



www.euma-erie.org

Helping Hands Winter/Spring 2011

Providing Christian ministry of refuge, hope, and encouragement to those in need.



THE REFUGE



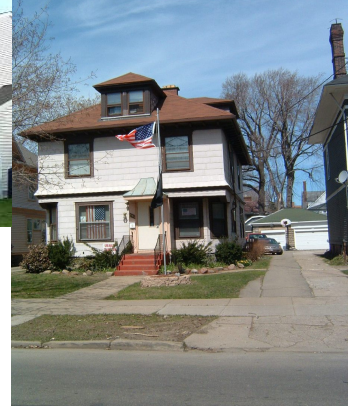
RAINBOW CONNECTION



HOPE HOUSE



PROJECT HOPE



LIBERTY HOUSE

SPIRITUAL SEASONS

Recently I attended a seminar at Ashland Theological Seminary where Dr. Terry Wardle lectured on the seasons of our spiritual development. He described the **Season of Delight** where we feel secure in our relationship with God and we can feel His presence in every aspect of our lives. Secondly, he described the **Season of Distance**. We commune with God but it just doesn't seem to make a difference in our sense of God. His presence seems to be beyond our awareness and yet, we know that He is near. Then we have times when we are in the **Season of Desert**. We know that God is close but life is just not so good. It is an important season because it is a season of introspection where we confront those sins in our lives that separate us from God and we recognize the false gods that influence our daily living. Finally there is the **Season of Darkness**. We all experience each season, but this is the season that is often seared in our minds. We are wounded and our woundedness often causes us to linger there. Darkness is a scary place to be and we think that God is absent. Dr. Wardle calls it a "tragic darkness". He believes the **Season of Darkness** has great spiritual purpose because it is there, in our deepest pain, we meet God and God walks with us through the darkness. How do we survive darkness? Are there not many ways? Perhaps like the Psalmists, it is crying out to God. In Psalm 13, David cries out, "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?" Perhaps we travel this darkness

with a patient Christian friend who just won't go away. This friend cares too much to abandon us. Perhaps it is a darkness that requires a physician's help. Perhaps it is a darkness that requires a radical reconstruction of our lives; physically, materialistically and/or spiritually. In my personal reflection, I couldn't help but ask myself, isn't this what we do at The Erie United Methodist

Alliance? We meet the homeless in their season of darkness? They can't see that God cares about them because the burdens of life have overwhelmed them. With no place to live, no way to care for or feed their children, no medical insurance, no job; the despair causes great blackness. But, in their darkest moment, here comes God through the reaching out of our "**helping hands**". Grab on; hold tight, we will show you love because God has loved us in our own darkness. Isn't that what we are saying? As you walk through this self-searching season

of Lent, may you sense His delight, may you seek His light whenever you are in darkness. May you consider your abundance and your personal call of Christ to help those who walk in the tragic darkness of despair. Inside this newsletter is an offering envelope. Please prayerfully consider how God has blessed your personal spiritual seasons and where He is calling you to help the less fortunate.

Gail Fees, Chairperson of Development

I couldn't help but ask myself, isn't this what we do at The Erie United Methodist Alliance? We meet the homeless in their season of darkness?

We're on the web
www.euma-erie.org

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We're on the web
www.gotacubit.org



THANK YOU!

Looking at this picture, can you see the devotion of our District Superintendent to the mission of the EUMA? Rev. Pat Harbison is crawling on to the platform of a dunking booth to raise money for the needy. Rev. Harbison has accepted a new appointment of ministry at the New Wilmington UMC. She and her husband Dan will be missed at The Alliance. Rev. Pat has a huge heart for those who are in need. From the Board of Directors, "Thanks Pat for all the support you and Dan have given us during your service as our District Superintendent."

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS!



Rose Asbury



Curas Campbell



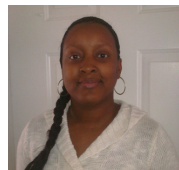
Mary Gollmer



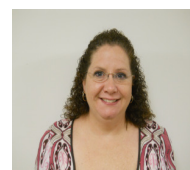
Lisa Karle



Valerie Lindstrom



Darlene Outlaw
Shelter Supervisor



Jan Owen



Yvonne Taylor
Child-Youth Program

YOUR GROUPS CAN HELP!



Harold Yannayon, Property Chairperson asks: Are you in need of a project for your youth or men's group? We plan to participate in Change the World Day on May 14 with maintenance projects at all of our ministries. Volunteers in Missions will be sending a team of youth for a week this summer. Another youth group is coming for a week and will be painting The Refuge deck and ramp. They will need paint and painting tools. We will need carpentry groups to help with the garage repairs later this summer, including building railings for safety going up the steps to the second floor. Please keep us on your radar and contact Jan at the Administrative office at 814-456-8073 with questions or to volunteer.

Thanks, Harold Yannayon, Property Chairperson

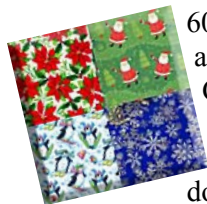
15th ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT SCHEDULED

The EUMA Newsletter recently asked Jim Renshaw, who serves on the Board and on the golf committee to share with us about the 15th annual golf tournament. Jim's response: "In just a few weeks we will be sending out letters to the member churches of the EUMA announcing our plans for this year's tournament. Again, the tournament will be held at Culbertson Hills Golf Course in Edinboro, Monday, June 20th. Letters will soon go to prior participants, sponsors and underwriters. 116 golfers played last year and we raised \$9,800 for The Refuge. Every year we have a silent auction and we are in need of donations which can include items like golf equipment, gift certificates, and landscape plants. Please consider what you might donate. We look forward to seeing you at this year's event. With your help, we will again provide needed support for Erie families in crisis." Thanks, Jim Renshaw



A FEW WAYS YOU HAVE SUPPORTED THE ERIE UNITED METHODIST ALLIANCE. GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU!!!

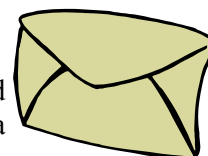
CHRISTMAS GIFT WRAPPING



60 plus volunteers manned and “womanned” the Christmas gift wrapping booth at The Millcreek Mall receiving donations totaling \$1,175.

Workers had fun and were able to share Christmas smiles with weary shoppers.

NEWSLETTER RESPONSE



Each newsletter has the “little envelope” stuffed inside for the reader to prayerfully consider a monetary donation to the ministry of The Alliance. These gifts have totaled \$8,345 since July 1, 2010. We need more newsletter readers so if you are willing to gather more readers at your church, please e-mail names and addresses to The Alliance office at info@euma-erie.org. Sending the newsletter electronically saves us money. Your friends, family and church family will be amazed at how complex and far reaching this ministry is. Give them an opportunity to hear the message of hope we bring to the hurting .

CHRISTMAS LETTER APPEAL

Every Christmas Holiday we send a letter to all who have supported The Alliance in the past asking you to consider a gift during the Advent Season. You blessed our homeless programs with \$12,660.



SPECIAL PEOPLE HELP.....

Margaret Himes of Youngsville has been busy crocheting “scrubbies” for The Holiday Boutique. She makes them by the basketful. Margaret is 82 but continues to serve Christ as she donates her time and talent. One board member’s four children and their spouses decided to not exchange Christmas gifts with each other; instead they shopped for Christmas gifts for clients at The Refuge and Hope House. It brought the givers great joy. Many of you have found similar or even more creative ways to help. Please tell us what you have done so we can share with others your “spirit” of service.

HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

Organized and managed by Viki Bloomer of The Girard United Methodist Church and a grateful recipient of The Refuge services, Viki pays forward through the boutique.



Sales of donated crafts and Lucinda Yates Pins netted The Alliance \$2,278. Viki says “thank you” to each person who has donated a craft or hosted The Boutique. Lucinda Yates pins are available all year.

If you are willing to display them at your church, please call The Alliance office at 814-456-8073 for scheduling. Consider donating a craft (she is looking for a variety) and/or hosting The Boutique next fall.



United Methodist Women

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN: AWESOME MISSIONARIES

What new can be said about United Methodist Women except to restate, “Where would missions be in the United Methodist Church without our local UMW units????” Since November 1st, you have blessed The Alliance with gifts of \$2,425 in utility bill assistance and \$2,110 in undesignated giving. Thank you ladies! You are a blessing to more people than you will ever know. We pray that God will bless you as you continue to be a blessing to those in our community and around the globe.

You're invited to walk with us on June 11!
See brochure inside newsletter or sign up
at www.walkforahealthycommunity.org.

DISTRICT SPRING MEETING

On May 1, 2011, the Erie-Meadville District will hold its District Conference at Wesley Woods, a United Methodist church camp in Grand Valley, PA, from 2-7 pm.

A free spaghetti dinner will be served from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. The Alliance will have a few minutes to share a word about our ministry and then we will present our 2011-2012 budget and slate of officers. Watch for details through local church communications.

Remember to bring your Lenten Calendar blessing

EUMA Fiscal Year
7-1-2010
through
6-30-2011

Cubits & Donations
 Needed \$264,580



AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR TREASURER

In November, the EUMA came to you, our supporters, with a plea for help. At that time we were facing some deficits in our finances and the prospects were looking like the deficits would be increasing. The newsletter staff caught up with Jim Garlick, the Treasurer of the EUMA Board of Directors and asked him a few questions:

EUMA Newsletter: So, Jim, now that we have moved into 2011, how have the agency finances been holding up?

Jim: In general we have been holding our own. In November we showed a deficit of about \$16,000 between our income and our expenses but through the sacrificial gifts of our supporters, we were showing an excess of about \$15,000 which grew to about \$17,000 by the end of January. I just got the results from Cheryl for February which shows that excess dropping to about \$7,000. We will be looking at the results as a board on March 24th.

EUMA Newsletter: How has giving been tracking?

Jim: Unfortunately, we are down versus budget in every category except individuals. This chart, through February, shows what we budgeted to support our expenses versus our actual income:

<u>Giver Category</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Actual Giving</u>
Churches, Advance Specials	\$50,000	\$30,367
Individuals	\$18,500	\$32,687
Civic Groups	\$13,000	\$8,147
Special Fundraisers	\$79,400	\$69,006
Total	\$160,900	\$140,207

As you can see this lag in giving can have quite an impact on our financial stability.

EUMA Newsletter: Do you have any closing comments for our supporters?

Jim: I appreciate all that our supporters do for the organization and for our clients. Please remember us in your financial plans and giving but most importantly, remember us in your prayers. During this time of Lent when we are called to take a look at our relationship with Jesus, ask Him what you can be doing for our ministry to the homeless here in Northwest Pennsylvania.

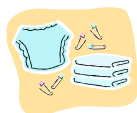
Thanks for the time, Jim Garlick, Treasurer

Two ways to donate online!
www.euma-erie.org
www.gotacubit.org



MAY 14-15, 2011
Get Involved

Last year, over 100,000 people participated in 1,000 Change the World events all around the world. Locally 46 people accomplished 11 projects for us. United Methodists are preparing now to participate in Change the World 2011 on May 14-15 – a weekend that will change lives and change the world. On May 14 we'll be offering projects that interested groups can do at The Refuge/Hope House, Liberty House, and the Rainbow Connection Thrift Store. Watch our website for details and sign up for a project. There is power in numbers. Will you be counted?



SAME OLD, SAME OLD!!!

As the revolving door of clients continues, we have some consistent critical needs. We need diapers of all sizes, baby wipes, socks for every size and gender, and underwear, underwear, underwear, especially larger adult sizes and boxer shorts for men. The Rainbow Connection also needs merchandise from your closets and house as you do your spring cleaning. Also, we need hotel size toiletries, deodorant, and lotions.

12th Annual Ride for the Refuge



Mark your calendar now for the 12th Annual Ride for the Refuge on Labor Day Monday, September 5th. Two sites are available for riding – Shades Beach in Harborcreek and Albion fairgrounds. This is one of our biggest fundraisers and again another way to get healthy. See details in the

SPA NIGHT REMAINS POPULAR

Imagine never getting a break from your children and living in a house with 8 other families and their children. Wouldn't you like to escape to a desert island and breathe? Well, with no desert island to be found, the next best thing is probably SPA night at The Refuge. Volunteer child care and a time of hot packs for tense neck muscles and cosmetics and supplies to give you a manicure, pedicure and a pretty face is the next best thing. Popcorn and conversation topping off this evening without the kids certainly makes the next day easier to face. Please consider a collection box for SPA supplies at your church.



2nd ANNUAL FALL EXTRAVAGANZA SCHEDULED



What a great event we experienced for our first Fall Extravaganza!!! Michelle Ridge was our keynote speaker. The food was great and the children's ballet was delightful. This year we are hosting the extravaganza on November 11, 2011 with focus on our Liberty House that provides housing for honorably discharged veterans. Our guest speaker will be the Honorable Michael E. Dunlavey, Retired Major General United States Army. Location and menu are in the planning stages, but mark your calendar now. We also need silent auction items for this event. Thanks to each of you who participated in our first extravaganza.

Julie Davis, Program Chairperson



BOARD OF DIRECTOR PUTS CART IN FRONT OF HORSE

My husband would just smile and say, "Again???" Cheryl was not able to attend a mandatory meeting for the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community, so I went in her place. It began with Chad asking if anybody in the room did not know him. I raised my hand and he said, "Who are you and where are you from?" I told him. He definitely commands the room. While a discussion was being held about how we were advertising the event that Highmark totally underwrites, there was silence and I started getting nervous. So, being me, I raised my hand and said, "We are publishing our newsletter and inviting all church congregations to get moving and get healthier in preparation for the walk on the peninsula on Saturday, June 11, 2011." He was all over that like a dog on a bone. Great idea! Let's all do that! So, help me get the horse and cart back in the right place. CONSIDER, forming your team that will walk to benefit the Alliance NOW and start walking. You can name your team, agree to eat healthier, get your sponsors to sign-up and move, move, move and have fun. We can also register these miles with the Golden Sneaker Program that the district has and bring the SNEAKER back to the Erie-Meadville District. I looked so organized. SSSSH!!!! Hope you will help me by organizing your team very soon. SPRING IS COMING; IT IS PART OF GOD'S PLAN!!!! Chad said there are changes on their web-site to make registering and donating easier. They've added boxes that say, "Register to Walk" or "Register to Donate".

Check it out at www.walkforahealthycommunity.org.

Gail Fees



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MINISTRIES

PROJECT HOPE
OUTREACH
 1033 E. 26th St.
 Erie, PA 16504
 814-456-5670
 On the street ministry
 to those in need

THE REFUGE
 1027 E. 26th St.
 Erie, PA 16504
 814-454-6088
 Emergency shelter
 for mom dad and
 kids

HOPE HOUSE
 1033 E. 26th St.
 Erie, PA 16504
 814-456-8073
 Long range housing
 with life skills train-
 ing for families

LIBERTY HOUSE
 550 W. 7th St.
 Erie, PA 16502
 814-874-3687
 Long range housing
 with life skills training
 for veterans

RAINBOW
CONNECTION
 1516 Buffalo Rd.
 Erie, PA 16510
 814-453-4080
 Thrift store providing
 necessities to those
 need and financial
 support to Alliance