



**Inter-Church
Ministries**
of Erie County

T O G E T H E R

Working Together...United in Faith

Volume 2019.1 ...*Feeding Body, Mind + Spirit Since 1975* Winter 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)

A More Excellent Way

This is the initial issue of the Inter-Church Ministries Newsletter for the New Year 2019. We have a lot to look back on and hopefully more to look forward to. The past year saw national and world events rise to the forefront of our everyday lives and impacted us in many ways. We saw hatred erupt and spew like an active volcano, we saw the marginalizing of people of color, we saw children living in cages, we saw the separation of families...that as Christians may have caused us to question who we are and what actually do we stand for?

We may ask ourselves are our lives aligned and guided by Christian teachings and values? What role do we play, or should we play in our effort to impact and change the world for Christ?

The Apostle Paul alludes to pressing forward in a new way, being neither constrained or restrained in our efforts when he says, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". (Philippians 3:13-14) We must never get weary in well doing. Our Christian mandate compels us to look at others with the eyes and heart of Christ. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are ambassadors for Christ, in essence the life and the works of Christ should be manifest in us.

Many times, we are in doubt, confused, uncertain and sometimes feel hopeless. But it is the Christ in us, the hope of glory that allows us to stand strong. It is the Church's role to be that light in a dark place, that city on a hill that emits a brightness that mankind cannot only see but want to bask in and become a part of. Today we may be asking the question that Thomas asked, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" There was a prophetic answer to Thomas' question, Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life."

As we navigate through the world that we live in, each day bringing situations and circumstances that try us as individuals and the Church collectively, fogging our minds, obscuring our vision, we look to the solutions in the answer given by Christ, "I am the way and the truth and the life."

Be assured as the Apostle Paul says in Romans 8:37-39, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

We are the Church triumphant!

Yours in Christ...

Johnny C. Johnson, President, Inter-Church Ministries

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R-Church
Matters
Lenten
Worship
Services
2019

“Reconciling and Restoring the
Wounded Body of Christ” (Isaiah 1)
Community Missionary Baptist Church
1001 German St., Erie PA
7:00 pm Services

Preachers/Exposition of Theme:

- 3.06.19 Harry Euell/Parris Baker
3.13.19 Anita McCoy/Parris Baker
3.20.19 John Bowers
3.27.19 D. Cook/Kevin Nelson
4.03.19 Curtis Jones Sr.
4.10.19 Gloria Rhodes
4.17.19 Katie White/Robert Lewis
4.18.19 Anthony Harris

Exposition Theme: Matt Judd/Charles Mock

Sermons will be dedicated to lifting up
Repentance. Reconciliation. Restoration

9th Annual Dr. King Awards Dinner
Held Saturday, January 19, 2019 at MLK Center
Theme: “Celebrating Women of Our Community
Who Influence, Change and Impact Lives”

At this year’s MLK Dinner, twelve women leaders
from our community were honored and recognized
with the “Coretta Scott King” Award as 2019 Women
of Influence.

Inter-Church Ministries’ Executive Director, Diane C.
Edwards was among the 12 honored as a 2019
Woman of Influence ... *Congratulations, Diane!*

Great Lakes Erie Threshold Choir
Seeks More Members

If you like to sing and can blend your
voice with others to bring comfort to
those near the end of life, please call
the choir director at:

(814) 825-2030

Great Lakes Erie Threshold Choir, one of
150 chapters scattered around the world,
provides three-part harmony at the bedside
of clients in nursing or private home
settings, with the sole purpose to bring
comfort and convey kindness to clients and
their families. The repertoire includes some
hymns and well-known songs, but also
many composed by Threshold singers.

www.thresholdchoir.org/moray

Church Women United – Erie Sponsors
2019 World Day of Prayer

Saturday, March 2nd at 1:00 pm

St. James AME Church

236 E. 11th Street

(off street parking and accessible facility)

Theme: “Come – Everything is Ready”

*Based upon: Jesus’ parable of the Great Dinner
(Luke 14: 15-24)*

More info: Rev. Adrienne Rush (814) 490-8092

CWU 2019 May Friendship Day

Theme: “The Time is NOW! Agree to Differ.”

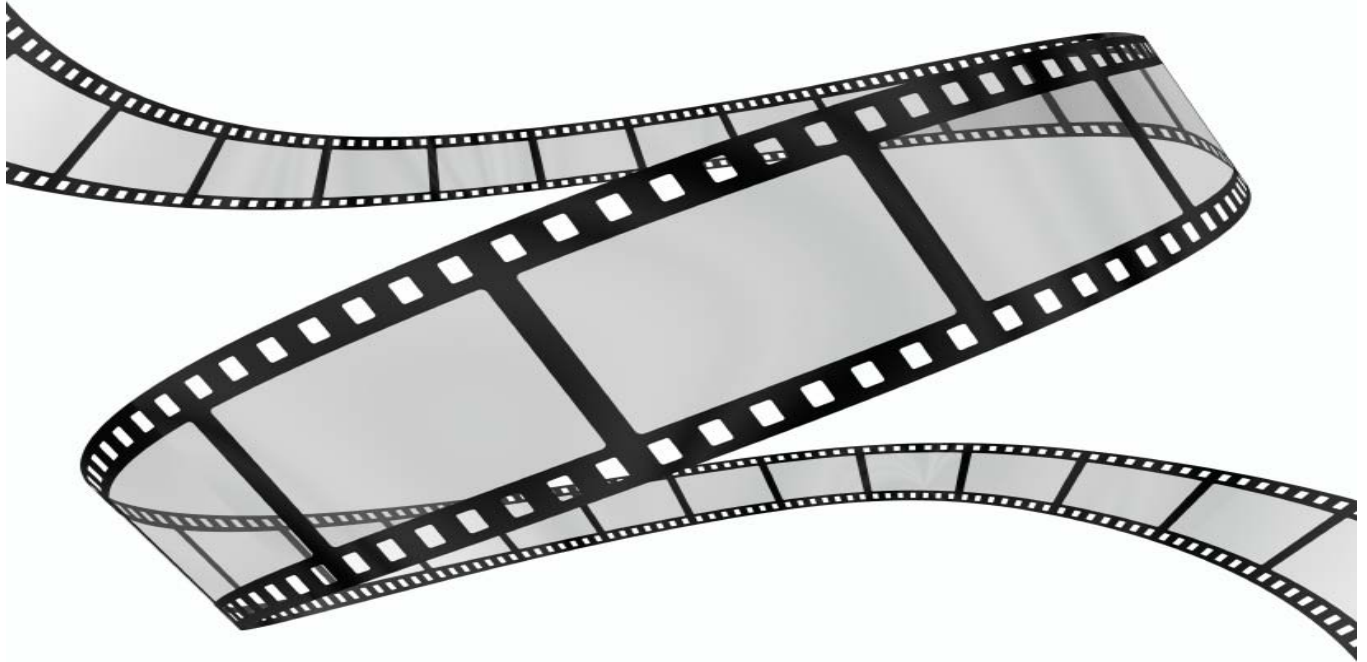
Saturday, May 11th, 2019 at 1:00 pm

Community United Church

1101 E. 38th Street, Erie PA

*Reminder: Fellowship of the Least Coin donations
will be collected at the 2019 May Friendship Day!*

“Facing Race thru Film” Conference



Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County Sponsors Local Event

Sat., March 30, 2019 – 10:30 am to 4 pm
Venue: Gannon University
Zurn Science Center, Lecture Hall 104

This conference will use film as a vehicle to engage in conversations about structural racism, both past and present. Participants will explore how cinema can reveal entrenched inequities, foster dialogue, and ignite transformation towards healing and reconciliation. The local conference will utilize resources from Trinity Wall Street “Scene & Unseen” Conference (NYC live 2/8 & 2/9/19) AND will screen the 2018 film:

The Hate U Give

“Based on the best-selling novel by Angie Thomas, *The Hate U Give* tells the story of Starr Carter, who lives in two worlds: the poor, black neighborhood where she resides and the mostly white prep school she attends. This uneasy balance is shattered when she witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood friend by a policeman. Facing pressures from all sides, Starr must find her voice and stand up for what’s right.” This film is rated PG-13 based upon mature thematic elements, some violent content, drug material and language.

There is no charge for this event, but registration is requested.
To register, please call (814) 454-2411 or icm@icmeriecounty.com

CSWNA and Gannon University's Social Work Conference 2019

Friday, March 15, 2019
8 am to 3:30 pm
Waldron Campus Center,
124 W. 7th Street, Erie

“Hope Rising Like The Dawn” Keynote Speaker: Larry Oney

Ordained Catholic Deacon and business leader, Larry Oney is the author of *Amazed by God's Grace: Overcoming Racial Divides* and founder of Hope & Purpose Ministries. A dynamic international speaker, Deacon Oney leverages humor, joy and Scripture in his lively, invigorating, knowledgeable and Spirit-filled presentations.

Conference Registration Required
FREE

Conference Reservation includes lunch
with special guest, Mayor Joe Sember

NASW-PA CE hours: \$25 members and \$35
non-members (due day of conference)

Register Today!
abatta001@gannon.edu or call 814-871-5378

Benefit Concert Announced

The Lettermen

Saturday, May 18, 2019
Two Shows: 2 pm and 7:30 pm
Venue: Mercyhurst Prep

Preferred Seating: \$50/General Admission: \$30
For Tickets Contact: concert@tableofgrace.net
or (814) 983-1210

Concert will benefit a new ministry at Table of Grace Church:

Children's Bedroom Makeovers!

Many children in our community go to bed each night sleeping on the floor, or a couch. Table of Grace Church - a United Methodist Community located at 2113 Sassafra St. -- is on a mission aimed to provide children in need with beds, sheets, blankets, comforters, pillows, curtains, dressers...be part of changing lives!

North Star Mentoring of Erie County Independent Living Program

Are you a person with an ear to listen, a lesson to share, or are you someone desiring to make a difference? Then you might have what it takes to be a Mentor!

North Star Mentoring of Erie County ILP helps young people with a history of foster care and/or out of home placements to make permanent connections with positive adult role models.

Do you know the Facts?

- Mentored young people are 46% less likely to get involved with drugs (source BBBS)
- 59% improved their grades (source Career Beginnings)
- 86% went to higher education (source Proctor & Gamble)
- 80% of youth involved in the juvenile detention system who received a mentor did not return to that system (source Prison Fellowship)
- Positive outcomes for young people in mentoring relationships are directly correlated with the length of the relationship, as time makes it stronger (source BBB)

Expectation & What is Needed

- Must be at least 24 years old
- Minimum 1 year commitment – at least 4 hours per month
- Attend professional trainings – 3 hours initially, others as needed
- Child Abuse & Criminal Record Clearances & FBI fingerprinting check
- Driving Records check – if you own a car, provide proof of car ownership and insurance

The Erie County Independent Living Program is a contractual and collaborative arrangement between Family Services of NWPA, Bethesda Lutheran Services, and the Erie County Office of Children and Youth (OCY). OCY contracts with both Family Services of NWPA and Bethesda to provide jointly the direct services of the Erie County Independent Living Program (ECILP) to youth aged 14-21.

To become a Mentor or for more information please call Brenda Martin ILP Mentoring Specialist: (814) 724-7510 x 427 or Mary Winters Family Services Mentoring Specialist: (814) 636-9244.

Inter-Church Ministries Program Continues "Achieving Your Goals...Empowerment through Financial Literacy"

The goal of this program is to empower families and individuals to gain control of their personal household finances. ICM's trained volunteer budget coaches are helping families better understand the basics of:

- how to balance a checkbook
- how to create a monthly family budget
- how to have a relationship with a bank
- how to start saving on a budget.

If you or someone you know is interested in working with one of ICM's volunteer budget coaches, please give ICM a call (814) 454-2411.



This program sponsored in part by:

One Table: Erie's Inter-faith and Multi- Cultural Bridge Builders' Gathering "The American Experience... Sharing Ancestor Stories"



March 12, 2019 4 pm

Venue: First Presbyterian Church of the
Covenant, 250 W. 7th Street, Erie
'Is America a melting pot or a colorful tapestry?'

Join your friends at One Table as we hear and share ancestor stories. ICM Director Diane C. Edwards and ICM President Johnny C. Johnson will share some of their personal ancestor stories – stories of ancestors coming to America through Ellis Island and stories of ancestors brought to America from Africa. Our stories weave together to become America's story!

Come to hear stories and share stories!



Scholarship

**Moral Leadership
Scholarship
Applications
Now Available**

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** 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.

Two \$500 scholarships will be awarded.

Deadline for submitting a scholarship application is **April 30th, 2019.**

For complete details about the application process, please call the ICM office at:

(814) 454-2411 or

by email: icm@icmeriecounty.com



Days of Awe and Wonder. How to Be a Christian in the 21st Century

By Marcus J. Borg Copyright 2017 by Borg Family Trust

First HarperCollins Paperback Edition Published in 2018

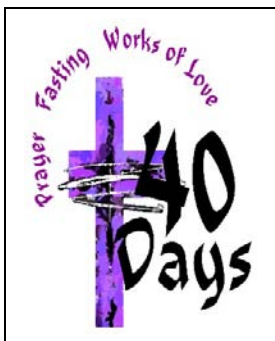
On February 8, 2019, I had the pleasure of speaking before a room full of young college students in Dr. Michael DeSanctis' "Theology and the Christian Faith" class at Gannon University. Dr. DeSanctis said he wanted his students to see and hear from a living, breathing Christian who could witness to her faith...to students who might be 'unchurched' or maybe 'spiritual but not religious.' The students were most attentive and seemed to listen closely as I told of my personal journey of faith...of, at times, identifying with the disciple Thomas -- needing to see to believe -- and then, at other times, of knowing in my deepest depths the awe and wonder of life and God. I shared with the students a deeply personal, most sacred moment in my life -- that of being at my father's bedside when he took his final breath. My father had been born at home and had died at home...the circle of life complete from birth to death on the same patch of land of my father's family for generations. A sacred moment of awe and wonder...ashes to ashes...dust to dust...

Over the years, I have gleaned great wisdom from the writings of Marcus Borg and how fitting that the Borg Family Trust recently published (posthumously) a collection of Marcus Borg's thoughts and ideas taken from a diversity of sources to be compiled in "Days of Awe and Wonder...How to Be A Christian in the 21st Century." I found it to be a great read... for seekers...for anyone who might be 'spiritual but not religious'...as well as for any one of us struggling to be Christian in the 21st century.

In the foreword of *the book*, Marianne Borg writes that "*Marcus Borg's journey reveals the fruit and labor of doubts and loves...in this collection of thoughts and ideas taken from a diversity of sources...you will find a companion for your doubts and loves. And you may just discover what it means to be a Christian in the 21st century.... May the discoveries here give us hope, like flowers in the spring that emerge from a season that looks to some like death...with new eyes and, yes, a new heart, being Christian in the twenty-first century can make the world a better place...*"

Yours in hope, in awe and wonder...Diane Edwards

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Be inspired to be the change!

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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.