OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION IN SOUTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA WWW.PSEC.ORG

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Communitas

PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE
1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100, Pottstown, PA 19464
484-949-8774

December 4, 2016

The Power of Hope and How Our Faith Makes A Difference

The theme of this year's Ventures retreat, held in late September, was **The Power of Hope and How Our Faith Makes A Difference**. One of the presenters was Rev. Karl Jones, PSE Conference Disaster Coordinator. He explained that there are many levels to disaster relief and that the United Church of Christ's primary involvement with the clean-up would probably not happen until 3 or 4 weeks after the disaster, probably long after the disaster had ceased to be the main story in the news. At the time of the retreat, our disaster ministries had provided help in 5 different locations in 2016.

An important element of the Conference's disaster ministries is clean-up as well as giving hope to those whose lives have been disrupted. In addition to personnel, they bring buckets, shovels, cleaning supplies, tools, nails, lumber, etc., all items to try to help those who were affected rebuild their lives.

Hurricane Matthew wasn't even on the horizon at the time of the retreat but it would be shortly. It held the news for several days and then went to the "back page." A member of St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Kutztown, who had attended Ventures, remembered the words of Pastor Jones. Just because it was no longer on the front page didn't mean that help was not still needed. So a plea was made to the congregation for help. October 23 was set as the day to receive a special offering for disaster ministries and a check for $425 has been given to the Conference as a result of the generosity of this congregation.

Disaster Ministries
United Church of Christ
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference

Getting to Know :

Emanuel UCC

2628 Fillmore St., Philadelphia, PA 19137

Emanuel (Bridesburg) United Church of Christ was founded by German and Swiss immigrants who settled in the heavily-industrialized borough of Bridesburg, which in 1854 had been annexed to the City of Philadelphia. A nucleus of 34 immigrants of the Reformed faith gathered in 1857. For four years the group was served by traveling German Lutheran and Methodist pastors. Under the leadership of the Rev. J. G. Neuber, Emanuel's first German Reformed pastor, Emanuel Church was formally organized in 1861. Our church laid the cornerstone of our present building in 1863, and the building was dedicated in June, 1864. Also in 1863, under the leadership of then-pastor the Rev. Emanuel Boehringer, a home for children orphaned by the Civil War was established under the name of "The Orphans' Home of the Shepherd of the Lambs." This orphanage, located originally in South Philadelphia and then for several years in Bridesburg, was relocated to Womelsdorf, PA in 1870, and is now known as Bethany Children's Home. Our congregation values our historic connection to Bethany Children's Home, and the relationship between Emanuel Church and Bethany Children's Home continues to this day.

Emanuel Church recently celebrated our 155th anniversary. We offer a "Dinner Church" on the first Wednesday of each month, and our ladies organize a "Women's Wednesday" program on the third Wednesday of each month. We are a counseling site for the Second Chance Kinship Network, which helps at-risk children and youth by arranging kinship care. We have an annual "Backpack Sunday" before the start of each school year, and donate school supplies to Bridesburg Elementary School. Our fall and spring auctions raise funds for the maintenance of our cemetery. We regularly respond to genealogical inquiries about our cemetery, and through those inquiries have learned that our small church has family connections from coast to coast.

Prayers are requested for Emanuel (Bridesburg) UCC in Philadelphia and Rev. David T. Reppert.