

T O G E T H E R

Working Together...United in Faith

Volume 2019.2

...Feeding Body, Mind + Spirit Since 1975

Spring 2019

VISION STATEMENT

The Vision of Inter-Church
Ministries of Erie County is
to:

WITNESS to Christ through
unity among Christian
churches;

ENCOURAGE interfaith
cooperation;

SHARE resources with those
in need; and to

DO nothing separately that
can be done better
TOGETHER.

(adopted 2/19/04)

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Chaos or Community: A Look from Inside.....

In 1967 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote his final book before his death, Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community? It was written amid the backdrop of a changing America in which old norms were being torn down and a new era seemed to be in formation. From this turmoil, a new Phoenix was arising from the ashes fomented by racism, sectionalism, classism, injustice and inequality. All those things that kept this magnificent bird from taking flight were being thrown from the overloaded cargo area that was so weighted that flight could not occur.

This was the launching pad from which seemed to be the culmination of Amos' prophecy, *"But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream."* It seemed as if the Christian community would become a vibrant participant and a proponent of this banner.

This community or chaos theme is not much different from what followed after the trial of Christ where religious leaders believed that they were serving the community because of their definitive roles as the perpetual overseers of religious thought and adherence. In other words, community consisted of a staunch set of rules that became the progenitor of the chaos that soon ensued. It's rather ironic that out of those pre-set conditions conducive to chaos arose the foundations of the beloved community.

If we move forward to today's scenario, it is one that seems to remind us of the old. Do the decisions we make on a personal level as Christians and on a collective level as the Church lead us to the fork in the road where the two paths are labeled "community" and the other "chaos"? And more importantly, which path do we take?

It is my belief that the Church is at a crucial period in its history. Will it stand as the lighthouse on the hill that gives light to all or will it be the salt that has lost its savor and is trodden underfoot. We must stand as the church triumphant or become the church decimated. Decimation cannot be an alternative because *"upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*

In one of the most crucial times in our nation's history, President Lincoln spoke these words, *"Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."* Individually and collectively, what does it mean to be on God's side? I believe that *we are admonished by the word of God not to be merely hearers of the word but more so...doers. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act – they will be blessed in their doing.* (James 1: 22-25)

Yours in Christ...

Johnny C. Johnson, President, Inter-Church Ministries



Coats for Kids 2018-19

A Project of Inter-Church Ministries
in Partnership with
Bethany Outreach Center
254 E. 10th Street, Erie PA

Well over 1300 items – coats, jackets, mittens, hats, scarves, snow pants, sweatshirts, boots, sweaters and more were collected during the fall/winter of 2018 – 19! Bethany Executive Director Mabel Howard, told me that *‘each and every family member served thru Bethany Outreach Center this winter received a coat!’*

The outpouring of support for ICM's Coats for Kids Project was amazing as always...and special thanks goes to these congregations, individuals, organizations, businesses + more:

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Geriatric Social Workers
Wayside Presbyterian Church
Lakewood United Methodist Church
First Covenant Pre-School
St. John's Lutheran Church in Girard
Our Lady of Peace Church
Erie BayHawks "Season of Giving"
Our Lady of Mercy Church
Crossroads Community Baptist Church
Widget Financial
Marty @ Elk Valley Manor
Marlene @ Parkside at Westminster
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Zurn Industries
Albion New Inmate Visionary Organization

Please know that the folks listed above kept me posted with their results and progress. If you or your group also supported the project this season, but your name is not included in the above list, please accept my apologies and heartfelt gratitude.

Kudos to ALL for your support and prayers!

Diane Edwards, ICM Director



GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.

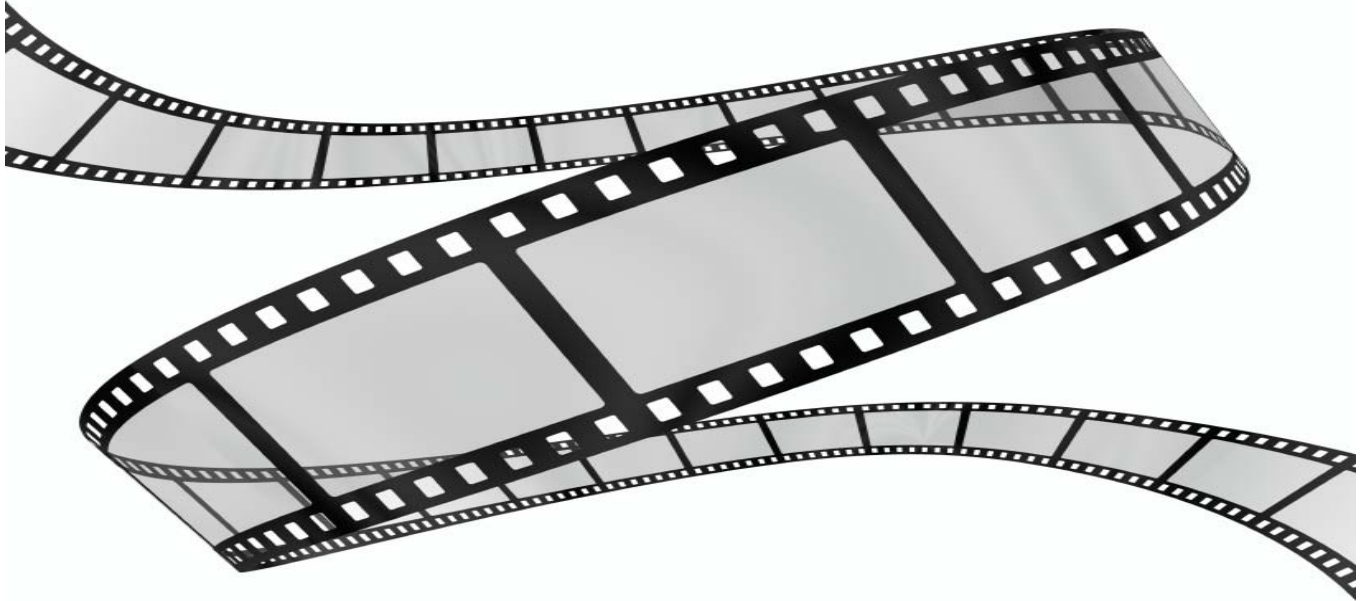
Mikka McCracken, Director, ELCA World Hunger Planning and Engagement announces:

"Inter-Church Ministries has been awarded a 2019 ELCA World Hunger/Domestic Hunger Grant Award for 2019 – 2021 to address hunger and poverty in the community through transformative, holistic and integrated ministry....With the whole church, we give thanks for your creative and courageous service with your neighbors and neighborhood. We look forward to walking with you through the life of this grant and beyond."

Inter-Church Ministries is "one of 77 ministry partners across this church working toward a just world where all are fed with the support of these grants.... May your ministry continue to bear gifts of hope and new life to those with whom you serve – toward strong communities where all may be fed."

ICM's 2019 Domestic Hunger Grant award in the amount of \$18,000 will be received over a 3-year grant period and will benefit ICM's overall ministry and efforts... through our voucher program, our financial literacy empowerment program, our coats for kids project... and more.

“Facing Race thru Film” Series The Conversation Continues



Inter-Church Ministries' March 30th “Facing Race thru Film” Conference has now morphed into a **30th of the Month Series** to continue the conversation, using film as a vehicle to engage in conversations about structural racism, both past and present. Participants will explore the power of story-telling thru cinema to foster dialogue and ignite transformation toward healing. For each month in the series, a ‘film of the month’ will be selected... All are welcome to watch the ‘film of the month’ sometime during the month – *on your own time and dime* – and then we’ll gather on the 30th of that month for conversation and discussion.

For May 2019, the Film of the Month is: “FENCES”

From the DVD cover: “One of the best films of the year (2016), award-winning film “Fences” features Denzel Washington and Viola Davis in the film adaptation of August Wilson’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play. Set in 1950’s Pittsburgh, the film takes a passionate look at former Negro-league baseball player Troy Maxson (Washington) as he fights to provide for those he loves in a world that threatens to push him down. Washington’s directorial triumph “connects with people on a deep, emotional level” and pulses with the universal truths of love and forgiveness, despite what lies beyond your own fence.”

Film Discussion Group Will Meet On Thursday, May 30, 2019 – 4 to 5:30 pm

Venue: First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, 250 W. 7th St., Erie

Note: There are 4 copies of “FENCES” available at the Erie County Public Library; it is available ‘free’ as an Amazon prime video; and/or is available thru your favorite video source.

For more info., please call (814) 454-2411 or icm@icmeriecounty.com



Greater Erie Area Habitat for Humanity
Summer 2019 Faith Build

This summer marks the 10th Anniversary of the Habitat summer 'faith' builds. During that time, church volunteers have built nine new houses and renovated two others, all of which have become homes for families in our area.

This summer's build begins in early June. It is being called: **"The House that Courage Built."**

As we did last year, the 'Courage' house will be a rehab, taking an existing home and adding another bedroom and bathroom to accommodate the family involved.

Because this is a somewhat smaller project, there won't be quite as many volunteer slots available. Work will begin on Tuesday, June 4th and conclude on Saturday, June 22nd. We will work Tuesday through Saturday each of those three weeks. During week 1, volunteers will work a full day (7:30 am to 4:30 pm). During weeks 2 and 3, volunteers will work just a half day (7:30 am to noon), with the exception of both Saturdays, which are again full-day slots.

If your church – whether as a group or just as one or two individuals – would like to participate, please contact Nancy Milkowski at the Habitat Office (454-7025) to sign up.

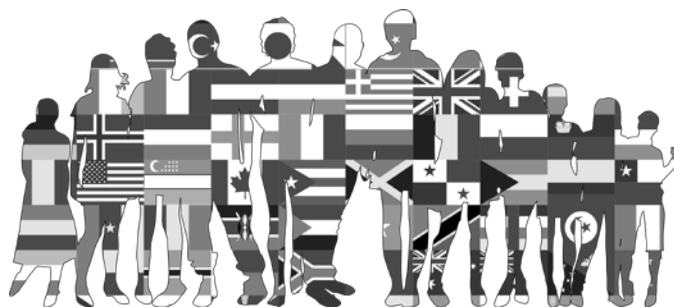
Save the Date...Save the Date...Save the Date
Wayside Fall Convocation 2019
October 12th, 2019

Debby Irving, author of Waking Up White, will offer a day long series of conversations on Saturday, October 12th. Co-sponsored by the Lake Erie Presbyterian Women.

www.wayside-erie.org

One Table: Erie's Inter-faith and Multi-Cultural Bridge Builders' Gathering

"The American Experience – International Students in Erie Share Joys and Challenges"



June 11, 2019 4 pm to 5:30 pm

Venue: First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, 250 W. 7th Street, Erie PA

Join your friends at One Table... Director of Community Engagement at First Covenant – Seph Kumer – has invited a number of international students from Gannon University to share some of their personal experiences as young people living and studying in Erie, PA... Come to hear their stories, their joys and challenges and learn something new about Erie and the world!

There will be time for conversation with each other and with the students.

Light refreshments will be served.

Mission Statement: One Table is committed to building bridges of respect, cooperation and understanding within, across and among diverse cultures, faiths, and belief systems in Erie's communities and neighborhoods.

Save the Date...Save the Date...Save the Date

ERIE COUNTY CROP HUNGER WALK
September 15, 2019 2:00 pm
Presque Isle State Park

Coordinators' Day for Church Team Leaders is set for Thursday, August 1 from 4 to 6 pm at Glenwood United Methodist Church, 2931 Myrtle

Integrity...Responsibility...Moral Leadership

You are cordially invited to attend Inter-Church Ministries'

2019 Leadership Breakfast

To Honor our 2019 Scholarship Recipients

**Please join us in the Parlor on
Wednesday, June 12, 2019
8 am to 9 am**

**First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant
250 W. 7th Street, Erie, PA 16501**

A freewill offering to benefit the Moral Leadership Scholarship Fund will be gladly received as investment in the next generation of leaders in our community.

Please RSVP by calling Diane Edwards at ICM: (814) 454-2411

Sponsored in part by: Thrivent Financial...#Living Generously

Established in 2015 in celebration of ICM's 40th Anniversary (1975–2015) and in honor of Sister Mary Louis Eichenlaub, OSB, Inter-Church Ministries' Moral Leadership Awards are to provide **educational scholarships to graduating high school seniors** in Erie County, PA who have demonstrated leadership qualities, including: integrity, responsibility, dependability, character, positive attitude, moral leadership and service with a heart.

Unlike 'celebrity' leadership that stresses individual heroism, achievement or success, applicants must exhibit and embrace the concept of moral leadership involving service to others on behalf of the common good in their schools, their neighborhoods and/or their community.

For more information about the scholarship program, please call the ICM office at:
(814) 454-2411 or by email: icm@icmeriecounty.com



I am unable to attend the 2019 Leadership Breakfast, but I believe in young people and would like to invest in the next generation of leaders in our community by making a contribution to ICM's Scholarship Fund....

Donations may be mailed to:
Inter-Church Ministries, 250 W. 7th Street, Erie, PA 16501
or given online via PayPal @: www.icmeriecounty.com/donate/



"Together" is ordinarily published quarterly by Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County, 250 W. 7th St., Erie, PA 16501 and is provided free to our supporters and friends. Publication of events in "Together" does not indicate specific endorsement of an organization or event, and is strictly of an informative nature.



Be inspired to be the change!

Stories put flesh on the bones of our ideas and dreams...our memories, thoughts and inspiration. The Bible is full of stories of real people meeting the challenges of daily life, rising to the occasion...helped along the narrow way by God and neighbor.

We want to hear your stories...stories of Compassion and Community...stories inspired by the notion of Common good... core values of faith which drive, lead and inspire the ministry of Inter-Church Ministries every day.

Please take a moment and share one of your favorite stories about Inter-Church Ministries. Maybe it was a program you attended that meant a lot to you...or you were helped through one of our ministries... or you are eager to share your story of faith that was nurtured in some small way through the work of Inter-Church Ministries...whatever your story, we want to hear from you!

One of my favorite stories about Inter-Church Ministries....

Please include your name and contact information and send your stories to my attention at Inter-Church Ministries, 250 W. 7th Street, Erie, PA 16501 or by email to icm@icmeriecounty.com. Faithfully yours...Diane Edwards

Interested in receiving this newsletter by email?
You can help us Go Green and Save Green\$!

Provide Your Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____
Your email Address: _____

Mail your info to: Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County at 250 W. 7th Street, Erie, PA 16501
Or call (813) 454-2411 or email ICM at icm@icmeriecounty.com

The Mission of Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County is to be a network of Christian churches committed to cooperation for the greater good of the religious community and people of Erie County, Pennsylvania.