

Good News From Our Partner Organizations



FAMILY PROMISE UPDATE: SAM'S FAMILY IS REUNITED WITH HIS WIFE IN MOLDOVA

FPCA made a donation to help Sam (pictured above with his children and family), get back to Moldova with his kids to reunite with his wife. Roslyn, the Family Promise Director, thanked all of the partner congregations for their generosity. The family received airline tickets, a car to drive them to Newark, new coats, boots and luggage, plus almost \$3,000 in cash. Sam is beyond grateful. He said his wife could not stop crying when he sent her a copy of the airline tickets. We hosted Family Promise Sept. 17-24 and Nov. 12-19. ✚



THE ALLENTOWN CROP HUNGER WALK

- Raised over \$25,000 – FPCA raised approximately \$3,000
- Above are some pictures of FPCA members during the walk

DAYBREAK PICNIC

In September, we hosted the Daybreak Picnic and the guests enjoyed great food, conversation, games and a beautiful day outside. ✚



SHERIDAN SCHOOL

- We collected 640 pencils, 355 erasers, 57 pads of sticky notes, 30 bottles of hand sanitizer and MUCH more

Food Drives

- 500+ bags were packed and distributed to the kids to be able to enjoy over the weekends
- We filled over 100 boxes with foods to supplement what they have at home over the holiday breaks ✚



FaithFULL Waters Are Flowing

LOOK, I AM DOING A NEW THING! NOW IT SPRINGS UP; DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT? I AM MAKING A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS AND STREAMS IN THE WASTELAND.

ISAIAH 43:19 †

10

Average number of times a person turns on the bathroom faucet in a day.

5

Average number of times a person flushes the toilet in a day.

17.5

Average number of gallons of water per shower.

5

Average number of times a person fills a water bottle per day.

0

Average number of miles walked to get water per day.

DON'T WE LIVE IN A LAND OF PLENTY? AT THE TURN OF A KNOB, WATER FLOWS.

The 18.1 million people who live in Malawi are rich in many things, but water is not one of them. And of the six needs identified as critical for human development, the most critical is water. To give access to good, clean water is to reduce the number of people, especially children, who die from disease or dehydration. To give access to good, clean water is to free women and girls to get an education, thereby lifting whole households out of the dust. To give access to good, clean water is to improve medical care, expand economic development opportunities, not to mention quench thirst. Loren Eiseley, science writer and anthropologist, says "If there is any magic on this planet, it is contained in water." The magic of flowing water is boundless.

No wonder the scriptures describe God's divine life as streams of water, gushing springs, quiet pools; no wonder Christ described himself as Living Water. Like Jesus, water is life-giving, life-changing, life-saving. The people of Malawi know this. When our mission partner *Villages in Partnership* asks a village to name its top priority of need, they answer "a well, we need a well." And when the villagers learn that they are to receive a borehole and get a well, "the anticipation is electric."

Just the anticipation of water stirs magic. Villagers get to work doing their part of the contract: they walk the miles to get water to create a mud pit so they can start making the 3,000 bricks that will line the well; they quarry and crush stone needed for filtration; they walk more miles to collect river sand for filtration. "Everyone in the village is expected to help," and they do, with singing. There is magic in the air. See the videos in this link to see the people in action.

villagesinpartnership.org/six-critical-needs/water/

RAISING AWARENESS

The Mission team has already begun the work, and the magic is bubbling up in them. Leslie Longyshore says, "When we began to think and learn about doing a new thing involving people's need for water, it became so much bigger than just raising money.

“

We realized we need to raise awareness about how great the need is, not only in Malawi, but also right here in Allentown.”



Children putting our first coins into the well.

According to Abigail Goldfarb, Executive Director of the Lehigh Council of Churches, "right now there are hundreds of families living out of their cars near the Jordan Creek and Lehigh River. There is no access to public water in the city of Allentown."

HOW FAR WE GO

As the Mission team researches how to bring water to neighbors not only in Malawi but also in Allentown, the vision has gotten bigger, even a bit daunting. But bringing living water to God's thirsty children is holy work, so the Holy Spirit is involved, and evident. "Our congregation is coming together in ways we haven't seen in a really long time. It's strange, but it doesn't feel overwhelming," says Leslie. Now it is not just the Mission Action Team working on this, it is also the Deacons, and Faith Formation, and the Sunday School, and youth groups – the whole congregation is mobilizing for FaithFULL Waters, our new church-wide action project. And like our partners in Malawi,

we are singing as we go, with the help of new words to "Down By the Riverside" written by Kathy Matthews for the project.

FaithFULL Waters will continue into 2024, and in the coming weeks of December you can follow the stream of waterdrops to the table in the atrium where you will find Alternate Gifts for Christmas. Cards will be available to give to someone you honor as an explanation of your donation. +

We at FPCA have a part to play in the magic. These are the numbers:

10,000

The number of dollars we are raising to help give access to clean water to people in need near and far.

1,100

the number of magic-makers in the congregation.

Or, perhaps you can generate your own set of numbers. Count the number of times your household members turn on the faucet, fill your water bottles or glasses, flush your toilet, do your laundry and wash your dishes for one day. And when you get your grand total, put that number of dollars (or coins) in the FaithFULL Waters Wishing Well, located in the Atrium. Be part of the magic the Spirit is stirring up near and far.

Support FPCA's FaithFULL Waters mission project!

faithfull
waters

Alternative Gift Giving

Give the gift of clean water access to those in need!

Honor a family member or friend!
Double your impact with matching funds!

December 3, 10, & 17 in the Atrium

Donations by check, credit card, and cash joyfully received
Decorative gift acknowledgement Cards will be available.



"Responding to the call of Jesus Christ, the mission of The Lehigh Conference of Churches is to unite communities of faith as ecumenical partners. Putting our faith into action, we minister to and advocate for those in need and encourage all to reach their full potential."

The Lehigh Conference of Churches offers numerous programs and services for people experiencing poverty, hunger, homelessness, housing instability, racial injustice and/or who are reentering society after incarceration.

Contact: Dennis Giangliulo, 484-894-2711;
woodyneg@rcn.com



Our mission with Sheridan Elementary School in Allentown is focused on children who need extra community support. Each week 40-60 children receive food bags for the weekend and boxes of food for the longer school breaks. The school also has food bags available for the summer for these children as needed. FPCA members and friends donate food, money and their time to collect, sort and pack the goods in bags and boxes throughout the year. FPCA also donates school uniforms, pajamas and school supplies during focused times each year.

Contact: Erica Simmons, Sheridan School
Counselor, 484-765-4883 or Marijo Taylor



Sixth Street Shelter

Serving Families Since 1984.

Sixth Street Shelter, a program of Community Action of the Lehigh Valley, assists families experiencing homelessness secure safe housing through family-centered services, in-house programming, and referrals to community resources. The organization also advocates to end homelessness and housing insecurity in the Lehigh Valley. Our church planted and maintains the shelter's garden. To help with the garden contact Becky Short.

Contact: Becky Short, 610-395-0903;
shortgarden@yahoo.com

The Quilting and Craft Group makes quilts to be given to each family when they arrive at the shelter. By the end of 2023, six quilts will have been donated. If you are interested in helping with the quilts contact Sharon Benson.

Contact: Sharon Benson, 610-730-9012;
sharonjbenson@gmail.com



CROP Hunger Walks are community-based walk events held in cities and towns across the United States, raising funds to support the global mission of Church World Service, a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster. FPCA participates in the walk held in Allentown. [Visit events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/event/allentownpa](https://www.crophungerwalk.org/2023/event/allentownpa) to learn more.

25%

of funds raised at the CROP Hunger Walk are returned to the host community (Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank) to support local hunger fighting efforts.

Church World Service uses the remaining 75% of funds raised by CROP Hunger Walks throughout the U.S.A. to help our neighbors in need of food and clean water due to drought, floods, and other disasters in the US and throughout the world

Contact: Dianne Kareha, 610-706-0168;
karehad@gmail.com

EACH OF YOU SHOULD USE WHATEVER GIFT YOU HAVE RECEIVED TO SERVE OTHERS, AS FAITHFUL STEWARDS OF GOD'S GRACE IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS.

1 PETER 4:10 +



Since founded in 2010, Ripple Church has had a heart for those who are lost, living on the margins, and have lost hope. The founders were Mennonites, as are many of the supporting churches today. Ripple Church meets every Sunday in the former St. Stephens Lutheran Church (1421 W. Franklin St.). Their 4 p.m. worship service is followed by a meal provided by supporting churches. FPCA provides meals 3-4 times a year. Our mission team has supported fundraising events, including a planned basket sale this fall at FPCA. The FPCA congregation has generously provided donations to the 40 Days of Giving Lenten collection. Ripple was especially grateful for women's personal hygiene items, an ongoing need. Our support is an important outreach to residents in the city of Allentown.

Contact: Anne and Ed Miller, 610-360-9405; edwinmiller@rcn.com



The only food bank in Lehigh County serving food insecure families (800+/month) Monday thru Friday, 5 days a week, 52 weeks a year. Our long-awaited goal of serving as a Client Choice Pantry in our new location is now enabling clients to shop for their family's preferences. Visit us allentownfoodbank.org or our follow us on Facebook. Search Allentown Food Bank.

Contact: Beverly Levenson, Executive Board Member, 610-481-9540; belev@verizon.net



Family Promise helps local families who are temporarily homeless due to a loss of employment or issues with their current housing. Their mission is carried out by a network of churches and community resources working together to help families build patterns that will bring long-term stability. FPCA partners with Family Promise by hosting families for weekly stays providing housing and meals four times a year.

Volunteers are needed (youth and adults) to prepare and serve meals nightly while socializing with families. Two volunteers are needed to stay overnight in case needs arise during the week. Each morning families are picked up and transported to their place of employment, schools or back to Family Promise headquarters. If you are interested in learning more about this program visit fplehighvalley.org.

Contact: Christine Connelly, 201-738-9671; christinedconnelly@gmail.com



Youth helping at Family Promise dinner – Taco night in Sept.



DayBreak picnic attendees enjoying agame.

DAYBREAK

Daybreak, a weekday drop-in center, gives people living with mental illness or physical disabilities and those struggling with addiction or HIV/AIDS, as well as the neighborhood's elderly, a place to belong. The staff teaches life skills and works with members to provide stability and help them reach their full potential. Daybreak serves three balanced meals a day during the week.

Contact: Nancy Miller, 610-739-2242; mnkm63@aol.com



Four Little Free Libraries were built and installed by Jack Brion for his Eagle Scout project. These libraries are located at our church playground, the Sixth Street Shelter Garden, The Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank, and Sheridan Elementary School. The Little Free Libraries are a place where everyone is free to take a book and share a book. Our Mission Team is the steward of these Little Free Libraries. We collect and deliver books to these libraries when needed. To learn more visit littlefreelibrary.org.

Contact: Becky Tacca, 610-390-7866; beekytacca@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW?



We delivered a check for over \$30,000 to the Allentown YMCA Warming Station – the money raised from Par for the Cause.



This year The Quilt and Craft Group were able to provide hand knit hats for all 1305 first graders in the Allentown Public Schools system! This is the first year we have been able to reach out to all the schools.



Our FPCA volunteers helping at the Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank. Many helping hands and welcoming faces come every Tuesday to help out.

Did you know that 7 hand knit hats and 6 scarves were also donated to the Sixth Street Shelter? The Quilt and Craft group also made and donated 537 Prayer Squares for Pride Fest.



Members Kathy and Lou Spencer enjoy giving out special hats to Dodd Elementary students.



Family Promise volunteers helped make the 1 year birthday a fun celebration. The volunteers made sure all of the kids had something fun to play with.

DECEMBER

Christmas box delivery to Sheridan School Timing TBD but will be late morning before lunch, need 10-15 cars to deliver boxes – Dec. 11

Christmas gift wrapping at Sheridan School, need 700+ gifts wrapped that have been donated by community businesses. You can come for an hour or stay as long as you can. Please bring scissors and tape. Wrapping paper provided. – Dec. 18-20; 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Sheridan School Festival, need volunteers to be Santa's helpers in handing out gifts and running games for the children at the festival. Do not need to stay entire time. – Dec. 21; 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Contact Marijo Taylor at the5taylor@msn.com for more details if you would like to help.

JANUARY

Daybreak Dinners – Jan. 5, 19
Ripple Dinner – Jan. 14

FEBRUARY

Daybreak Dinners – Feb. 2, 16

Family Promise – Feb. 4-11

Special Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing – Feb. 14-March 31

The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People – all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

MARCH

Daybreak Dinners – March 1, 15

Lenten Collection to Help our Mission Ministries – TBD

APRIL

Daybreak Dinners – April 5, 19

Ripple Dinner – April 14

Special Offering: Pentecost – April 1-May 19

A gift to the Pentecost Offering helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and also address the needs of at-risk children. 40% of the Pentecost offering can be retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support children-at-risk, youth, and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DRIVES

FPCA Quilt & Craft Group

Christmas Craft Sale

Sunday
December 3




8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in the Library

Christmas ornaments, household items, twin size quilts, recycled cards, attic treasures and much more! All proceeds benefit the Allentown Area Ecumenical Foodbank & the 6th Street Shelter.

Reverse *Advent Calendar*

Each day add an item to a box, and say a prayer inspired by the brief prompt. Bring the boxes to the church on **December 17**. All items will go to the **Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank** before Christmas.

Pick up a Reverse Advent Calendar poster in the Narthex for a list of donation items, or scan the QR Code.

This Mission Moments Newsletter was brought to you by the Mission Ministry team with special assistance from Becky Tacca, Christine Connelly, Kathy Matthews, Kerry Lester-Pidcock, Karen Ensley and Erin Parrish (designer).
If you would like to help with future newsletters (even if you are not part of the Mission team), we would love your help.



Mission Moments

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