

EAST DISTRICT

E-ALERT FOR

November 16, 2017

Editorial Policy of the East District E-Alert:

Generally, articles will appear for only one week, and, if pertinent, will be posted on the East District website (<http://www.epaumc.org/districts/east>). Or, if you are on the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference website (<http://www.epaumc.org>), there is a link to the East District website at the bottom of any page. Previously published E-Alerts will be posted to the East District website.

This E-Alert is sent to Pastors and Church Offices on the East District and to lay people who have requested being added to the distribution list. Feel free to clip or copy any article for your church's bulletin or newsletter unless permission has specifically been granted to the East District for publication, in which case, request permission from the source. The District Office requests that pastors forward the E-Alert to church leaders and congregants who might find the E-Alert helpful and informative.

IMPORTANT HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION FOR 2018

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Health Insurance Changes Are Coming

Register [here](#) for this Saturday's (November 18) session on the East District at 10 am at St. Andrews UMC in Warminster (999 York Road, Warminster 18974) to learn more about the 2018 plan. The session is for all active clergy and lay health insurance plan participants. (This plan does not apply to retired clergy who are in the Conference plan for retirees.)

Benefits Officer Jo Fielding reports that the Conference will change from Independence Blue Cross to Aetna as its insurance carrier, offering three plan choices: 2 silver and 1 bronze. **All clergy and lay employees participating in coverage should attend Open Enrollment meetings to learn more and ask questions about insurance coverage for 2018.** Note that Open Enrollment is only for re-enrollment or first-time enrollment for ¾-time and full-time clergy, and full-time employees. **Open enrollment began yesterday (November 15) and must be completed by Dec.1, 2017.**

Senior pastors should make sure that Lay Employees receive this information. Registration is appreciated for planning purposes.

EAST DISTRICT MINISTERIUM CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST

District Superintendent Tracy Bass invites pastors and deacons to a **Christmas Breakfast** on Tuesday, December 5 at 9 am at Jarrettown UMC, 1460 Limekiln Pike (Route 152), Dresher PA 19025. Please RSVP to the District office by emailing your attendance or regrets to cakrall@epaumc.org by Friday, December 1 to help those planning breakfast to know how many to expect.

2017 JOURNAL

The 2017 Journal is now available online. Limited sections are available in the public resources section (<https://www.epaumc.org/resources/conference-journal/>) as well as the link to order copies. The full online journal is available in the logged-in section of the website

(<https://www.epaumc.org/directory/>). The username for East District users is **east_district** and the password is **2017Jour^al**.

NEXT VIGIL TO END GUN VIOLENCE – WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

The Philadelphia Chapter of **Heeding God’s Call** had its first renewed Northeast Vigil to End Gun Violence yesterday afternoon (see photo), and it was highly successful. The sidewalk in front of Northeast Regional Library is a very visible and trafficked location. In an hour the group received 130 horn honks for its sign, “Honk to End Gun Violence,” handed out as many Heeding flyers as they had, and could have handed out more. With all the gun violence incidents in the news (including a lockdown at Wilson Junior High because of a gun being found outside the school), people were ready for this gun violence prevention message.



The people in the picture, left to right, are Pete and Jenny Duskey, Jan Chanin, Marion Brown, and Harvey Chanin. Dave Brown took the picture.

Most of the flyers went to students from Northeast High or Wilson Junior High who had just been dismissed. A smile and, "We're working to end gun violence," and the young people (and adults going by) were eager to take the flyer. And the 130 horn honks included a number from pedestrians who made honking sounds as they went by.

The Philadelphia Chapter of HGC is excited about going back next month, on **Wednesday, Dec. 13**, during holiday shopping season. And, with more people, they plan to have signs on both sides of Cottman Avenue, and have some of participants ready to engage passers-by in conversation and sign them up with the Philadelphia Chapter of **Heeding God’s Call**.

Save the date! And plan to join them on Dec. 13 at **3:00 pm** outside the **Free Library of Philadelphia Northeast Regional** branch. Get in the picture!

ENGAGING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN LOWER BUCKS COUNTY

Advocates for Homeless & Those in Need (AHTN) Missions is currently looking for **volunteers** for the upcoming **Code Blue season that starts December 1st** and for its other missions that run all year long. To make its mission a success, help is needed.

Advocates for Homeless & Those in Need (AHTN) Missions:

Code Blue - Transportation to church shelter from December 1 - March 31 when temperatures plummet. We need 18 volunteers for every night that we call a Code Blue in Lower Bucks County.

Wheels to Meals - Transportation to 35 different houses of worship for a hot meal and socialization, almost every day of the year. We need Bus Drivers (non CDL) and Bus Attendants to help with this mission.

Rejuvenation Station - Transportation to a local church for a hot shower, haircut & shave, lunch and clothing, once a month. We need Bus Drivers (non CDL) and Bus Attendants to help with this mission.

Those in Need (TIN) - Resources and funding for a variety of needs for those who are on the verge of homelessness. We need volunteers to drive those in need to their mental health or doctors' appointments; drug court; food pantries; YMCA for a shower; thrift store; or the laundromat.

Volunteer Orientation Dates:

Sunday, December 3, 2017 – 2 pm

Thursday, January 4, 2018 – 7 pm

Wednesday, January 24, 2018 – 7 pm

Sign up attend a Sign up attend a Volunteer Orientation Volunteer Orientation

AHTN staff, volunteers, and Board members are busy trying to secure additional funding to **#SaveOurMissions**. They are in need of additional funding so they can keep their four missions running for the homeless and those in need in Lower Bucks County.

#SaveOurMissions by DONATING

DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY

Disability Awareness Sunday is set for **Sunday, January 14, 2018** in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. This is the same day as Human Relations Sunday, which pairs well with Disability Awareness Sunday as many people with disabilities are often on the margins. Alternatively, Disability Awareness Sunday may be celebrated on any other Sunday of the year that will work for particular churches. Click [here](#) for worship resources for Disability Awareness Sunday.

BISHOP CALLS FOR ACTION AGAINST PENNSYLVANIA GAMBLING EXPANSION

On October 26, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives voted 109-72 to approve a significant expansion of gambling in our state, House Bill 271. The bill was approved by the state Senate the previous day. Four days after the House action, Governor Tom Wolf signed the legislation into law. The legislation was quickly moved, taking only 18 hours between its introduction and its passage in the House. In fact, lawmakers had only two hours to read the massive 939-page bill. This stealthy rush through the General Assembly minimized scrutiny. Obviously, public input was thwarted.

This new law will create 10 mini-casinos in regions without a casino, allow some truck stops to operate video gaming terminals, regulate fantasy sports and online gambling, legalize

online gambling portals at casinos and airports, permit the state lottery to sell tickets and offer games online, and legalize sports betting (if Congress allows it nationally). Proponents of this legislation hope to open gambling to new markets, especially younger players.

Only Nevada exceeds Pennsylvania in commercial casino revenues. This law marks the biggest expansion of gambling in the state, since it first legalized casinos more than a decade ago. Pennsylvania now becomes the fourth state with internet gambling and the first to allow both casino and lottery games online.

But, this is not the end, there is still a way that the public can respond. A provision in the new law allows municipalities to opt out of this gambling expansion. **Local governments may pass a resolution prohibiting a "mini-casino" within the boundaries of their municipality. Such a resolution must be sent to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board by December 31, 2017.** County governments have the same option regarding truck stop gambling. Many lawmakers, who voted against this legislation, are recommending such action. There is not much time.

The UM Social Principles state, *"Gambling is a menace to society, deadly to the best interests of moral, social, economic, and spiritual life, [and] destructive of good government... As an act of faith and concern, Christians should abstain from gambling and should strive to minister to those victimized by the Practice... Organized and commercial gambling is a threat to business, breeds crime and poverty, and is destructive to the interests of good government. It encourages the belief that work is unimportant, that money can solve all our problems, and that greed is the norm for achievement. It serves as a "regressive tax" on those with lower income. In summary, gambling is bad economics; gambling is bad public policy and gambling does not improve the quality of life."*

As bishop of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, I strongly urge members, clergy and conference agencies to act during this limited response period. Prayer followed by meaningful and effective action is an exercise of faith. We ask that you contact your local government councils, as soon as possible. Ask when the next meeting will be and ask to have this mini-casino prohibition put on their agenda. Plan for residents to attend these meetings and be ready to support this resolution.

Sincerely,
Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

PASTORS COOK

This year, members of the Cabinet will travel in two teams to the Congo and Puerto Rico. District Superintendent Tracy Bass will be traveling with the team of Superintendents travelling to Puerto Rico.

To help raise funds for the relief effort, the East District will host a "Pastors Cook" event (samplings of dishes prepared by pastors around the district. The date will be January 20th (not the 13th) from Noon until 3 pm.

Interested pastors should contact the District Office as soon as possible.

CHRIST SERVANT MINISTER FORMS

Following charge conference, a copy of completed and signed Christ Servant Minister (CSM) forms should be provided to the District Superintendent, one is to be retained at the church by the Church/Charge Conference Secretary (at the local church), and one is to be retained by the CSM for his/her own records. After the charge conference, a copy is to be mailed to the East District CSM

Director, Ms. Ruth Portzline, 216 Eagle Court, Jamison PA 18929 and one to the Conference CSM Director, Mr. George Hollich, 212 Orchard Drive, Palmyra PA 17078. Please do not send the form to the Rev. Lloyd Speer, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Secretary.

CONFERENCE COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

The East District is seeking to find someone interested in being part of the Conference Communications Ministry to do some reporting and/or referencing with John Coleman, Director, Conference Office of Communications. If you know of someone willing to serve the East District in such a capacity, please have him or her call (215-878-4607) or email (cakrall@epaumc.org) the East District office.

DISTRICT MISSION PROJECT AT ST. JAMES UPDATE

There are a number of painting projects for which volunteers are needed at St. James UMC (199 E. Tabor Rd., Philadelphia 19120). Also, there is a desire to convert a space into a café. The sanctuary needs to have some pew removed and new carpeting installed. New lighting is needed throughout the facility. A time can be scheduled to accommodate teams interested in any of this work! Call (215-878-4607) or email (cakrall@epaumc.org) the district office to discuss possibilities.

SAVE THESE DATES

- **Saturday, November 18, 2017:** Open Enrollment Session on the East District for 2018 Health Insurance, **10 am**, at **St. Andrews** in **Warminster** (999 York Rd., 19874).
- **Tuesday, November 28** is UMC #GivingTuesday.
- **Friday, December 1-Saturday, December 2, 2017:** Christ Servant Ministry courses at St. John's UMC, 820 Almshouse Rd., Ivyland 18974.
- **Tuesday, December 5, 2017** at **9 am** – East District Ministerium Christmas Breakfast at **Jarrettown UMC**, 1460 Limekiln Pike, Dresher PA 19025.
- **Saturday, January 20, 2018** from **noon-3pm** – Pastors' Cook
- **Saturday, May 5, 2018** – encore presentation of **Walking With: The African American Experience** – East District Conversation on Race Relations. More information will be forthcoming. This event is designed for clergy and laity who missed this East District retreat event held in January 2017 at Washington Crossing UMC.
- **Sunday, May 6, 2018** – East District Pre-Annual Conference gathering, 3 pm-5pm, Lighthouse Fellowship UMC, 137 N. Easton Rd., Glenside 19038. Parking available in lot across the street at St. Luke's Roman Catholic Church. Lighthouse Fellowship is located two blocks from Septa's Regional Rail, **Glenside** station.

CHRIST SERVANT MINISTRY (CSM) CLASSES TO BE OFFERED AT IVYLAND: ST. JOHN'S

Two CSM classes (one Basic, one Advanced) are being offered from **Friday, December 1 through Saturday, December 2, 2017** at St. John's UMC in Ivyland (820 Almshouse Rd. 18974). The instructor for the Basic Course, "Introduction to Christ Servant Ministries" is Judy Ehninger. The Advanced Course, "Speaking Course 1" will be taught by the Rev. Harold Burkett. The registration fee is \$35. Attached to this E-Alert are the registration forms. Completed registrations and checks must be received by **November 17** to allow time for mailing of homework materials with adequate time to prepare.

CONNECT YOUR PASSION WITH GOD'S MISSION

SAVE THE DATE! UMC #GivingTuesday is November 28.

Thomas Kemper, General Secretary, General Board of Missions, invites you to join United Methodists around the world to support Global Ministries missionaries and Advance projects on UMC #GivingTuesday Nov. 28.

Frederick Buechner once described "calling" as the place "where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." One of the great things about The Advance is that it allows you to invest your resources where your passion answers specific needs in the world.

The UMC #GivingTuesday theme this year is "Connect Your Passion with God's Mission." **One hundred percent of the gifts made online through [The Advance](#) goes to the missionary or project of the donor's choice.**

In 2016, more than 2,550 people from 19 countries gave gifts of more than \$850,000 toward missionary support and Advance projects. The countries or territories represented included Argentina, Austria, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Guam, Ireland, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, the Philippines, Russia, South Korea, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This was truly a global effort.

Thank you for your generous gifts through The Advance, the designated giving channel of The United Methodist Church.

This year's impact areas are:

- Food and Agriculture
- Church Development
- Disaster Response and Relief
- Education
- Health
- Economic Empowerment
- Social Justice
- WASH/Water and Sanitation
- Women and Children
- Mission Personnel

Now is a great time to start thinking about how you want to connect your passion to God's mission on Nov. 28. Visit umcmission.org/give to learn more about missionaries and projects. Your gift on UMC #GivingTuesday will help bring hope and healing to a world in need.

Please share this information with your friends, family, and church members.

CALL TO THE CHURCH TO OBSERVE GLOBAL MIGRATION SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2017

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 on 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 on 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 No. 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 3rd.

Jesus said, "When you welcome the sojourner, 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

Watch "The Migrant" animated video at this [link](#).

POSSIBLE CHARITABLE EVENTS WITH SENATOR BOB CASEY

Senator Bob Casey's staff is inquiring if there are congregations in the Philadelphia area that will be hosting charitable events, e.g., coat drives, serving meals, etc, during December. If so, the Senator might be interested in participating to help raise awareness of the need for the federal government to be stepping up in this area, not cutting back. Please be in touch with Joy Bergey at joybergey@gmail.com or 215-313-1311 if a congregation is interested and she will make the connection to Senator Casey's staff.

TAUFSCHHEIN (BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE) IN THE PA DUTCH FRAKTUR FOLK ART STYLE

The Rev. Dr. Colleen G. Kristula, East District Extension Minister, serves as Chaplain at The Lutheran Home at Topton, located within the Lutheran district where a baptismal certificate in the Pennsylvania Dutch Fraktur folk art style has been commissioned by the East Berks Mission District (Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) in commemoration of the 500th anniversary year of the Reformation. More information about the certificate can be found on the attachment to this E-Alert email.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Mrs. Hope Henry, beloved wife of **Rev. Clyde W. Henry**, will be eulogized by Bishop F. Herbert Skeete on **Saturday, November 18 at 10 am at Camphor Memorial Church**, 5620 Wyalusing Avenue,

Philadelphia, PA 19131. The viewings for Mrs. Henry will take place on November 17 from 6-9 pm and November 18 from 8:30 am-10 am. Rev. Henry served Camphor Memorial from 1985-1991.

Pray for **Mr. John Goshert** as he recovers from a heart procedure. John is the husband of **the Rev. Pat Goshert**, pastor at First UMC in Pottstown. Well wishes may be sent to him at 601 Wellington Ave., Reading PA 19609.

Pray for **the Rev. Tim Thomson-Hohl**, pastor of Ardmore UMC, whose mother, **Joan V. Hohl**, passed away on October 25. Condolences may be sent to him at 525 Parkview Drive, Wynnewood PA 19096.

Pray for **Ben Stippich**, son of the Rev. Deborah Gildart-Hanks, pastor of Mont Clare: Otterbein) and the Rev. Rob Stippich, pastor of New Holland: Evangelical), as he struggles with serious consequences of Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS). Ben was born when his parents were both serving Levittown: Emilie UMC.

Pray for **the Rev. Nancy Ross**, Pastor, Pottstown: Salem, as she continues to recover from a procedure. Pray also for Pastor Jack Ross (Radnor UMC) and their family. Mail well wishes to Nancy at 3501 Huey Ave., Drexel Hill PA 19026. Rev. Ross' recommending church is Scottsville on the East District.

We received word of the death of **Mrs. Juanita Sparrow**, who passed away on October 20. She was the surviving spouse of The Rev. Arthur Sparrow, retired Associated Member of EPA Conference. Mrs. Sparrow is survived by daughters Sandra Sprowl and Juanita Julia Gilmore and son Arthur Sparrow. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to the surviving family c/o Mrs. Sandra Sprowl, 7225 Swiftrock Ridge Terrace, Chesterfield VA 23838. A funeral service was held at Mother African Zoar UMC in Philadelphia. Rev. Sparrow served Phila.: Sayers Memorial UMC in the Eastern PA Conference as well a church in the Peninsula Delaware Conference.