cabinet are diligently working to guide us into God’s preferred future: a future with hope!

In Ministry With You,

*Jeremiah Park*
May 5, 2020

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good... Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”
Romans 12:9,12

I thank God every day for you. You have risen to this very great challenge to offer ministry to church members and neighbors from a distance. You have learned and applied communications technology to worship and spiritual formation activities. Your churches are finding appropriate ways to extend ministries of compassion to their communities. Through it all, your commitment and care have not waned. What Paul expressed to God’s people of the Church in Corinth deeply resonates with me: “I have great confidence in you; I take pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bound.” (2 Corinthians 7:4)

Gov. Tom Wolf has begun a gradual and deliberate process of reopening businesses and gathering places in Pennsylvania. This county-by-county plan moves through three phases: red, yellow, and green. The strategy begins Friday, May 8, and its progress depends on how the virus spreads or abates. (You can learn the specific requirements of the phases here.)

In those counties in the yellow phase (some of which are in our conference), a few types of businesses and organizations can reopen with limitations. Social-distancing practices remain in place. Group gatherings are limited to 25 people. (Again, please review the governor’s web site linked above for specifics.) The remainder of the state remains in the red phase.

The Cabinet has developed the attached guidelines, “Return to Gathering” for the gradual resumption of church activities. Please review them closely whether you are in a yellow or red zone. The guidelines can help clergy and leadership teams think through the safest practices for reopening the church buildings and gatherings. Many of you have begun making some carefully considered plans. The guidelines may inform those continuing conversations.

We are all eager to return to our familiar lives, especially to worship, minister, and fellowship with our Christian sisters and brothers. While the government carefully determines its rules for reopening, we, as the church, must uphold even higher standards. Jesus taught us that loving God and loving neighbor are the two greatest commandments. By maintaining high standards of safety and protection for all, we express our love of God and neighbor. We also will be following John Wesley’s rule, “First, do no harm.” Please keep in mind that some groups remain particularly vulnerable, such as people aged 65 and older and those with certain underlying medical conditions and that many of our people are seniors. (Find specific information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.)

You and your congregations remain in my daily prayers, for your continued health, safety, wisdom, and courage as you so diligently give witness to faith, hope, and love in Christ Jesus for such a time as this.

In Ministry with You,
Jeremiah Park

Return to Gathering Guidelines: tinyurl.com/ycx5bhx

UMCOR COVID-19 Response Fund
ADVANCE # 3022612

Since the start of the novel coronavirus outbreak, UMCOR has been working with health boards, medical professionals, disaster management coordinators and faith leaders to prevent the further spread of this disease. Now it is clear that the impact of COVID-19 will be far-reaching and demands an even greater response.

Through the UMCOR COVID-19 Response fund, grants will be rapidly released to equip partners to assist vulnerable populations around the world impacted by COVID-19, including racial/ethnic and indigenous communities in the United States. Grants from this fund will be disbursed quickly and efficiently to address health concerns, food insecurity, water and hygiene limitations and other pressing needs.

Even as you shelter in place, you can be there for others. When you say “yes” to supporting the UMCOR COVID-19 Response, you will help bring God’s love to life for those who need it most.

Questions or comments? Please contact Tom Farley, Director of Development at tfarley@umcmission.org, or call (800) 862-4246.

Support the UMCOR COVID-19 Response at tinyurl.com/ybmc9nr

For more information about COVID-19 in relation to the Susquehanna Conference go to www.susumc.org/covid-19/
If ever there was a time to live with great intention and sensitivity as spiritually transformed leaders, it is now! Laitly and clergy alike can be Spiritual Transformational Leaders who engage others in abundant Christian love that transforms lives wherever they go! What forms can love take in a time of uncertainty? How can we inspire people to healthy forms of creative community, which go the extra mile beyond “social distancing” alone? How do we acknowledge fear and still act with love while we inspire others to bring the same healing and resilient presence to their circles of family, friendship, work, school, and communities?

People hunger for nourishment that cannot come from simply pointing out the difficulty, harping on what is wrong, or litanies of critique and complaint. What observable actions bear fruit and strengthen people beyond accurate information and understanding of what is happening? Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV) provides sage guidance about what we can bring and actively do by staying deeply connected with God.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” It is insightful that the writer of Galatians included that last sentence — “against such things there is no law!” When was the last time a parent told their child to stop being so joyful? Or a young person was accused of having too much self-control! How have you been punished for being faithful or gentle or kind? It is energizing to realize that we are also free to greatly expand our lives in ways that have no limitations. It is vital that we embrace the enormous power of love because Jesus identified love as the heart of Christian discipleship and leadership. The point is that the Fruit of the Spirit can nourish and heal when we distribute them through our daily lives and interactions. Print out these two verses and hang them in a prominent place during this time of COVID 19 to remind yourself of the presence and power of the Spirit with and within you.

There is a sense that even within the COVID-19 experience positive change emerges if we have the eyes to see it. I have seen kindness return as we interact with others at the grocery store, people standing outside of windows with signs to cheer people up, and the way in which tips are given to those few wait staff who are working the carry-out restaurant business. Our appreciation for pharmacy techs and convenience store clerks takes expression in patience as we wait in line 6 feet apart from one another. Joy wells up as we walk the neighborhood to see the colorful chalk drawings and greet our neighbors celebrating the daily gifts of sunlight and fresh air, heretofore, taken for granted.

We, too, have an opportunity to be kind to others because we don’t know what their daily struggle might look like!

Another passage gives us similar guidance: “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” (Colossians 3:12-14 – NIV)

As counter intuitive as it may seem, now is an incredible time when your congregation can unite together to “be” the church through intentional living today wherever they are. Building these new habits of loving relationships will help us “be” the church well into our future. We agree when we join a local congregation to uplift the church’s purpose and ministry with our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Our witness to the good news of God’s love in our community is most poignantly communicated in how we interact with all people within our daily relationships. Discipleship is relationship. The nature of a church’s relationship with their community and wider world takes shape in how each one of us who is a part of the body live from a heart of love. All things are connected.

Right now during COVID 19, when we seem to be limited in what we can do, remember the encouragement of Mother Teresa. “We cannot do great things, only small things with great love.” Engage your people as distributors of the Fruit of the Spirit during the pandemic and beyond so there will be no shortage of love. Whatever we do, no matter how small, if done with great love feeds the soul and brings life to all the people. We are part of God’s love for the world and Jesus’ way of life. We thank God for all of you and your leadership.
One of the pastors I spoke with this week made this observation, "We have never been here before and we can never go back to the way it used to be."

These might have been the words of God’s people down through the ages who, like us, were shocked and shaken by things they could not control. The Coronavirus pandemic is just such a time for us. Like our ancestors before us, we turn to God for guidance. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

I think back to the book of Exodus which tells the story of God rescuing his people from captivity in Egypt and leading them away from everything familiar to an unfamiliar place (Promised Land) which at the time seemed a mere dream or idea. In order for them to get to this new place they had to let go of so many things- routines, houses, material possessions, daily provisions of food and water and even extended family and friends (remember, some of them married Egyptians and worked to shoulder to shoulder with others). To get to a new place they had to leave so many things behind.

Isn’t this kind of where we are right now? In this season of Viral Captivity, aren’t there many things being taken from us? What might these be for you? I imagine some of the losses you’re experiencing are especially painful. God knows. God cares for you. God is with you.

Maybe, not everything we’re being asked to give up is bad. Surely there are habits, practices, attitudes and behaviors that have hindered us from being the people God wants us to be. Maybe there are some things we SHOULD lose and NEVER return to. Can you name a few for yourself? For your church?

Losses are painful and the transitions that comes with change can be disorienting. Maybe it helps to know that in our time of change God is up to something new. I certainly don’t want to miss the new things God is up to because I’m still focused on the old things that have been taken from me.

In the time of the Babylonian Empire, during Judah’s exile, God spoke these words of hope and promise of renewal through the prophet Isaiah, “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” (Isaiah 43:18,19 NRSV)

Right now, right here, in the midst of the worst week of this pandemic God is already doing something new in YOU, in the CHURCH, and in the WORLD. Can you begin to see it? Are you earnestly looking for it?

This has been a wild season of rapid innovation giving birth to fresh expressions of the Gospel all around us. Just think about how much change your church has had to navigate in such a short period of time? Online worship, virtual prayer groups and Bible Studies, online classes and meetings, new forms of community engagement and support. God is doing a new thing in and through his people. We are already becoming a new church. This is the work of God in our midst. Can you see it? Will you actively look for it? What are some of the new things of God you are seeing in yourself and in your church?

Yes, a great deal has been taken from us by this pandemic BUT a great deal has been given to us as well. Let’s name and claim these things as signs of God’s abiding presence and power!

In her book, Fragments of Your Ancient Name, Joyce Rupp wrote this prayer for the day I finished writing this article. It’s powerful.

Wake us up
To what needs doing,
And what needs undoing.
Wake us up
To what we must let go,
And what to draw closer.
Wake us up to what enlarges love
And what diminishes it.
In all parts of our life,
Disturb us and wake us up!

May God wake us up. May we see the new things God is doing. May we follow God wholeheartedly into whatever lies ahead.

You are not alone! The Equipping Vital Churches Team is always ready to encourage and support you. Let us know what you need as God has already begun a new thing in YOU!
8

Thank you for paying your

Altoona 100%
12th Street Huntingdon
Allemansville
Ambersen
Asbury Altoona
Atkinson Mills
Bald Eagle
Bedford
Bethel Bedford Valley
Boxemans Chapel
Breezewood
Broad Avenue Altoona
Calvary Bellwood (Extended)
Calvin
Canoe Creek Union (Extended)
Carrick
Center
Centre Grove Clearfield
Christ Community Altoona
Christ Tyrone
Clear Ridge
Coalmont
Concord
Congress Hill
Cove Forge
Crever Memorial Petersburg
Curwensville
Dale
Donation
Doylestown
Dudley
East End
Ebenezer Harrisonville
Fairview Altoona
Fairview McConnellsburg
Faith
Faith Woodbury
First Hollidaysburg
First Houtzdale
First Mt Union
Good Shepherd Tyrone
Goshen
Grace Three Springs
Grazierville
Greenwood Altoona
Hicks Memorial Duncansville
Hope Alexandria
Hopewell
Jaggard First
Janesville
Junita Altoona
Kerr Addition
Knobsville
Lake Street
Lakemont
Laurel Grove
Little Cove
Llyswen Altoona
Madera
Mapleton Grace
Mapleton Trinity
McConnellstown
McKee
Mill Creek
Mines (Extended)
Mt Joy Clearfield
Mt Zion Olanta
Newton Hamilton
Orbisonia
O’Shanter
Pinecroft
Pleasant Hill Shade Gap
Pleasant Valley Woodland
Ramey
Rahobeth
Richvale
Royer (Extended)
Ryde United
Salem Hillcrest
Saxon
Second Avenue Altoona
Shawville
Shiloh
Shirleysburg
Siloaon Harrisonville
Six Mile Run
Spruce Creek
Stevens Chapel
Tatesville
Trans Run
Trinity Clearfield
Trinity Roaring Spring
Trough Creek
Warfordburg
Warriors Mark
Waterfall Zion
Wehrend
Wells Valley
Wesley Chapel Breezewood
Wesley Chapel Huntingdon
Wesley Tyrone
West Side Clearfield
Wayant
Williamsburg
Wolfsburg
Woodville
Altoona 90%
15th Street Huntingdon
Bedford Forge
Breezewood
Cassville
Claysburg
Clearfield
Ennisville
Nossville
Harrisonsburg 100%
Allderdige Mechanicsburg
Armitz
Barry Salem
Baughman Memorial
Belthry Marysville
Belthry Marysville
Big Spring
Bucks
Calvary Harrisburg
Calvary Wiconisco
Camp Hill
Carlisle
Centenary Steetlon
Chambers Hill
Chariton
Christ Shippensburg
Christ Tower City
Cleversburg
Community New Cumberland
Cross Point
Delville
Donally Mills
Ebenezer Middletown
Emmanuel Enoia
Evangelical Middletown
Faith Hallfax
First Harrisburg
First Hershey
First Mechanicsburg
Geyers
Good Shepherd Community
Grace Hummelstown
Grace Lemoyn
Grace Mechanicsburg
Halifax
Hays Grove
Hebron Millersburg
Hickorytown
Hill
Hope Eternal
Hopewell Cumberland
Immanuel Loyalton
Leesburg
Letort
Linglestown Life
Liverpool
Lykens
Messiah Shippensburg
Middlesex
Millerstown
Mt Calvary Harrisburg
Mt Gilead
Mt Holy Springs
Mt Hope Newville
Mt Olivet Mechanicsburg
Mt Rock Newville
Mt Zion Carlisle
Mt Zion Enola
Mt Zion Steetlon (Extended)
New Bloomfield
New Buffalo
New Germantown (Extended)
Newburg
Oakville
Otterbein Boiling Springs
Otterbein Duncannon
Otterbein Newburg
Paxton
Pitotz Valley
Pine Creek Spring Glen
Rockville (Extended)
Roseglen
Salen Liverpool
Salem Marysville
Shepherdstown
Shermans Dale
Shirmanstown
Shopes
Snyder’s
St Andrews Valley View
St Johns Grantville
St Johns Heggies
St Marys Bloserville
Stoverdale
Summerdale
Trinity County Line
Trinity Elizabethville
Trinity Hummelstown
530 - Trinity New Cumberland
Trinity New Kingstown
Trinity Walnut Bottom
Waggoners
Walnut Grove
Wesley Marysville
West Fairview
West Hill
Whiteford
Youngs Shermans Dale
Zion Stone
Harrisonsburg 90%
Calvary Lemoyn
Grace Millersburg
Lewisburg 100%
Bakers
Beach Haven
Beaverstown
Benton
Bethel Catawissa
Bethel Hill
Browns Cooalanus
Buckhorn
Buffalo Valley
Calvary Berwick (Extended)
Catawissa Avenue Sunbury
Christ Benton
Christ Community
Christ Montauntop
Christ Northumberland
620 - Christ Selinsgrove
Daniels-St Thomas
Dresslers Ridge
Ebenezer Berwick
Elnsport
Emmanuel Fremont
Emmanuel New Berlin
Evansville
Eyres Grove
Fairmont Springs
Faith Hovers
Faith Sunbury
First Berwick
First Catawissa
First McClure
First Nanticoke
First Shickshinin
Fowlersville
Freeburn
Good Shepherd Bloomsburg
Hendrickson
Heterville
Hope
Hummels
Hunckle Creek
Jerseytown
Kitchens
Klinesgrove
Kulp
Lawyers
Lightstreet
Lime Ridge
Lincoln Chapel
McAlisterville
McKendree Shickshinin
Mifflinburg
Mifflinville
Mill-Green
Montandon
Mooresburg
Mt Pleasant Sunbury
Muhlenburg
Oakdale
Otterbein Sunbury
Paxtonville
Chiree
Pine Grove Millfinton
Richfield
Ridge Street
Roaring Creek Valley
Rohrburg
Shamokin Dam
Siocum
St Andrews Milton
St Johns Dewart
St Johns Ellimsport
St Pauls Berwick
St Pauls Emmanuel Danville
Pauls Lewisburg
St Pauls Penns Creek
St Peters Beavertown
St Peters Riverside
Stairville
Stone Church
Summer Hill
Summerhill
Trinity Danville
Trinity Espy
Trinity Middleburg
Trinity Northumberland
Trinity White Deer
Turkey Valley
Wallace
Wesley Nescopeck
Wesley Selinsgrove
Witmers
Zion Penns Creek
Lewisburg 90%
Wesley Bloomsburg
Scranton/Wilkes-Barre 100%
Abrahamsburg
Albright Wilkes-Barre
Alderson
Asbury Scranton
Beach Lake
Bethel
Bethel Avoca
Bradley Memorial
Calvary Waymart
Center Moreland
Central Honesdale
Central Wilkes-Barre
Chinchilla
Clarks Green
Clarks Summit
Clifford
Community Church Great Bend
Countryside Community
Court Dale
Daleville
Damasus Manor
Dimock Community
Dunmore
East Benton
East Lemon
East Rush
Eatontown
Elm Park
Embry Scranton
Emory
Equinunk
Evans Falls
Fairdale Community
Falls
First Jersey
First New Milford
First Old Forge
First Pittston
First Taylor
First West Pittston
Forty Fort
Franklin Forks
Gibson
Hop Bottom
Jenningville
Kingsley
Kunkle
LaAnna
Lake Dewel
Lake Como
Lake Winola
Larksville
Lehman-Idetown
Lemmon
Lenoxville
Loyalville
 Shares of Ministry 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Cities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maple Grove</td>
<td>Liberty, Locust Run, Mackeyville, Martha, Matamoras, McElhattan, McVeytown, Milesburg, Mill Hall, Mirroy, Morrisdale, Moshannon, Mt Nittany, Mt Pleasant Port Matilda, New Hope, North Bend, Ohio, Otterbein East Salem, Palestinian, Park Forest Village, Pleasant Gap, Pleasant Valley Bellefonte, Port Matilda, Port Royal, Reedsburg, Rhodes Memorial, Rote, Runville, Salem, Salona, Shadrer, Snow Shoe, Spring Mills Faith, Spring Valley, Sprucetown, St James Coburn, St Pauls Sandy Ridge, St Pauls State College, Summit Hill, Swissdale, Thomspontown, Trinity Bellefonte, Trinity Millfin, Trinity Philippsburg, Trinity Woodward, Valley Salem, Valley St Marks, Vira, Wagner, Walnut Street, Watts Memorial Bellefonte, Wayne, Wesley Chapel Lewistown, Woodycrest, Woolrich Community, Yarmell, Yeagertown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State College 90%</td>
<td>Albright Logan, Calvary West Decatur, Centre, Sanborn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York 100%</td>
<td>Adamsville, Aldersgate York, Barts-Centenary, Bendersville, Bethany Red Lion, Bethel Brogue, Bethlehem Stonepile, Bynavsnye, Calvary Dalbys, Calvary Fayetteville, Calvary York, Centenary Biglervre, Charles Town, Chestnut Grove, Christ Waynesboro, Christ Yoe, Christ Yorkana, Cross Roads, Druck Valley, Edenville, Emanuel, Emory New Oxford, Fairmount, Faith Hallan, Faith Waynesboro, Fawn, First Chambersburg, First Greenscastle, First Marion, First Mercersburg, First Roxbury, Fishing Creek Salem, Fort Louden, Fourth, Gettysburg, Grace Hanover, Grace Wellsville, Grace Windsor (Extended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York 90%</td>
<td>Asbury York, Bethany Dover, Bethlehem Dallastown, Chaple, First Hanover, Mt Victory, Park Avenue Chambersburg, Pine Grove York, Salem Martinsville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre 90%  
Court Street, Gouldsboro, Lakeville, Salem Community Church  
State College 100%  
Albright Bethune, Aldersgate Millfontown, Arch Rock, Bald Eagle Valley Community, Black Oak, Christ's Julian, Church Hill, Clintondale, Covenant, Curtin, Dunstown, East Salem, Emmanuel Rebersburg, Fairbrook, Fairview Morrisdale, Faith Bellefonte, Faith Chapel, Faith East Waterford, Faith Sandy Ridge, First Lewistown, Flemington, Gethsemane Alport, Gouldsboro, Grace Centre Hall, Grace Mexico, Grays, Greater Buffalo Run Valley, Greenburr Trinity, Howard, Hyner, Lake Park, Lamar, Laurel Run, Grace York, Greenmount, Idaville, Immanuel Glen Rock, Lebanon, Lewisberry, Longstown, McKendree Airville, Messiah York, Mont Alto, Mt Airy Dillsburg, Mt Calvary Bendersville, Mt Carmel, Mt Hope Ortanna, Mt Nebo, Mt Olivet Delta, Mt Pisgah Trinity, Mt Royal, Mt Tabor, Mt Union Fayetteville, Mt Zion Dillsburg, New Creation Community, Orrantia, Otterbein Emigsville, Otterbein Mt Wolf, Paddletown St Pauls, Pleasant Grove Windsor (Extended), Pleasant Grove York Haven, Prospect, Quincy, Red Mount, Roaring Spring, Saginaw Community, Salem Airville, Salem Guildens, Scotland, Springville St Pauls, Spry, St John's Chambersburg, St Paul Chambersburg, St Paul Manchester, St Pauls Reg Lion, St Thomas, Starview, State Line, Stebbins, Trinity New Freedom, Upper Strasburg, Violet Hill, Water's Edge (Extended), Wenksville, Wesley Chapel Rouzerville, Winterstown, Wrightsville Hope, York Springs, Zion East Prospect, Zion Freysville, Zion Red Lion, Zion York  
York 90%  
Asbury York, Bethany Dover, Bethlehem Dallastown, Chaple, First Hanover, Mt Victory, Park Avenue Chambersburg, Pine Grove York, Salem Martinsville
In 2004, a Mental Health Task Force was created in the former Central Pennsylvania Conference UMC. This group, comprised of laity and clergy, was convened to discuss how to provide education and support to the churches and pastors in the conference, simply because, we ALL have mental health. It’s just that the state of our mental health can vary from day to day and even during each day. The Mental Health Awareness Sunday offering is used to provide education and resources to the congregations in the Susquehanna Annual Conference.

The current pandemic is an added stressor for all of us. Parents have become teachers. Adult children have become caregivers for their parents. We worry about the COVID-19 virus – am I safe going to the store? Can I visit my loved ones or not? What is happening to my mom, my dad, my loved one in the hospital or nursing home? Social isolation or distancing keeps us from gathering with our loved ones to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries or to grieve together when a loved one dies. Wedding plans are being canceled. Graduation ceremonies are on hold. Many people are now unemployed as businesses have closed. College students are home. The cumulative effect of these changes in our lives and losses increases daily.

All of us have mental health, but stress of this type can have a negative impact on any of us. We all need to develop healthy coping habits, especially habits we can use during times such as this.

Here are some suggestions:

- **Good sleep hygiene** – [http://sleepeducation.org/essentials-in-sleep/healthy-sleep-habits](http://sleepeducation.org/essentials-in-sleep/healthy-sleep-habits)
- **Find time to exercise**
- **Maintain a healthy diet**
- **Get out in nature, if possible. Even stepping out on to your front porch or, if that’s not possible, opening a window to get some fresh air**
- **Keep connected to family & friends. Phone calls, email, texting, writing letters….we have so many ways to keep connected, while maintaining our distance!**
- **Spend time with God. Prayer, reading the Bible, participating in worship or Bible study via the internet**

Our mental health is connected to our overall health and well-being. When we become anxious, when worries begin to take control of our thoughts, we need to stop, BREATHE, and remember: God is with us. God is always with us. We are not alone.

Here is a simple breathing exercise that can help:

**Slowly inhale.** 1...2...3...4....

SLOWLY is the key word!

**Hold your breath.** 1...2...3...4....

FOCUS on holding your breath.

**Slowly exhale.** 1...2...3...4....

SLOWLY is the key word.

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**The Importance of Mental Health Awareness**

*By Rev. Evelyn Madison, Chair of Mental Health Ministries*
Repeat these steps at least 3 or 4 times, very slowly. As you inhale, offer a prayer to God – keep it simple: God, thank you for life or Jesus, Son of God, be present with me. As you exhale, picture all the worries, the cares, breathed out into God’s care.

Breath is a source of life. When we focus on our breathing in this intentional way, we cannot also be worrying, allowing thoughts to race through our minds, because it takes focus to control your breathing.

In the beginning, when God created us, male & female, God breathed life into us. In the valley of dry bones, Ezekiel is told to prophesy to the wind, the Spirit, which brings breath into the bones. After the resurrection, Jesus breathes on the disciples, sharing with them the Holy Spirit.

When we are under stress, it affects the way in which we breathe. May practicing this intentional breathing exercise help reduce the stress, the anxiety, the worry you are experiencing during this time.

Mental Health First Aid Training

Rescheduled to June 3, 2020

Mental Health First Aid training originally scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, has been re-scheduled for Wednesday, June 3, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Wesley UMC
306 Rhoads Ave, Selinsgrove, PA.

Cost for United Methodists: $30
Includes manual and lunch.

CEUs are available.

To register, contact Evelyn Madison (emadison@susumc.org). Registration fee should be mailed to her at 2511 Juniata Gap Rd., Altoona PA 16601.

Pre-registration is required.

Volunteers In Mission (VIM) are often thought of as those who are out in the community, traveling from state to state or all over the world DOING, SERVING, WORKING. However, in these unprecedented times we are taken aback and caught off guard. What do we DO?

One of the core values of UMVIM (United Methodist Volunteers in Mission) teams is to adhere to John Wesley’s three simple rules. Wesley summarized what he felt God calls us to do in these three directives: Do No Harm, Do Good, and Stay in love with God.

For those of us who are non-essential workers, the very best thing we can DO is stay home. It’s very easy to look at this as doing nothing. I challenge you to look closer. Our values state that we are to do no harm. We know that staying at home currently is the best way to care for others, especially the vulnerable. In the Volunteer in Mission Training, we learn that sometimes the practices of mission have the best intentions but can also have the worst impact. We must continually look at how our words and actions through service could be harmful.

Over the past few weeks I’ve witnessed our VIM teams take to heart “Do no harm”. Trips that were saved up for, planned to the very detail and teams built were cancelled. Team leaders are sending out encouraging emails and funny memes to lighten the spirit. Many VIM are gathering on video calls to discuss best practices and new innovative ideas. Many are adding friends and neighbor’s grocery list to theirs as they venture out for their once a week run. They’re donating blood. Mask making is being researched and shared on social media as well as new ways to distribute them in a safe manner. Virtual mission is being planned where you can engage with the site getting the cultural experience as well as donating money to their ministry. VIM teams have donated their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to those on the front lines of the battle with this virus.

Volunteers In Mission: Christian love in action! The action has changed but VIM stay true to their values as they care to love their neighbor in whatever form it may take.

If you had VIM trips cancelled but didn’t send your roster in, please send me an email updating me on the status of your trip. I would like to have a record of how this pandemic has affected our VIM travel. Also, as your teams are working out creative ways to love our neighbor, I’d love to hear your stories.

Peace to you and stay well,
Michelle Schwartzman, Director of Volunteers In Mission
vim@susumc.org • 717-766-7441 ext. 3105
“Many pastors struggle to stay sane because they’re operating under the handicap of a flawed philosophy of Christian leadership,” from Self-Care for the Weary Pastor.

Are you a member of the club: The few who do the majority of the work at your church — especially now in these demanding times?

As a church leader, it’s imperative that you take care of yourself. Unfortunately, that goes against the grain for many pastors and ministry servants who feel on call 24/7 and feel guilty for needing time off. Even Jesus needed solitude, and he encouraged his disciples to get away for a break.

So, here’s your permission — and a few self-care tips. Take time out for you this week. Note: These tips should be adjusted for social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Take a timeout. Church leadership is challenging. If you find yourself increasingly frustrated, depressed or stressed, put yourself in timeout. Find a nice, quiet spot alone, and leave your phone behind. Shut your office door. Sit in the car. Hide in the bathroom. When there, close your eyes and take several deep breaths, say a prayer, tense and relax your shoulder muscles and roll your head and neck. It’s amazing what a difference five minutes can make.

2. Leave for lunch. Everybody deserves a break (breakfast, lunch or dinner — depending on your hours). The busier the day, the more important it is that you take one. If at all possible, leave the church. You don’t have to go far. If you don’t want to eat out, pack your lunch and go to your car in the parking lot, a local park or food court to eat. Have your spouse or a friend meet you, but make it a rule not to talk “shop.”

3. Move that body! Finding time to exercise is hard when your schedule is already full, but exercise offers many emotional as well as physical benefits. Even mild efforts are helpful and can help prevent burnout and fatigue. If time is an issue, try parking farther from the church or walking around the parking lot once every time you enter or exit the building. You might also consider walking to a colleague’s desk versus sending an email.

4. Be natural. Fresh air, scenic views, warm sunshine on your face … through God’s design, our bodies seem to naturally recharge whenever we venture outdoors. Yet, all day, every day, many people only step out of one structure or vehicle directly into another. With the portability of technology today, there’s no reason that work can’t be accomplished outside just as well as inside. So, plan the next staff meeting under your picnic shelter. Sit under a tree to do your Bible study. Be creative!

5. Maintain a hobby. Reading, sewing, shopping, building, baking, taking pictures — whatever you like to do, do it! You can’t just say you have a hobby, you need to spend time maintaining it. At least once a week, block out time on your schedule to do the things you love.

6. Reward yourself. Treats aren’t just for children. Even the most serious no-nonsense adult enjoys a reward. Purchase a variety of small items that you consider indulgences, things that you really like but wouldn’t normally purchase for yourself: candy, a gift card to your favorite coffee shop, gourmet cookies or hot cocoa packs, a special body wash or hand soap. Pick up several items and then tuck them away at home and at the office. When you’re having a particularly bad day, pull one out and enjoy.

7. Create memories. Good memories help carry us through rough times. Make a point to create lots of them. Spending time with the people you love builds emotional reserves that helps you get through those busy, chaotic days that never seem to end. Keep pictures of good times and loved ones on your phone or desk to remind you of good memories.

8. Worship and praise. No amount of service can take the place of worship. Prioritize not just Bible study time but worship as well. Instead of taking calls when you’re in the car, play worship music. Play praise music while you are getting ready in the morning. Sing hymns when you’re alone in your office. Sing the Doxology as you wash your hands. If you are a pastor, schedule a week when you don’t have to preach but can listen to someone else’s sermon.

9. Get away. You may think that everything will fall apart if you aren’t there, but you will fall apart if you’re there.
too much. At least once a year, take a vacation or staycation. Delegate someone else to be in charge, and get away. If you can’t afford a long trip, take several day trips. Plan ahead or be spontaneous, but avoid at all costs being sucked into work. Turn off your phone. Unplug your computer, and just relax for a while.

10. Eat, sleep and maintain balance. You know what you need to do. Eat right. Get a good night’s rest. Get a physical every year. Follow health and safety recommendations. Take care of yourself. There’s only one of you! Set an example for your team and family and encourage them to lean into similar practices. By establishing an environment that supports self-care and wellness you’ll feel more at ease in taking time in the future and in helping those around you to do the same.

These steps are even more important in light of the recent COVID-19 restrictions. While church buildings may be closed, pastors and church leaders are having to work harder than ever to meet the increasing needs of their congregations. Finding creative ways to encourage spiritual growth and unity, combat loneliness, visit the sick and minister to the hurting is proving even more stressful under isolation practices.

Since the needs of your congregation are likely to continue to grow during this trying time, you must remember that self-care is important. However, it won’t happen without effort. No matter what your profession or ministry, it’s easy to get caught up in the rat race of life. Don’t be deceived into thinking that you’re more godly if you work yourself to death.

Be intentional. Schedule time for rest and relaxation. Work as hard at taking care of you as you do your church. Your church needs you, but they need you to be healthy and well — emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually.
When Lauren Dieter moved into the role of Executive Director at Normandie Ridge in August of 2019, she had no idea what would be on the horizon for her six months later. Lauren was just getting her feet wet in her new position when the Coronavirus outbreak occurred, changing everything for senior living communities the country. Lauren quickly had to learn how to adapt to all of the restrictions put into place, to keep both the residents and her staff safe.

Lauren said, “I did a lot of research and thought of ways to keep our residents safe, but also happy. For me it’s the ideas. I get these crazy ideas and decide we are going to attempt to get them done.” One of those ideas was to place illuminated hearts across the campus to show the residents they are loved during this time of uncertainty.

Lauren has had a variety of great ideas over the past few weeks to help the residents during this tough time, with no visitation on campus due to COVID-19 precautions. They have hosted outdoor concerts and religious services, which residents can enjoy from their balconies. Residents have even used pots and pans to create their own music!

One day, Lauren and her team delivered roses to every resident, which put a smile on their faces. She has also provided residents with coloring pages and pencils, puzzles and other activities they can do to stay busy, including games they can play in the hallway sitting with their apartment doors open. And families can connect with the residents through Facetime on iPads and other devices provided by Normandie Ridge staff members.

Lauren’s staff is also being treated like royalty, with regular treats including hot lunches, ice cream bars, cookies and more, to acknowledge that they are respected and loved for the work they are doing.

When asked about how she deals with the daily challenges, Lauren said, “I think a lot of it is having patience and still being able to ask questions and find out why things are happening. I have also learned a lot through listening to the residents and hearing what they truly want.”

In a short period of time, Lauren has shown how to lead with compassion. She said, “I love to give the residents little pieces of joy. I want to make sure both the staff and the residents know how much I appreciate them. I get a lot of enjoyment from giving people gifts and seeing their reaction from it. I thrive on a good outcome for others when I’m able to have a hand in it.”

Lauren Dieter is a shining example of being called to serve, and Albright Care Services is proud that she is part of our family. Albright invites you to continue your mission by joining us at one of our six locations. Visit www.AlbrightCare.org for information on senior living, day programs, giving or volunteering.
Answering God’s Call in Rwanda, Africa

By Carol Falke

It’s amazing how God gets our attention and places something on our hearts. Something so strong you can’t ignore it. Eleven years ago he did just that to me. It was a call to connect with Mama Arlene Brown, a United Methodist from Williamsport, PA, who was living and serving in Rwanda, Africa. She established Hope Made Real/Urukundo Children’s Home & Learning Center in 2006 to offer a home for vulnerable children.

Since then, Urukundo Learning Center/Hope Made Real has grown to offer so much more. It is woven throughout the community. It provides hope, empowerment, nourishment, joy, love and peace to all who seek.

- It’s a family with 90+ staff that can support their families.
- Of the children from the home - 5 are university graduates, 13 attend university, 6 are at secondary school. The youngest have been placed with foster or biological families – a government requirement.
- The school: preschool – 6th, opened in 2011 with 30 children now provides an education to over 987 children, with textbooks, library, educational toys, music, sports, and religious studies.
- Pastor Yves, who we support*, leads Sunday worship, devotions and connects with many in need.
- The dental clinic reaches those that can not afford essential dental care.
- The sewing technical school trains young adults in sewing skills, English, business and entrepreneurship giving them opportunities to support themselves and mentor other youth.
- The farm provides nourishment to Urukundo and supports itself by selling products to businesses.
- The mom and baby program, an essential community outreach, provides layette kits with baby items for new moms at a local clinic.
- The Daycare provides safe, loving care for children of staff and others in need.

As I write this, Mama Arlene’s staff placed her under quarantine and I am finishing 14 days of self-quarantine having just returned from my tenth month-long visit volunteering at Urukundo Learning Center. After one Coronavirus case, the Rwandan government closed the schools, churches, and the airport one day before I was to fly home. Then, the main road was closed to all traffic between communities. As a developing country they were taking this seriously. Five days later, on March 25, I caught one of the last flights out of Rwanda. I am safe at home but am concerned for my Rwanda family and the many vulnerable people living there. I am concerned that we can only pay our staff half their salary as donations have slowed. But as Arlene says, “God’s in Charge!”

If you want to learn about my time in Rwanda, go to my public Facebook postings at Carol Falke. Any questions: please contact me at falkes248@gmail.com.

Psalm 139:9-10 “If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.”

Carol Falke is a member of *St. Paul’s UMC, State College, Pa. and President of the board of Hope Made Real, www.hopemadereal.org.

*Pastor Yves, who we support, leads Sunday worship, devotions and connects with many in need.
Supporting High School Seniors During COVID-19

By Philip J. Brooks
Source: Resourceumc.org

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of many people, including students. High school seniors are being robbed of making precious memories as more and more schools confirm they will be closed for the remainder of the academic year.

Seniors will miss marking important milestones of their final year, including graduation and prom. They will not share these times with their closest friends and classmates. Many seniors will also miss time with their extended family who planned to come to their graduation ceremony. They face a future filled with uncertainty.

It is important not to minimize the pain seniors may be feeling during this time.

“As witnesses to the upheaval and change, young people may feel a sense of sadness as they recognize the personal and social losses they will endure as a part of quarantines and other responses to COVID-19,” says Chris Wilterdink, director of young people’s ministries at Discipleship Ministries. Seniors have a right to feel sad and disappointed at this time and the best thing their families and churches can do for them is to empathize, rather than minimize their loss.

It is also important for congregations to find ways both to honor their high school seniors while also acknowledging and empathizing with their loss. While Gen Z students are the most digitally connected generation alive, they still treasure in-person contact with friends and loved ones as much as older generations.

Churches can give seniors an outlet to express their feelings, continue to engage in spiritual formation and celebrate the beginning of a new chapter in their lives.

GIVE STUDENTS AN AVENUE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES

Self-expression is second nature to young people who have grown up around social media, blogs and podcasts. As churches adapt Sunday school and youth group onto online platforms, they can provide space for seniors and other students to share their anxieties and emotions.

Some may be happy sharing informally with their friends and youth leader over video chat. Others may want to blog or vlog about their experiences or express themselves more creatively through art, poetry or music. If the students agree, the church can share their testimonies on the website and social media and invite the congregation to offer prayers and encouragement. It will mean so much to these students to know their church is listening to them.

There are many other ways parents and churches can offer outlets for students to share their feelings.

The Arkansas Annual Conference has resources for online youth ministry during COVID-19, including articles and suggestions specifically for high school seniors.

Brad M. Griffin at the Fuller Youth Institute shares about posting two large sheets of paper on the wall and encouraging his children to write things they are grateful for on one and things they have lost on the other. “We don’t have to pretend like everything is just fine. We can name what’s lost, and lament it together,” says Griffin.

GIVE THEM TIME TO SOCIALIZE

School (as well as youth activities at church) is not just about education and development. It’s time students spend with their closest friends and peers. Many realize their senior year is precious because it is the last time they will see many of their friends every day. When planning a virtual Sunday school class or youth meeting, be certain to include vital time to allow students to talk among themselves and have fun – just as they would if meeting in the church.

Encourage young people to share fun activities online. Offer different challenges each week, such as creating the funniest meme or writing/performing the best parody of a popular song. St. Andrew United Methodist Church in Plano, Texas hosts daily contests on its student ministry Instagram account that include trivia, scavenger hunts and music video challenges. You can also host Netflix watch parties or share virtual meals as a group.
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

HONOR THEM DURING A WORSHIP SERVICE

Many churches have their own traditions for honoring graduating seniors. There is absolutely no reason not to continue these traditions during COVID-19, and churches that do not have a special service for graduates may want to consider starting one during this time. These traditions vary depending on the church and number of graduates. Some churches invite students to speak or might have perform singers and dancers during worship. Others simply call the seniors forward or name them and offer a special prayer on their behalf. Some churches may give each a gift.

There are many ways these traditions can be adapted for virtual worship. Churches can still offer prayer on behalf of seniors online or invite them to participate in virtual worship in other ways.

Student speakers can talk to the congregation directly from their home computer/device or – providing they practice responsible social distancing – have their speech recorded or live-streamed from the sanctuary. For years, Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Memphis, Tennessee, has had a Sunday when all the seniors offer short messages. This year, as they watched a late March service online, congregants saw three seniors each step up to the pulpit and deliver a mini-sermon. Original plans had been to have the students record the messages at home on their cell phones. However, when the young people were adamant about speaking from the pulpit, accommodations were made to record them in an empty sanctuary while safe social distancing practices were followed.

Whatever other recognition the church offers, the pastor or youth leader should announce the name of each student at some point in the service. If possible, show a recent photograph (perhaps a senior picture) of each while reading their names. Encourage their families to invite other relatives to join the service that morning. If the church usually gives gifts to its seniors, have those delivered to their homes during the week. If you are still unsure what to do ask the students themselves how they would like to be recognized and the best way to use media to do it.

Today’s seniors are enduring loss and uncertainty about the future during what is supposed to be one of the happiest times of their lives. Instead, many feel sad, angry or anxious. The best thing our churches can do to continue to pray and watch over them in Christian love, letting them know we see their pain, we care for their well-being and we celebrate their accomplishments.

Philip J. Brooks is a writer and content developer on the leader communications team at United Methodist Communications, Nashville, Tennessee, USA. Contact him at pbrooks@umcom.org.

Plan ahead

As I write this article, Discovery Place is temporarily closed due to restrictions related to COVID-19. We hope to be open by the time you read this, but of course that will depend on the situation in Pennsylvania. Please know that we will re-open as soon as we possibly can, so that we can continue to serve your Sunday School classes and small groups once they are able to meet again. Several points to remember:

• If you currently have a resource that you haven’t been able to finish, please keep it and finish it with your group once you are able to resume meeting. We would appreciate it if you would email us (discovery@susumc.org) with the resource number and your anticipated completion date.
• If you’d prefer not to finish the study you were doing when we closed, please send it back and place an order for a different resource to use instead.
• If a resource was scheduled to be mailed to you while we have been closed, we will contact you before we send it, to see how it fits into your revised schedule. We can adjust dates as necessary.
• If you don’t currently have a resource in your possession or reserved for future use, we would LOVE to help you find something! After this time of separation and isolation, folks will be eager for the fellowship of meeting together, so take advantage of it!
• The Discovery Place website is www.discovery-place.org. We have an online catalog in which you can search by title or author or do an “advanced search” for a subject using the drop-down menu provided. You can order directly from the online catalog, call us at 717-766-7968, or email us at discovery@susumc.org. We would love to help you get started with a new resource for your class or small group!

I look forward to serving you!

Joni Robison

Susquehanna Conference
303 Mulberry Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
717-766-7968

e-mail discovery@susumc.org

web www.discovery-place.org

Open 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Mon, Wed, Fri.

www.discovery-place.org
THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NAMES GARY FALLINGS AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the Neighborhood Center of United Methodist Church, it is a great pleasure to announce that Mr. Gary Fallings has been appointed as the organization’s new Executive Director.

For more than 20 years, Mr. Fallings has provided exemplary service to the youth in the Harrisburg area. His experience as a teacher in the Harrisburg School District combined with his leadership skills as an administrator helping adjudicated youth and his proven civic commitment to this community as a founder of a local non-profit, mentor, and coach has made him the ideal choice to lead this organization.

Gary embodies the values that drive the mission of the Neighborhood Center; he is youth focused, client-centered and is deeply committed to upholding our Christian values. His background in community engagement will create opportunities for strong community partnerships in Central Pennsylvania.

In his new role as Executive Director, Mr. Fallings will work directly with our committed Board of Directors, staff, clients, community partners and all stakeholders to continue to amplify the lives and futures of young people affiliated with the Neighborhood Center. We are thrilled to see where Mr. Fallings leadership efforts take us.

The Board of Directors is deeply committed to working together to ensure his successful and visionary leadership as the Neighborhood Center enters its next chapter. Please welcome Mr. Fallings to his new role as Executive Director.
May – 100 years ago

St. Paul’s Chapel, Red Lion, dedicated a new frame church building May 2, 1920. The congregation grew out of a fall 1858 United Brethren revival meeting in the barn of George Musser, three miles northeast of the present site, that resulted in 80 conversions. Following that great revival, Mr. Musser built a large spring house, with a second floor to be used for regular religious meetings. In 1880, John Stabiley donated land for a chapel – predecessor of the 1920 structure.

The 1920 frame building was replaced by a brick structure in 1936, which was added to in 1950 and 1982. Rev. M.B. Heiland (1885-1979), pastor for both the 1920 and 1936 projects, served the congregation for 23 years and is the namesake of its Heiland Cemetery. The present congregation is known as Chapel UMC.

June – 50 years ago

The United Methodist Nursing Home at Lewisburg admitted its first patient June 26, 1970. Plans for the new home began in 1966 as a cooperative effort between the former Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren denominations. While the United Evangelical Church had begun operating the Evangelical Home on the site in 1916, that facility was not intended to provide its residents with on-site medical care. Soon a clinic emerged to care for the Home’s orphans and elderly guests, which developed into a community hospital that opened on the grounds in 1926.

The Home transferred 8.8 acres of land to the Evangelical Community Hospital, which opened in 1953, and 7 acres of land to the United Methodist Nursing Home which opened in 1970. Today the Evangelical Community Hospital is a completely separate entity, while the Evangelical Home and United Methodist Nursing Home properties are part of the Riverwoods Senior Living Community operated, along with Normandie Ridge in York, by Albright Care Services – a faith-based non-profit organization strongly affiliated with the Susquehanna Conference.
“[Peacemakers] employ all their strength, all the talents which God has given them, as well to preserve peace where it is, as to restore it where it is not.”

— John Wesley, Sermon XXIII, Sermon on the Mount
Important Update From Camp and Retreat Ministry

New Summer Camp Schedules Announced

From the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, we have found ourselves in the midst of change. Based on the guidance we currently have, and the time it takes us to prepare our centers properly for summer camp, the Camp and Retreat Ministry Board has made the decision to move the start of all summer camp programs at all centers to June 28, 2020. For the newly modified summer camp schedule, along with any future decisions and information, visit the Camp and Retreat Ministry COVID-19 Updates page found at tinyurl.com/y93gzkfc for information.

Register Today!

www.susumcamps.org
Mental Health Awareness Sunday
Sunday, May 17, 2020
See page 10
susumc.org/hministries/

Mental Health First Aid Training
June 3, 2020
See information at right
emadison@susumc.org

Peace with Justice Sunday
Sunday, June 7, 2020
See page 20
umcgiving.org/givePWJS

ChangeMakers
June 28 - July 2, 2020
A new exciting experience created for Senior High Youth to explore how God may be leading you to make a difference in your community and the world.

Local churches or youth can contact Kim Shockley at kshockley@susumc.org for more information and an application OR you can register online at tinyurl.com/y7zjdhnm

2020 Susquehanna Annual Conference
Rescheduled to October 3, 2020
See page 4
www.susumc.org/annualconference/

Homemade Face Mask Challenge
As an essential health care service provider, the United Methodist Home for Children, a Board of Child Care program, needs your help in making face masks to support our staff who are working around the clock during the COVID-19 crisis. We are asking for partners in our community to help our youth and staff, from the safety of their homes, by making coffee filter and cloth face masks. For more information, please see the attached flier or visit our website umhc.org or call Aaron Andrews at 410-865-0367. You may also contact him by email at aandrews@boardofchildcare.org.

Instructions can be found at tinyurl.com/y7z9wmpc

Visit Our YouTube Channel
Stay at Home resources, short videos of prayer practices and other resources to support you in your daily journey that can be practiced at home or anywhere you find yourself, designed to open your Spirit to a deeper awareness of God’s presence.

YouTube: tinyurl.com/yd6hfoh4

Mental Health First Aid Training
Rescheduled to June 3, 2020
Mental Health First Aid training originally scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, has been re-scheduled for Wednesday, June 3.
Wesley UMC in Selinsgrove.
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Registration cost for United Methodists: $30
This includes the manual and lunch.
CEU’s are available
To register, contact Evelyn Madison (emadison@susumc.org).
Registration fee should be mailed to her at 2511 Juniata Gap Rd., Altoona PA 16601
Pre-registration is required.
UMW Spiritual Enrichment Day

WEBINAR
May 16, 2020 - 10 am EST
Susquehanna Conference UM Women presents a Spiritual Enrichment Day and you are invited!

Topic: Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission
Featuring Cathy Berkey.

This is a FREE WEBINAR event, however you are encouraged to send donations to your UMW treasurer in support of the Neighborhood Center, Harrisburg.

Register here: tinyurl.com/y9lvg595

Mission u 2020 has been Cancelled

The Mission u team has announced that the Mission u event scheduled for July 17-18, 2020 has been cancelled. The Express Day events scheduled for July 16 and July 25, 2020, have also been cancelled.

We have scheduled Mission u 2021 at Best Western Country Cupboard for July 16-17, 2021. We are currently planning to offer this year’s studies in 2021.

Please be on the lookout for more information about a possible online study this summer from the National Office of United Methodist Women. Even as we continue to self-isolate for social distancing, our passion to support global missions and provide mission education resources for the Susquehanna Conference is as strong as ever.

There is Hope in Disaster

Following is an excerpt from “When the Seas Rage; Be Still!” (copyright pending)—a soon-to-be-published collection of personal devotions for emergency managers, first responders, and those seeking spiritual strength as they work through life’s disasters—written by Doug Hoy, Disaster Response Coordinator for the Susquehanna Conference.

What is a disaster? By definition, it is an event causing great suffering, destruction, and distress, such as a serious accident, crime, or natural catastrophe. It negatively affects society or the environment. They occur once every 100 years or every day in your own lives. Some are small and can be handled on a personal level. Other disasters happen on a larger scale and require a coordinated effort to find relief. The things we call disasters vary from person to person and place to place.

It can be frustrating facing a disaster, big or small. It can be particularly overwhelming if we must face it alone. And, we find ourselves asking a lot of questions. Why did it happen? Where will we get help? How will we move forward? Of course, the answers can be as varied as the types of disasters we face. It can be as simple as, I took a wrong turn, or as complex as the meteorological explanation of a hurricane. But, I would also submit to you that the answer is Biblical.

In Matthew 24:7, we are told “there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.” The book of Luke foretells the coming of “terrors and great signs from heaven” (chapter 21, verse 11) and there will be “distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves” (chapter 21, verse 25).

Before you get too concerned about the signs of the end times, understand this message is meant to provide you comfort. And, to know that God is sovereign! He is the creator and holds the earth and all that is in it in the palm of His hand. As we learn in Isaiah 45:7, He created the light and the darkness. He is responsible for creating disasters. He confirms this in this verse saying, “I the Lord, do all these things.” So, the answer to the question “why” becomes clear when we look to scripture. The reality is, God said disasters would occur and He is powerful enough to make them happen. But, that is not the end of the story.

There is hope in disaster. During our trials and tribulations, God promises hope and reassurance. Remember, He is sovereign and all powerful. He is the one who created the light and the dark; the crashing waves and the roaring winds. But, in addition to being responsible for “all these things,” Isaiah 45 reveals God also “brings prosperity.” He shares this message of hope again in Isaiah 54. “For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,’ says the Lord, who has compassion on you” (verse 10).

As we face the disasters of life, whether personal or public, in our homes or communities, or a nationwide pandemic, know that God, through Christ, assures us there is hope in our suffering. He promises to be with us. And, He will supply a peace that passes all comprehension. In return, we only need to be faithful and committed Him. For, in that dedication, “He will establish your plans...and work out everything to its proper end” (Proverbs 16:3-4).

PRAYER: Sovereign God, creator of all things, thank you for the hope and peace of your presence when storm clouds surround me. We are grateful for your promise to remain with us during the trials and tribulations of life. Give us the ability to share this message with everyone we meet and allow it to provide comfort as they struggle with their own challenges.

Contact Doug Hoy, Disaster Response Coordinator, at drc@susumc.org
Mrs. Musa L. Bovee of Adams, NY, spouse of Retired Elder Rev. Martin W. Bovee, died Thursday, April 9, 2020 at home. Obituary: tinyurl.com/yc3egm3n

Mrs. Jeanne L. Davis of Kingston, PA., widow of Rev. James M. Davis Sr., died on Sunday, April 12, 2020 at the Guardian Healthcare Center in Nanticoke, Pa. Obituary: tinyurl.com/y9pl32q7

Rev. J. Faust Hissong of Belleville, PA., Retired Elder, died Sunday, April 5, 2020 at Valley View Retirement Community in Belleville, PA. Obituary: tinyurl.com/ych6w899

Rev. Robert J. Kennedy of Murfreesboro, TN, Retired Elder, died on Thursday, April 30, 2020 at Elmcroft Senior Living, State College, PA. Obituary: tinyurl.com/ybt7b7vw

Rev. Kenneth D. Loss of Lewisburg, PA., Retired Associate Member, died Saturday, February 29, 2020 at RiverWoods Nursing Care Center in Lewisburg, Pa. Obituary: tinyurl.com/y8jj7e2o

Rev. Donald A. Misal of Silver Spring MD, Retired Elder, died Thursday, March 26, 2020.

Rev. Dr. P. Dale Neuf of Greenville, NC, Retired Elder, died Tuesday, March 17, 2020. Among his survivors is his wife, Judith E. Neuf. Obituary: tinyurl.com/yda5hjwt

Mrs. Marian L. Schell of Williamsport, PA., spouse of Retired Elder Rev. Walter M. Schell, died Wednesday, May 6, 2020 at UPMC in Williamsport, Obituary: tinyurl.com/ybrrvwa


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