Top four worst, and best, ways to help after a disaster

By Susan Kim (UMCOR)

When disaster strikes, often we see heart-wrenching images on television. People have lost everything. Their homes are swept away or lie in a tangled heap. Their belongings are ruined.

We immediately want to help – a good intention that stems from compassion for our fellow human beings. However, be certain to couple your compassion with good judgment on the best ways to help disaster survivors.

Here are the top four most common pitfalls into which helpers fall after a disaster – and what they should do instead.

Resist the urge to jump from your couch and drive to the disaster site. When Hurricane Sandy struck the mid-Atlantic in 2012, scores of people decided to drive to New Jersey, New York and other affected areas. The result? Clogged interstates, a worsening mid-Atlantic in 2012, scores of people instead.

Don’t give the shirt off your back. Did you know that donations of used clothing are commonly called “the second disaster”? When clothing piles up at a disaster scene, it must be stored, hauled away, or sorted by volunteers who could better use their time helping disaster survivors. Instead, cash donations help disaster survivors purchase needed items from local businesses, which boost an economy weakened by disaster.

Don’t believe that recovery takes only a few days. Well-intentioned donors often give money or relief-supply kits only while a disaster is prominent in the news headlines. In fact, for a major disaster, recovery can take years. If donations dry up after a week or two, responders no longer have the resources to help disaster survivors. Those survivors feel forgotten, and their recovery doesn’t progress.

Continued on Page 6

New Director of Camp & Retreat Ministry

Rev. Kevin Witt

Rev. Dr. Tom Salsgiver, Director of Connectional Ministries, is very pleased to announce that Rev. Kevin Witt has been chosen as the Director of Camp & Retreat and Discipleship Ministries for the Susquehanna Conference.

For more than 20 years Witt has been on staff with Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church (formerly General Board of Discipleship) as the Director of Camp and Retreat Ministries. Witt’s ministry includes consultation, training, networking, and strengthening the missional effectiveness of staff, volunteers, and boards who lead camping and retreat ministries throughout the United Methodist Church.

Witt has written numerous articles as well as co-authoring two books, "Twists of Faith: Ministry with Youth at the Turning Points of Their Lives," and "The Retreat Leader’s Manual." Witt also helped to develop the United Methodist Camp and Retreat Certification program in collaboration with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Witt serves as part of the faculty for this certification.

In addition to his responsibilities with camping, Witt, along with the other Discipleship Ministries staff, has been developing resources for leadership development and ways to encourage and equip transformational spiritual leaders. The focus of Discipleship Ministries is to connect local church, district, and conference leaders with needed resourcing, training, consulting, and networking that support spiritual formation, new church development, revitalization of local churches, and equip world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ.

As part of the re-organization of staffing in the Susquehanna Conference Connectional Ministries, this position will, for now, include camping and discipleship ministries. As the conference leadership continues to realign all our resources to accomplish our three main goals of growing effective leaders, equipping local congregations, and developing resources for leadership development and ways to encourage and equip transformational spiritual leaders, Witt’s role expands to include these responsibilities.

Continued on Page 5

Hearts Strangely Warmed

"While the leader was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." — John Wesley, May 24, 1758

God calls us to tell our story so that others may come to know Jesus Christ. "Hearts Strangely Warmed" was created to share these stories about transformational encounters with the Living God.

Pastor Joshua Wargo

Joshua was invited to share his testimony as part of the altar call at the end of the Service of Commissioning and Ordination at the 2017 Susquehanna Annual Conference, in which he was commissioned as a provisional elder.

I’d like to begin by saying that I didn’t grow up in the type of family where we went to church together. I didn’t grow up in the type of family where we sat down and prayed together, and we most certainly did not love and serve God together, but I always believed in Jesus Christ. However, I was not a disciple of Jesus Christ and I truly believe there is a difference.

I went through a period in my life where I was living in rebellion and rejection to God’s holiness. I was hanging out with the wrong crowd, making poor decisions, and I even dropped out of high school. But even in the midst of all that brokenness, even among all of that mess, God called me. My call is very similar to Samuel’s story, because God called me multiple times, but I just kept on saying “no.” I kept on making excuses. I thought that I knew better than God and I tried to run away from Him. But He knew better than me.

I didn’t have long to grow up in the type of family where we went to church together. I didn’t grow up in the type of family where we sat down and prayed together, and we most certainly did not love and serve God together, but I always believed in Jesus Christ. However, I was not a disciple of Jesus Christ and I truly believe there is a difference.

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Residents of these Benevolent Homes of the Susquehanna Conference which will benefit from this offering are:

- United Methodist Home for Children
  Mechanicsburg
- Bethany Village
  Mechanicsburg
- Normandie Ridge Senior Living Community
  York
- Quincy Village
  Quincy
- RiverWoods Senior Living Community
  Lewisburg
- United Methodist Homes’ Wesley Village Campus
  Pittston

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 
II Corinthians 8:11.

As people of faith, we claim God’s love as offered to us without condition through the life and teaching of Jesus. We strive to live a life that witnesses to that love each and every day. Through our words and actions, we have the opportunity to bring not only joy but security to those who are cared for in our Benevolent Homes.

When we give generously to help others, it is a profound act of kindness. Through your gifts, both the elders and youth that we serve are assured they will have a safe and secure place to live, nutritious food to eat, and necessary medicine. They deserve our very best care each and every day — so please give to this important special offering that will benefit seniors and youth in the Susquehanna Conference.

If your church participates in receiving this special offering during Advent, please make your gift at that time. Otherwise, make your check out to Susquehanna Conference, with Benevolent Homes Christmas Offering in the memo line, and mail it to:

Susquehanna Conference Finance Office
303 Mulberry Dr., Ste. 300
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

For the latest news and event information, visit the Susquehanna Conference Web site at www.susumc.org
New Director of Camp & Retreat Ministry
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
connecting to the world, this position will change.
With Witt’s gifts and past ministries strongly connected to leadership development, Witt will work collaboratively to develop ways to strengthen and nurture leaders in our local churches and throughout our conference. Prior to working at Discipleship Ministries, Witt was associate director in the Oregon-Idaho Conference. In addition, Witt has served as a manager of a United Methodist Camp and as pastor. Witt is an ordained elder, with his membership in the Oregon-Idaho Conference. Witt will, for now, be on loan to the Susquehanna Conference, and his appointment will be extension ministries. Witt earned a Master of Divinity degree from United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, and a Bachelor of Science degree from West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, W.Va. Witt will officially begin his ministry with the Susquehanna Conference January 1, 2018.

New Executive Director of Loans
Susquehanna Conference is pleased to announce Ms. Lauren Hokamp has joined the Loan Fund as executive director reporting to the conference Loan Committee and for by the Loan Fund. The desire is to improve their processes, enhance their policies, and develop standards which will improve their service to their borrowers (churches), as well as mitigate the risks to both their investors as well as the conference itself. Prior to joining the conference, Ms. Hokamp practiced as an attorney in law firms in the Harrisburg area focusing on business and corporate law, commercial and general civil litigation, real estate, mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, and securities offerings and compliance. Hokamp graduated from Penn State Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle, Pa., after obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree in finance with a minor in Business Law from Penn State. While in school, she interned with the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania Exchange Commission, Office of Chief Counsel. Division of Enforcement; the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Office of Chief Counsel; and the Pennsylvania Treasury Department, Office of the Treasurer.

Who’s in control?
There’s something about the fall weather. Maybe it’s the drizzle, falling slowly and heavily outside the window. Maybe it’s that unmistakable feeling: “Ahh, it’s finally getting cooler.” And yet, maybe it’s knowing something. Knowing that things change all around us, even as we don’t fully realize it. For me, God has always worked like this. It’s very rare that I have points in my life that I can look back at and say, “Yes, this was a huge monumental shift for me and my relationship with God.” He always there, nudging, moving, changing me and my relationship with Him slowly, almost without my knowledge. He was instrumental in all the decisions of my life, even when I thought I was the one in control. And I still wrestle with that: I want to be in control, I want to go ‘this way.’ But it’s never been my plan for my life. He’s always had His hand on every moment.

FROM WHERE I SIT
A most interesting day
I’m writing this article after a most interesting day. The day was interesting because it gave me a glimpse into exactly what Dr. Willis Johnson talked about. Dr. Johnson was the leader for the Clergy Day Apart on September 11-12. Dr. Johnson is a United Methodist pastor serving in Ferguson, Mo. He serves a predominantly African American, intergenerational UM church plant. He also was the pastor in Ferguson in August 2014 when Michael J. Brown was shot. His ministry in those turbulent times helped Dr. Johnson to write a very important book, “Holding Up Your Corner: Talking about Race in Your Community.”

Witt spent the day Monday and Tuesday talking with pastors about how do we hold up our corner as we talk about race and confront the racism that exists in our churches and in our communities. Willis was prophetic, was pastoral, and shared from his heart. And he pushed us to think about our communities. I had to leave the event early because I had an appointment always there, nudging, moving, changing me and my relationship with Him slowly, almost without my knowledge. I’m now one of the thousands of people who must be treated for glaucoma, but that’s not really the interesting part of the day. When I arrived for my appointment, I waited to be checked in. The woman at the registration desk was talking on the phone, speaking Spanish. When she was finished, she greeted me and checked me in. If I would have guessed, English was not her native language. I was escorted to another waiting room, and when it was time to be seen, an African American woman took me into the exam room and did my eye test and checked my pressure. She led me to another waiting room until the technician could give me my field of vision test. While sitting in the waiting room, a man and woman were speaking to each other. They were not speaking English. In another part of the room was a little girl in a wheelchair, with oxygen to breathe. Her caregiver was speaking quietly and comforting her. Next her there was a little girl using sign language to talk with her caregiver. When it was my time for my test, the technician was not Caucasian, and he had a heavy accent. As he explained the test, he took care to make sure that I knew how to work the machine and when to press the button.

Here is the interesting part. I spent the morning talking with other colleagues talking about racism. The doctor’s office, employees, and waiting room was very multi-cultural, with different languages being heard. This so, great! If not, is it time to re-vision? Core Values: Whether they have defined or not, these values exist and guide your church. Naming the core values has been a barrier for many church leadership teams. Are you prepared for 2018? What is your strategic, intentional plan for the church? As we enter the new year, do you have the best of intentions for the new year? We hope and pray for the best. Yet without intentional planning, we may very well wake up a year from now and regretfully not be in the place we had hope to be. There are five important elements to strategic ministry planning: mission, vision, core values, goals, and strategies. Let’s take a quick look at each element.

Mission: Review the very purpose for which the church exists – to make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. How are we doing this? Are we making disciples of people who disciple others in 2018? What is your strategic, intentional plan? We will have the best of intentions for the new year. We hope and pray for the best. Yet without intentional planning, we may very well wake up a year from now and regretfully not be in the place we had hope to be. There are five important elements to strategic ministry planning: mission, vision, core values, goals, and strategies. Let’s take a quick look at each element.

Vision: Vision is the unique way your church lives out the mission of disciples discipling others. Is your church better aligned? How can your church be better aligned? Vision: Vision is the unique way your church lives out the mission of disciples discipling others. Is your church better aligned? How can your church be better aligned? Vision: Vision is the unique way your church lives out the mission of disciples discipling others. Is your church better aligned? How can your church be better aligned?

Core Values: Core values are at the heart of your church’s decision making. Are the stated core values still a correct reflection of the church’s DNA or do they need to be evaluated? Goals: What are the three to five things your church will focus on in the upcoming year to allow the vision to become reality to make disciples within the boundaries of your core values? Make sure the stated goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time based).

Objectives or strategies: This is where the rubber hits the proverbial road. Ministries are planned based on the goals to live into the vision to accomplish the mission within the boundaries of the core values.

The best format for strategic ministry planning is typically the pastor and councilboard to go away into a retreat setting. The afternoon planning and a break from the routine agenda allows for creativity and concentration for this important work.
FYI

The 800 numbers for the conference office will be discontinued December 31, 2017. Please refer to the list at right for contact information.

CONFERENCE CENTER PHONE NUMBERS

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<tr>
<th>MINISTRY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Connectional Ministries</td>
<td>717-766-7441</td>
<td>717-766-9756</td>
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<td>Finance and Administration</td>
<td>717-766-5275</td>
<td>717-766-9756</td>
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<td>Episcopal Office</td>
<td>717-766-7871</td>
<td>717-766-3210</td>
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<td>Discovery Place</td>
<td>717-766-7868</td>
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<td>Harrisburg District</td>
<td>717-766-8124</td>
<td>717-766-3887</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growing Effective Churches</td>
<td>717-545-0525</td>
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PHONE EXTENSIONS

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<td>Greg Myers</td>
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<td>Director of Camping TBD</td>
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<td>Shawn Gilgore</td>
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<td>Stacy Eckert</td>
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<td>Sandii Peiffer</td>
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<td>Janelle Walker</td>
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Do you know about QuikLINK?

QuikLINK is a regular e-mail broadcast service for clergy and lay persons of the Susquehanna Conference that highlights breaking conference-related news, events, job and classified postings, and more.

Get Connected • Join QuikLINK

If you would like to subscribe to this FREE service or post a message, email quiklink@susumc.org

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SAVE THE DATE!

UMC #GivingTuesday is November 28

We hope you will join United Methodists around the world to support Global Ministries missionaries and Advance projects on UMC #GivingTuesday Nov. 28.

The UMC #GivingTuesday theme this year is “Connect Your Passion with God’s Mission.”

One hundred percent of your gifts made online through The Advance goes to the missionary or project of your choice.

umcmission.org/give

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Connect with the Susquehanna Conference on Facebook. www.facebook.com/susumc
In early August, the members of the Young People’s Ministry Council reviewed applications submitted from youth around the Susquehanna Conference to be part of this leadership team. After prayer and discussion, the council approved all applicants to become new student members of the Young People’s Ministry Council. We added to our team Hayden, a 12th grader from the Altoona District, who has been attending and serving with us at Annual Conference for several years. We are excited that he has now become an official member of the team. Melissa, an 11th grader from the Williamsport District, has also been attending Annual Conference with us for the last two years. She brings a great attitude of service and behind the scenes leadership. Last, but not least, we bring in some young talent in Lydia, an 8th grader from the Harrisburg District. Lydia has had leadership experience in her local church but is looking to expand her leadership skills and opportunities. We are honored to be a part of her growth as a Christian leader.

Remaining on the team for the upcoming year are Lyndsey, Julia, Jacob, and Alex, our other senior, from the Harrisburg District, Hannah and Julia from the Lewisburg District, Robbie from the Altoona District, and Morgan from the State College District. The council also consists of ten adults from around the conference serving in a variety of capacities to support these young people in their leadership. The ministries of our students would not be possible without the many hours of support and service these adults provide. Please pray for our students as they continue to explore their faith and the way God is calling them to lead the conference in youth ministry over the coming months.

New Young People’s Ministry Council Members

If you have ever missed a turn or ended up on Maple STREET instead of Maple AVENUE, then you know how frustrating it can be to be lost. Without proper directions or clear road signs it can be easy to end up somewhere you don’t want to be. This is also certainly true for our spiritual journey, as well as any road trip we might take. Last year the Young People’s Ministry Council came alongside the teens of our conference to talk about how we don’t struggle alone, where God is when we struggle, and how we can depend on God even in the midst of our worst days. We continue this journey of faith with our young disciples, focusing this year on finding the way. At the, “Recalculating” Youth Rallies, we will encourage students to “Think for yourself. Explore your path. Grow your faith,” through worship, group activities, small group discussion, and a mission project. The YPMC held the first of four youth rallies Sunday, October 22, at Good Shepherd UMC in Tyrone.

Registration is open for the remaining three event dates and locations, as listed below. We hope that your church will join the ride with us and our teens on this faith journey.

January 7, 2018 (snow date January 14)
Shepherdstown UMC
1934 S. York St., Mechanicsburg
Registration deadline - January 2

February 11, 2018 (snow date February 18)
Shavertown UMC, 163 N. Pioneer Ave., Shavertown
Registration deadline - January 31

April 8, 2018
Watsontown UMC
1319 9th Street Dr., Watsontown
Registration deadline - March 28

Available spaces: 20 youth, 7 adults. Cost: Students $375; Adults $150 (Includes travel, lodging, meals (on site), fellowship activity).

For more information, questions, or to get an application, email Curt Knouse, Director VIM, at cknouse@susumc.org. Applications can be found on our Web site, igniteyoungpeople.org, and must be completed by January 2, 2018.


Cost: Students $375; Adults $150 (Includes travel, lodging, meals (on site), fellowship activity). Available spaces: 20 youth, 7 adults.

Volunteers in Mission and Young People’s Ministry International Mission Trip

The Susquehanna Conference Volunteers in Mission and Young People’s Ministry are partnering together to sponsor a ten-day trip to Central America for young adults interested in serving God. The 15 person team is open to any young adult between the ages of 18-30.

This international trip will be going to Costa Rica. We will be based out of the Methodist Rural Farm outside Quesada, a town north of San Jose, Costa Rica. The team’s primary work will be construction; however, no previous construction experience is required. Our service with others while in the country is not the only goal of the trip. We are hoping that this trip will encourage our young adults to become trained VIM team leaders and begin co-leading their own trips in future years.

Applications are due by January 2, 2018, and can be found at igniteyoungpeople.org. The total cost of the trip is $1,650, which includes airfare, lodging, meals, and transportation in-country. A valid passport and proper vaccinations will be necessary to attend.

For more information, questions, or to get an application, email Curt Knouse, Director VIM, at cknouse@susumc.org.
Asking and why you appreciate your pastor.

Our Pastor is Gordon "Gordie" Trimer. He is pastor at both Mines and Royer United Methodist Churches in Williamsburg. Pastor Gordie is the most caring and loving pastor. When any one of his congregation is in need, he is the first one to respond. He truly cares about us. His sermons are down-to-earth and are often about his own experiences that we can relate to. He has two congregations working together to help out our little town of Williamsburg. A month ago he and his wife, Karen, took a mission team from our churches to Rosedale, South Dakota, to help out the Tree of Life at the Rosebud Reservation. They have also spread the Word of God and their love to people in Costa Rica, changing lives. UMC has congregation. He is a perfect fit for our congregations. We truly appreciate his service. — Patty H.

Karen Addition United Methodist Church would like to acknowledge our appreciation for Pastor Mark Brower in leading us, guiding us, and teaching us to be disciples for Jesus Christ, and for all the other acts of kindness he does. Thank you and God bless. — Joyce P.

My pastor, Steve Cowfer, is a very talented musician, actor, awesome father to his two children, and loving husband to his wife, Emy. He has been with us for a year now, and already he has stepped into shoes he did not think he would have to fill, such as pianist for Sunday services (on more than one occasion and for more than Sunday services), mediator between parties, asked in several member meetings, playing in the bell choir and singing in the sanctuary choir. He manages all this while still driving his children to York for school every day, helping with homework, cooking meals, and managing a two-pantry charge. We are very blessed to have him with us and believe he can bring positive things to the church and the King of God. Thank you, Steve, for all you do and will do for your congregations. — Lori H.

Our shepherd placed in the Rozellenee Charge (Wesley Chapel/Rozellenee UMC) of the York District, is Pastor Joshua Wargo. I appreciate his laser focus on the gospel message and the absolute authority of Scripture. Christian faith [is] a hard journey in today’s world. Pastor Josh’s leadership helps us remember [it] live out and share our call to disciples for the transformation of the world. Thank you for your service. — Mike H.

Thank you to Pastor Bob Rice for his service and devotion to our small-country church - Stone United Methodist Church, Berwick. — Sharon G.

We love Pastor Scott because of his love for Christ, how he teaches us to be more like Christ, to love one another, and to reach out to others. He leads by example. — St. Paul’s UMC, Scanton.

Just wanted to say how much I appreciate Pastor Ken Kitzmiller at Bucks Valley UMC. He is pastor at both churches in our community, then church members buy and wrap gifts, both needy families in their community, and church members buy and wrap gifts, both

Gloria Maust (right) was recently named Caregiver of the Year in Direct Care by LeadingAge PA. Gloria has been the recipient of numerous accolades and compliments from residents, family members and staff over the years, both for the compassionate care that she gives and for her friendship, support and caring demeanor. In 2016, she received Albright’s Best of the Best award, honoring employees who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in the areas of attitude, dedication, innovation, motivation, skills, enthusiasm and contributions to the corporation. Albright Care Services is grateful for the many years of caregiving Gloria has provided for residents of RiverWoods. 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.

Making dreams come true

Many families experience hardships that can make the celebration of holidays, such as Christmas, only a dream. For the past ten years the members of UMC have helped make dreams come true. With the help of the Center for Community Action in Huntington they identify needy families in their community, then church members buy and wrap gifts, both needed things and whimsical things, based upon ages of the family members.

“We always receive lovely thank you notes from the families thanking us how much they appreciate the kindness of others, and how it helped make Christmas special for their children,” said Violet Confer. “McConnellstown UMC has been blessed by this outreach. There is always more work needed, and our hope is that one day churches and organizations will participate in an outreach opportunity like this.”

Continent on your MISSION

At the 2017 LeadingAge PA annual conference, RiverWoods staff member Gloria Maust was named Caregiver of the Year in Direct Care. LeadingAge PA is the trade association representing more than 360 non-profit providers of senior housing, healthcare and community services across the Commonwealth. The Distinguished Service Awards honor individuals and groups who are making a difference through their commitment and service. These exceptional people give of their time, talents and abundant energy to their communities and demonstrate a deep commitment to serving seniors.

Gloria has shown exceptional dedication to her career, having worked at RiverWoods for 46 years. Through the multitude of changes in health care regulations, capital projects and management alterations, she has been an unwavering employee. She works tirelessly to adapt to every change and has become an invaluable role model for numerous nursing assistant trainees. Gloria always goes the extra mile for residents and takes time to develop personal relationships with each one. This connection is so important to recognize resident’s needs often before they do, and enables her to give observant and thoughtful updates on their health and progress. Gloria’s patience and kindness is recognized by staff and residents alike. Her positive attitude does not waver, even on the most challenging days and under stressful circumstances.

“Her dedication and love of her profession, and commitment to our residents, mission and values. I wholeheartedly believe that Gloria exemplifies the attributes of this esteemed award, a true lady boss, RiverWoods executive director. — Gillian M.

Don’t forget your own disaster preparation and training.

If you want to respond in a safe, helpful way, seek disaster-response training and learn how to go about helping yourself so you can respond should the need arise. Preparing can be as simple as forming a plan with your neighbors and friends, and then practicing it. As we approach hurricane season, keep in mind that this year, we are particularly vulnerable to hurricanes that may not be as predictable as those in years past. This is because climate change is altering the hurricane season. Keep an eye on local news and other reliable sources of information for updates on the hurricane season.

Gloria Maust was recently named Caregiver of the Year in Direct Care by LeadingAge PA.

Recent disasters that UMCOR is responding to include: Hurricanes in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, US Virgin Islands and the Caribbean; mudslides in Sierra Leone; earthquakes in Mexico; and wildfires on the West Coast.

Help through UMCOR

When you make a financial donation to UMCOR, you can be assured that every dollar you give will go directly to the people you specify. UMCOR can guarantee this because all of our administrative costs are covered by the UMCOR Sunday offering and other undesignated gifts. Volunteering or sending relief supplies to one of our supply depots is two more ways you can be a sign of hope for others. Your prayer support is vital to all that UMCOR does.

Visit www.umcor.org for more information and to donate, or you designate your church offering to: United States Disaster ResponseAdvance #9016780 - Support UMCOR’s response to disasters in the US. International Disaster Response Advance #9824580 - Support quick response to meet emergency needs around the world.

Material Resources Advantage #9824580 - Support long-term recovery, emergency response and disaster relief supplies.

Note: There are many other advance projects to choose from at www.umcor.org

Susquehanna LINK - November 2018

Check out our Camp & Retreat Ministries at www.susumcamps.org
Faith family supports woman convicted of killing baby

By Kathy L. Gilbert
Sept. 25, 2017. UMSN

Tina Brosius, 41, is not the same frightened young girl who at age 18 gave birth in a port-a-potty and left her newborn baby to drown in the toilet. She has served 23 years in prison for first-degree murder. On Sept. 15, the Pennsylvania Parole Board voted 5-0 to commute her sentence but she will not be free unless Governor Tom Wolf grants clemency.

Her family — parents, two grown daughters and the congregation of Calvary United Methodist Church — have been praying, visiting and supporting Brosius since the day she entered prison in 1994.

On the day of her hearing, members of Calvary chartered two buses and rode to Pennsylvania’s Supreme Court to support Tina Brosius during her parole board hearing September 15. There were so many people, about half had to be turned away because the hearing room was full.

Bishop Jeremiah Park commended Joshua Wargo as a provisional elder at the 2017 Susquehanna Annual Conference.

“I felt she had been so wronged from a judicial (and) justice standpoint. She’s not been given equal protection under the law,” he said, in an interview with United Methodist News Service.

Taking on this case “was a calling,” he said.

Many people spoke during the parole hearing on her behalf. Among the people asking the parole board for mercy were her two daughters, Kerri, 26 and Sarah, 24, and her parents, Lorraine and Ernest Brosius.

Tina Brosius had Kerri when she was 15 and Sarah when she was 16.

In 1994, she had just graduated from high school and was living at home with her parents. Her father had said if she had another child he would put them all out on the street. So Brosius hid her third pregnancy from everyone.

Brosius started going into labor at the dinner table. She told her mother she had to go to the store and she just started driving.

She went to a park and she thought she could get into a building there but it was locked. As her labor progressed, she went into a port-a-potty and had the baby,哥said.

She said she did not hear any sounds from the baby and had felt no movement during pregnancy.

She went back home. A week later, she got a call from the police. When they told her they had found the baby, she broke down and confessed.

“She was charged with first-degree murder which was very irregular. These types of incidents are usually third-degree murder,” Grose said. The death of the baby was not done with willful or malicious intent, he said.

At her trial, Brosius was represented by a court-appointed lawyer who had never tried a murder case. She didn’t call any witnesses and her defense was a psychological and evaluation done for her, Grose said.

In Pennsylvania, a life sentence ends under the possibility of parole. The state has more than 5,000 lifers and the highest number of lifers who committed their crimes as juveniles.

Grose said most of the staff at Muncy free.

“One of the counselors from the prison testified on her behalf at the hearing. Also testifying was Judge John Churry who was the district attorney for Dauphin County when she was charged. He said the life sentence she received had already been pleaded down to third-degree murder.

Grose said when the board voted 5-0 in her favor, the courtroom erupted in applause.

“They weren’t shouting or whistling, just showing support of the board’s decision. Taking this action took a lot of courage,” Grose said.

The Sunday, Sept. 24, bulletin at Calvary United Methodist Church included two notes of thanks from her parents and two daughters.

“You thank Calvary for making September 15th such a wonderful day for Tina. It means a lot to know that so many people can forgive and that so many prayers were answered. A special thanks to Rev. Parks for his leadership and belief in second chances, and to Steve Grose for his determination to get Tina a better life. Although Tina isn’t free yet, we will be eternally grateful to the members of Calvary for their love and kindness to our family. God bless you all.” — Lorraine and Ernest Brosius.

“Words can’t describe how grateful I am for all of the love and support my family has received from Calvary! When I learned there was a bus full of members from our church coming to support, I was amazed! I don’t know how we could do it without all of you. My sister Sarah and I want to thank all of you for everything you have done for us and our mom. Please continue to pray for us in the upcoming weeks, thank you again so much!” — With love, Kerri & Sarah Brosius.

Parks said the congregation at Calvary claims Tina Brosius in their family of faith.

“We kick those words around, of being brothers and sisters, but I think this congregation took those words personally and that’s what kept them going on faithfully through the years.”

Grose is a multimedia reporter for United Methodist News Service.
I n 2012 the General Conference of The United Methodist Church approved legislation to change the name of Lay Speaking Ministries to Lay Servant Ministries. The new name was chosen to better define the role of those laity who wished to help lead in church beyond speaking alone. The term “servant” best describes what Jesus told his disciples in John 13 after he himself had performed the duties of the lowliest servant. Just as Jesus called his disciples into service, we are called to live out our lives as servant leaders in the life of the church today.

Lay servants can choose from different levels of training, all of which will help our churches raise up quality transformational leaders who can help our churches in their mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Persons who are already lay speakers or certified lay speakers are “grand-parented” into the new model. To continue in those roles, they will need to be renewed and re-certified by completing the new re-certification courses now available.

A further step — Certified Lay Ministry

In order to enhance the quality of ministry to small-membership churches, expand team ministry into churches, and in deference to an expression of the gifts and evidence of God’s grace associated with the lay ministry of early Methodism, the certified lay minister is a part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person. The CLM may help lead the congregation in various ways. Each CLM and Staff Parish Relations Committee will create a covenant defining the ways in which the CLM shall serve as well as the responsibilities of the congregation. Each CLM will be assigned to a supervising elder who will assist the CLM and the SPRC as needed. The CLM may serve as part of a staff or may be the only pastoral leader assigned to a small-membership charge.

All persons serving a local church beyond pulpit supply who are not in the process of being licensed or ordained must be enrolled in the Certified Lay Minister Program (requirements are posted at www.susumc.org/layministry.)

Certified Lay Servant

Persons must complete the entrance requirements for this program or (they) will not be permitted to serve beyond pulpit supply. This will be monitored by the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Upon completion of the entrance requirements, a person may serve a church or charge as a candidate for lay ministry. Lay minister candidates and certified lay ministers are assigned, not appointed. The CLM remains a lay person and does not have sacramental privileges. The supervising elder works with the CLM to provide the sacraments to the assigned charge.

**THE LAY SERVANT JOURNEY**

The following describes three levels of lay servant ministry.

Lay persons are encouraged to grow in their leadership skills by beginning as a certified lay servant. For those who want to continue to deepen their leadership role, they may become certified lay ministers, or lay speakers for those who desire to fill the pulpit. Below are descriptions for those from the “United Methodist Book of Discipline.” Requirements for each level of certification can be found in the chart below left.

**Certified Lay Servant**

A certified lay servant desires to serve the church, knows and is committed to Scripture and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of the United Methodist Church, and who has received specific training to witness to the Christian faith through spoken communication, to lead within a church or community, and to provide caring ministry. The certified lay servant serves the local church or charge (or beyond the walls of the local church or charge in which his or her witness, leadership, and service inspires others to a deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship. The certified lay servant should prepare to undertake one or more of the following functions: provide leadership, assistance, and support to the program of the church; lead meetings for prayer, training, study, and discussion when requested; conduct or assist with services of worship, preach the word, or give addresses as requested; work with committees and teams which provide leadership or caring ministries; assist in Holy Communion; teach the Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of the United Methodist Church. ([2016 Book of Discipline](https://www.susumc.org/layministry))

**Certified Lay Speaker**

A certified lay speaker is a certified lay servant whose call has been affirmed ... to serve the church in pulpit supply. The certified lay speaker serves by preaching the Word when requested. ([2016 Book of Discipline](https://www.susumc.org/layministry))

**Certified Lay Minister**

A certified lay minister is a certified lay servant, certified lay minister ([2016](https://www.susumc.org/layministry)), or equivalent ... who is called and equipped to conduct public worship, care for the congregation, assist in preachers’ leadership, develop new and existing faith communities, preach the Word, lead small groups, or establish community outreach ministries as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person. The CLM serves to enhance the quality of ministry through service to the local church, circuit or cooperative church, or by expanding team ministry in other churches and charges. ([2016 Book of Discipline](https://www.susumc.org/layministry))
WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS

I recently read an article on leadership listing the five traits required as building blocks. The stewardship challenge I would add though is that for Christians, these traits need to be developed in the right order.

A leader cares. Not only do we have Scripture on the importance of sacrificial love, but we are warned of the emptiness of trying to do anything without it. “If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:2) A leader has courage. God is always there with his perfect love so we have the courage to stand, to be accountable, and to be changed by God. “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline.” (2 Timothy 2:7) A leader has character. Character comes from the practice of persistence and humility from someone willing to be loved by God with the courage to follow him. “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2) A leader communicates. Once you genuinely model and keep growing in love, courage, and character, you cannot keep your light hidden; you become a leader. Your words communicate in unity with your actions. “A person finds joy in giving an apt reply, and how good is a timely word!” (Proverbs 15:23) A leader has competence. While we do our best to present ourselves to God “as one approved” (2 Timothy 2:15) we also admit the paradoxical truth. “Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God.” (2 Corinthians 3:5) As we give thanks for all we have, let’s thank God for lessons on leadership. He has given us our example and taught us everything. Let’s lead others to church and learn even more together.

Now is the time to get your Advent resources

Merry Christmas! Yes, I know I’m a little (okay, a LOT!) early, but if you plan to borrow a study from Discovery Place to use during Advent, now is the time to call or e-mail to reserve it. Here are some suggestions to help you in the process. All studies listed here include a DVD, a book, and a leader’s guide.

- **Sent: Delivering the Gift of Hope at Christmas**, by Jorge Acevedo (2015). God sent Christ at Christmas. And Christ sends us. Each session is led by a different presenter, all of whom are clergy. The sessions begin with a story about Advent or Christmas, followed by a lively discussion among the presenters. Five sessions.

- **All I Want for Christmas: Opening the Gifts of God's Grace**, by James W. Moore (2016). Christmas has some amazing gifts for us, but we often need the miracle of God’s grace to experience and celebrate them. This study asks a very personal question: What are the gifts you would really like to receive from Christmas this year? Five sessions.

- **Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem**, by Adam Hamilton (2014). In this book, Hamilton begins at the end, with Mary at the crucifixion and the resurrection. He then travels back in time as Jesus’ life and ministry unfolds, ending at the beginning: with the Christ Child being born in a stable. Five sessions.

- **Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph**, by Adam Hamilton (2017). As the earthly father of Jesus, Joseph’s place in the Nativity story is sometimes overlooked, but contains valuable lessons for all of us. Four sessions.

- **Christmas Gifts That Won’t Break**, by James W. Moore (2017). As we journey through Advent, we reflect on the unbreakable gifts that God has given us: hope, love, joy, and peace... and, of course, the greatest gift of all: Jesus. Five sessions.

- **Down to Earth, by Mike Slaughter (2016). Have we ever really grasped the miracle that took place in Jesus’ birth? We will be challenged in this study to respond to this miracle with down-to-earth love, humility, lifestyle, and obedience. Four sessions.

- **The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem**, by Adam Hamilton (2011). Filmed in the Holy Land, this study retracts the actual path of Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem. Five sessions, plus a bonus session: The Holy Land Today.

In addition to these seven studies, there are numerous others from which to choose. Go to our Web site, www.discovery-place.org. Click on “online catalog.” You can search by title or author and read full descriptions of each resource listed above. You can also choose “advanced search” and under subject, use the drop-down menu and select Christmas/Advent. This will give you a complete listing of everything in Discovery Place that relates to this blessed season. You can place an order directly from the on-line catalog, call 717-766-7968 (toll-free 800-682-2615), or e-mail discovery@susumc.org. I’m looking forward to hearing from you.

Serving Christ with you,
Joni Robison

**WEBINAR WEDNESDAY**

**Pastor and Caregiver**

November 15 from 11 AM – 12 PM

Getting help when you are helping your loved one with a health issue
Handling the financial and treatment decisions
Balancing all your responsibilities

Join us for a workshop by Peter Wong, co-author of *The Caregiver’s Toolbox.*

Find out about the 3 stages of caregiving and how to give your best care

ANY CAREGIVER is welcome to join and learn more!

Sponsored by The United Methodist Stewardship Foundation:

Register: www.umstewardship.org/events by November 10, 2017
Cost $10; Nonrefundable

- **Hygiene kits for hurricane victims**

By Pastor Tina Hawkins

Children from the West Branch United Methodist Charge (Fairview-Morrisdale, Palestine, Morrisdale, and Summit Hill churches) assembled hygiene kits to be sent to recent hurricane victims. Members of the charge donated the items for the kits.

A list of items needed for the hygiene kits and other disaster response kits can be found at missioncentral.org/how-can-i-help/donate-items

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**Susquehanna LINK - November 2018**

**FREE RESOURCES FOR YOUR LOCAL CHURCH**

You can find free resources for your local church at www.discovery-place.org
Port Royal UMC celebrates 175th Anniversary

On Sunday, September 24, 2017, Port Royal United Methodist Church celebrated their 175th Anniversary. More than 210 people filled the sanctuary for the special worship service that included the hymns “Great Is Thine Faithfulness,” “Shall We Gather at the River,” “How Great Thou Art,” and “To God Be The Glory.” The choir sang “There’s Within My Heart a Melody.” Rev. David Biser, pastor at Crosspoint UMC in Harrisburg, who had been a student pastor at Port Royal (Janiata Parish) from 1989-1997, was invited to give the sermon. His message was titled “Dreams Take Time,” based on the Scripture passage Genesis 37:1-11.

Rev. Lori Steffensen, State College District Superintendent, offered the pastoral prayer.

Over 150 people gathered after the service to share in a celebratory meal and fellowship. Misty Henry made a 175th Anniversary Cake.

Since 1900, the Port Royal church has been served by thirty-five pastors, with Rev. Terrence Brossius currently serving.

Linglestown Life hosts active shooter training

I’ll never happen here.” That’s the response of many people when you bring up the idea that an armed intruder could strike at your church. But as several church leaders learned during a recent Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Confront, and Evacuate Training event at Linglestown Life, not only is it possible, but failing to prepare your people for how to respond is irresponsible.

When it comes to the safety of our members on a Sunday morning, we’ve prepared procedures to reduce the risks of abuse to children, youth, and vulnerable adults in the ministries of the local churches (SUSUMC Safe Sanctorum Policy), but we have failed to produce procedures and training to reduce the risk of injury and death associated with an armed intruder.

As Betty Secret, pastor at Center and Clear Ridge churches said, “The reality is this kind of violence is present in our society. And it doesn’t matter if you are in a rural setting or a larger city. You need to be prepared and you need to prepare your people.”

That’s why 28, seven people represented five different United Methodist congregations, of those 28, seven people represented five different United Methodist congregations, ranging from small rural congregations to larger suburban congregations. Each one walked away with a sense of gratitude knowing they had attended a mission to better prepare their congregations.

Karen Barefoot from Bedford said, “The world is changing, and we need to be more aware of our surroundings in church and out in the community.”

Jason Fisher of First UMC in Mechanicsburg said, “The eye-opening scenarios really drove home the course content.”

Michael Harris, Evangelical UMC, Middletown, mentioned, “Getting more people aware, trained, and focused increases your chances of survival.”

Both Harris and Fisher have law enforcement backgrounds, but saw the need for the kind of training offered to churches by ALICE Training.

Linglestown Life has three individuals who have completed the ALICE Training Train the Trainer course. The church is also using an ALICE Training e-learning module to provide computer-based training for church and nursery school staff, Sunday school teachers, and other hospitality volunteers. Eventually everyone in the congregation will have the opportunity to take the e-learning module.

As George Reynolds, lead pastor at Linglestown Life noted, “What you learn in the ALICE Training is applicable to any situation you ever find yourself in. The training just makes you more situationally aware in every setting.”

After completing the e-learning module, all of the individuals at Linglestown Life are receiving training that equips them to understand procedures, and most importantly, participate in actual training scenarios. “We are all used to fire drills,” Reynolds continued, “although the likelihood of a fire is remote. But have you ever thought through the options available to you in the event of an armed intruder?”

That’s the value of ALICE. ALICE teaches participants a proactive, options-based plan for civil response to a violent threat. ALICE trains and empowers individuals to utilize human action, building infrastructure, and communication options to increase their chance of survival. Simply put, ALICE’s mission is to save more lives.

As Rev. Howard Woodruff, Wesley UMC, Marysville, stated, “It’s about time we get serious about these threats and how to respond.”

A number of churches believe that having an armed member of the congregation will provide protection for their people, but the reality is that it leaves people with a false sense of security. Training volunteer leaders and ultimately the entire congregation, is the best way to assure people have the skills necessary to make a decision that can save lives.

While “it’ll never happen here” may be true, being prepared through education and training at least demonstrates that we are aware of the dangers in which we live and are drastically different than our past.

Persons wanting to learn more about the ALICE Training programs can explore their website at www.ALICETraining.com. Churches interested in exploring the way that Linglestown Life is implementing ALICE Training may contact George Reynolds by email at GReynolds@susumc.org.

Linglestown Life hosts active shooter training

By Rev. George Reynolds

Global Migration Sunday is a partnership between four general agencies of The United Methodist Church: the Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Communications, the Board of Church and Society, and Discipleship Ministries. Many resources including bulletin inserts, Powerpoint presentations, videos, Social Media images, Web banners, devotional booklets, worship resources, and more are available at umcmigration.org.

Call to the church to observe Global Migration Sunday

Brothers and Sisters of The United Methodist Church, grace and peace to you in the compassionate name of our Lord Christ Jesus. I write to you on behalf of our Council of Bishops to invite you to observe Global Migration Sunday December 3, 2017. This is the first Sunday of the season of Advent, a time when we remember the coming birth of the Christ child who himself was a migrant.

From Asia and Europe to Africa and the Americas, the plight of more than 65 million men, women, and children forced to leave their homes and migrate to places unknown calls all Christians to remember what God requires of us.

Wars, natural disasters, persecution, economic hardships, and growing violence around the world are the major root causes of the unprecedented global migration we witness with grave concern today. As if these deadly forces were not enough, migrants also face myriad problems including hazardous travel, cultural barriers, and the physical and emotional costs of arriving in strange lands where they are not always welcome and they often face persecution.

For most of these migrants, the decision to flee their homeland comes as a last resort effort to live. We are reminded of Joseph and Mary as they sought to save their lives and especially the life of the Christ child as they fled to Africa to escape the wrath of King Herod, who (threatened by the birth of Jesus) ordered the massacre of children (Matthew 2:13-14).

As United Methodists, we believe that the prayers of God’s people can cause the outpouring of God’s mercy and justice. As your bishops, it is our fervent hope that on Global Migration Sunday December 3, United Methodist congregations in all the places we serve around the world will join our voices to pray for our brothers and sisters who are suffering the journey of forced migration. In addition, as a people who pray and act upon those prayers, we ask that all our congregations gather an offering dedicated to the human suffering inflicted by forced migration. Offerings collected should be sent to the Migration Advance Anno. 3022144.

We are grateful for our general agencies who have prepared excellent resources for Global Migration Sunday in English, Arabic, French, and Spanish including the prayer that we ask all pray on December 3.

Jesus said, “When you welcome the stranger, you welcome me.” (Matthew 25:35)

Let us welcome our migrant brothers and sisters with compassionate care, pray for them without ceasing, and give generously that they, too, may have life.

Grace and peace,
Bishop Bruce R. Ough
President, Council of Bishops

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That’s why 28 people participated in ALICE Training’s Train the Trainer event at Linglestown Life on October 9 and 10. Of those 28, seven people represented five different United Methodist congregations, ranging from small rural congregations to larger suburban congregations. Each one walked away with a sense of gratitude that they had attended a mission to better prepare their congregations.

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The 800 numbers for the Susquehanna Conference office will be discontinued December 31, 2017. Please refer to the list on page 4 for contact information.

Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church 303 Mulberry Dr., Mechanicsburg, PA 17050-3179
Tel: 717-766-7441 Toll-free: 800-874-8474 Fax: 717-766-5078
www.susumc.org
link@susumc.org

Communications DNA in a Capsule

Growing Effective Churches
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Every year it is essential for a church to not only intentionally plan, but to also evaluate the current year ending. How did the church do at accomplishing the goals? What is working? What needs to be tweaked? What is to be celebrated? How does what we accomplished this year speak to how we intentionally and strategically plan for next year?

While we dream the idea of planning, the power of being intentional and strategic to align all we do and how we use our resources in our mission is not only essential, but faithful to who God calls us to be as the church! So… what is your strategic ministry plan for 2018?

A Most Interesting Day
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

office wasn’t in a big city – it was in central Pa.

How often have we said, “Oh, we only have people like us in our communities”? The reality is that in some places that may be true, but in the majority of our annual conference we are not all Caucasian.

We think our communities look just like our congregations, but in reality that isn’t really true. We think that just because there are no children, youth, and young people in our churches, they aren’t in our communities.

Just because there are no persons of differing ethnic and racial backgrounds than us in our congregations, they must not be in our community.

The reality is that is not true. My interesting day proved that, at least in the doctor’s office, we are a diverse community.

The work that we are called to do is to change the make-up of our congregation so that we reflect our community. That’s what Willis Johnson talked about. That is what each of us must be about – changing the culture and the color of our churches so we look and sound like Acts 2 church with different hues and different accents.

Blessings, Tom

Growing Effective Churches
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Our Heritage

October – 50 years ago

The October 11, 1967, first Methodist Men’s Fall Rally was a huge success. Attendance at [what would become an annual] spring rally held each April in Lewistown had increased to the point where men where “standing three-deep around the wall, sitting on the floor in the aisles, crowding the stairways, and filling the fellowship hall in the basement.” It was felt that more men could be reached by holding two annual rallies.

The fall rally filled Williamson’s Pine Street Methodist Church and featured internationally known singer and recording artist Bill Mann. That gathering was held in the imposing Pine Street cathedral-like structure that was destroyed by fire in 1977, the congregation worshiping in the Calvary building on Fourth Street until the present, modern Pine Street building was erected in 1980. While there is no longer an annual conference-wide fall rally, the spring event continues – and the 62nd annual Men’s Rally was held this past April in Lewistown.

November – 100 years ago

The November 1917 volume of Woman’s Evangel, the monthly magazine of the Woman’s Missionary Association of the United Brethren Church, carried the following article about Lohr Memorial Church: “The chapter at Hanover, Pa., which is only seven months old, reports much enthusiasm in the work. At their picnic, they provided supper for seventeen soldier boys camping near the town, which induced quite a number of them to visit the Sunday School and church services, and several have joined a young men’s Bible class.

Their president, Kathleen Kohr, has resigned to take up the missionary course at Bonebrake [United] Seminary in Dayton.” As it turns out, Miss Kathleen Rebecca Kohr (1898-1958) left Dayton with more [than] a completed missionary course. She graduated from seminary in 1920, became the first woman ordained in the Virginia Conference of United Brethren Church, and served in that state for 35 years with her husband, Rev. E.B. Caplinger.

Rev. Lyle S. Bundy, Retired, of South Pine Street, Red Lion, Pa., died Saturday, August 26, 2017, at Rest Haven, York, Pa. Private memorial services were held at the convenience of the family. Interment was in Laurel Cemetery, White Haven, Pa.

Rev. Arthur W. Davis, Retired, of Mount Cobb Road, Lake Ariel, Pa., currently serving Asbury UMC, Scranton, Pa., died Friday, September 22, 2017. Memorial services were held Tuesday, September 26, 2017, in Asbury United Methodist Church, Scranton, Pa. Interment was in Sandy Banks Cemetery, Greenfield Township, Pa.

Rev. George C. Kramer, Retired, of Delaware Street, Scranton, Pa., died Tuesday, September 12, 2017, at home. Among his survivors is his wife, Madelyn Goldsworthy Kramer. Memorial services were held Saturday, September 16, 2017, in Solfanelli-Fiorello Funeral Home Inc., Scranton, Pa. Interment was in Oak Lawn Cemetery, Hanover Township, Pa.

Rev. Edwin L. Martin, Retired, of Hard Road, Columbus, Ohio, died Monday, September 18, 2017. Among his survivors is his wife, Mary (Malley) Martin. Memorial services were held September 23, 2017, in Harrisburg United Methodist Church, Harrisburg, Ohio.

Rev. Ronald W. Onder, of Spring Street, Jessup, Pa., died Saturday, August 26, 2017, at home. Private services and interment was held at the convenience of the family.

Rev. Kenneth L. Rebok, Retired, of Deer Hollow Road, Huber Heights, Ohio, died Monday, August 7, 2017, in Kettering Medical Center, Kettering, Ohio. Memorial services were held Saturday, September 2, 2017, in Wayne High School Cafetorium, Huber Heights, Ohio.

Mrs. Shirley June (Yarnell) Shenk, of Kreamer, Pa., died Friday, September 29, 2017, in Massachusetts while visiting her son. She was the widow of Rev. Jay R. Shenk. Memorial services were held Saturday, October 21, 2017, in Christ United Methodist Church, Selingsgrove, Pa. Interment was at the convenience of the family.

Volunteer Opportunities

Fellowship Hall clean-up

Annual Fall Rally

November 11, 2017, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall, Memorial Church, 1301 Clarion Ave. Directions: From the east, take I-81 south to the I-180 and Exits 19 or 20. From the west, take I-81 north to the I-180 and Exits 19 or 20. Drive south to Clarion Ave to the church.

The rally theme is “A Most Interesting Day.” The event will include worship, fellowship, a buffet lunch, and a presentation on the church’s history. Volunteers are needed to help with the clean-up and the event. For more information, contact Rev. Tim Speakman at 717-232-2555 or email tmspeakman@gmail.com.

The schedule includes time for breaks, meals, and fellowship. Volunteers are needed to help with the clean-up and the event. For more information, contact Rev. Tim Speakman at 717-232-2555 or email tmspeakman@gmail.com.
**The Churches of the Susquehanna Conference, The United Methodist Church**

November 2017

**We put our hope in the Lord. He is our help and our shield. Our heart rejoices in God because we trust his holy name.**

Psalm 33:20-21 CEB

Helen Crowe from Chapelwood United Methodist Church in Houston dumps a load of debris in the front yard of a home flooded by Hurricane Harvey.

Photo by Kathleen Barry, UMNS

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“like” us on Susquehanna Annual Conference 2017 - 2020

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: “That 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 - “Better Together: Make Us One”**
- **2018 - “Better Together: One with Christ”**
- **2019 - “Better Together: One with Each Other”**
- **2020 - “Better Together: One in Ministry to All the World”**

I believe that God has plans to give our church hope and a future. I am already beginning to excitingly 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)

With You in Christ’s Ministry,
Bishop Jeremiah J. Park

**Better Together**

Susquehanna Annual Conference 2017 - 2020

How can you help when disaster strikes?

see page 1