



Three Rivers Current

A Publication of Three Rivers District Union
of the United Methodist Church



Issue XI, Vol. 7

www.3riversumc.org

DECEMBER 2011



¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. (Ephesians 1: 15-17)

As I have come through the Charge Conference season and upon Thanksgiving, I do give thanks for the wonderful ministries that are happening around our churches. I have had the blessed opportunity to hear the testimonies at charge conferences of the great ministries that God has empowered around our district. It's been exciting to hear!

- A special new worship service, *Rolling Hills Chapel*, for the hearing impaired at Coshocton Grace.
- A "Pr-hay" ride for members of the Baltic Church as they prayed for the Baltic community.
- An outreach by the Beulah-Liberty Chapel churches of providing packages of tissues at the movie theater for those attending the movie, "Courageous".
- Bible buddies –Bible study partnership and accountability for members of the Branch Church.
- A member of Lock Church selling a share of the corn crop to support the church's ministry.
- A new, energized children's ministry with a remodeled children's wing, *Kid's Zone*, at Utica Church.
- Twenty-five to 30 people attending weekly Bible studies at the Otsego/Bethel Charge or at the Newcomerstown Calvary Charge.
- An innovative Singles ministry starting in the Fredericktown area along with Knox county churches.
- New technology and media projection at the Guernsey/Wolf Charge.
- All Coshocton County UM Churches willing to sponsor an Apostle Build House for Habitat for Humanity

As we come upon this Advent season, God is making new things! Advent is the beginning of an adventure. The birth of Christ changed the world and we must continue to bring about that change through our ministry as the church of Jesus Christ.

I am thankful for the dedicated service and ministry that is being done to share the Good News of Christ's presence and love. *"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."*



Serving together in ministry,

Jim

CREATING VITALITY!



Three Rivers District Leadership Event Saturday, January 28 & Sunday, January 29



Saturday, January 28 **at Mt. Vernon Mulberry UMC** from 1:00 - 4:30 PM
Keynote Speaker: **Rev. Steven Court**
District Superintendent Southern Hills District



Sunday, January 29 **at Coshocton Grace UMC** from 2:00 - 5:30 PM
Keynote Speaker: **Rev. Valerie Stultz**
District Superintendent Canal District

Learn to Sense What is Vital so that Your Love May Abound & God will be Glorified

So that you may surely learn to sense what is vital ... (Philippians 1:10a Amplified Bible)

Choose from the following workshops that Define Vital Congregations

- A. Inviting & Inspiring Worship (**Andy Call**)
- B. Engaged Disciples in Mission & Outreach (**James Humphrey**)
- C. Gifted, Empowered & Equipped Lay Leadership (**Jim Skinner/Paul White**)
- D. Effective, Equipped & Inspired Clergy (**Steven Court on Sat/Valerie Stultz on Sun**) **For Clergy Only**
- E. Small Group Ministries (**Joe Schulz on Saturday; Derek Hickman on Sunday**)
- F. Strong Children's & Youth Ministry (**Kaye Wolfinger**)... **Offered on Sunday only**

Program Schedule (NEW FORMAT THIS YEAR...choose only ONE workshop from above list)

Each workshop consists of two sessions. Session one is a presentation by a ministry consultant. The second session will follow with a panel discussion and a time of Q & A for practical application in your local church.

- Opening Worship & Featured Speaker
- Session I (presentation)
- Break
- Session II (panel discussion and Q & A)



Registration costs: \$5.00 per person or \$20.00 per church (unlimited # people) **for one or both days!**

Make checks payable to Three Rivers District memo as "*Leadership Event*"

Complete form below and mail with payment to 415 Walnut St, Coshocton, Oh 43832

or register online at the Three Rivers District website www.3riversUMC.org

Name: _____ Church: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

I will attend on Saturday in Mt. Vernon & my workshop choice is _____. My alternate is _____.

I will attend on Sunday in Coshocton & workshop choice is _____. My alternate is _____.

Firm Registration Deadline: January 20, 2012 **Early registration encouraged.**

Choices honored on "first come, first served" basis due to workshop format and space availability.

Bishops Endorse Proposals: "For Sake of a New World, We See a New Church: A Call to Action"

The Council of Bishops has strongly backed a reform agenda aimed at reinvigorating the denomination and reversing declines in membership, attendance and giving. At their fall meeting, the bishops voted overwhelmingly to endorse a range of changes, including reorganizing and streamlining general agencies, redirecting \$60 million in church funds to help boost the number of [vital congregations](#), and giving annual conferences more organizational flexibility. Bishops watched a video describing The UMC's downward spiral in the US, having gone from 10.7 million members in 1968 to 7.7 million in 2009. Worship attendance dropped 20% in that time, while average age of membership climbed to 57. In recent years, bishops have pushed for change, helping to initiate the Call to Action effort that led to outside studies of the church, including one that found only 15% of UM congregations in North America are "highly vital" by various measures. The bishops supported a letter calling for "a church that is clear about its mission and confident about its future, a church that is always reaching out, inviting, alive, agile and resilient." It asks all UMs to "discover the path God is making for our future."-- NEWSCOPE© 2011

Many **Three Rivers District Churches** reported at their respective church conferences that they participated in their **local Crop Walks** or performed other types of fund raising projects to generate donations and support for local food pantries all in an effort to **combat hunger and poverty**.

Crop Walkers Fight Hunger, Step by Step

From Alaska and Florida to Maine and California UMs join people of all faiths for autumn CROP Hunger Walks. CROP stands for "Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty." Church World Service, an international ecumenical agency that works with partners to eradicate hunger and poverty and to promote global peace and justice, sponsors the events. The UMC is a Church World Service Partner. CROP walkers find sponsors who donate set amounts for the distances walked. Seventy-five percent of the money raised goes toward global hunger projects, and the rest stays in the community. According to the Church World Service website, "CROP Hunger Walks help to provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, to technical training and micro-enterprise loans, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs—something CWS has learned through some 64 years of working in partnership around the world." —Barbara Dunlap-Berg, UMCOM



Mt. Vernon CROP WALK
Picture by Mary Blencowe

APPOINTMENT Changes in Three Rivers District:

- **Carolyn Carman** has been appointed to the Green Valley Chapel UMC effective December 1, 2011. Carolyn comes from the Mahoning Valley District where she was serving the Wellsville Parish. She is in her first year as a student at Methodist Theological School of Ohio (MTSO) and will be serving as a part-time local pastor.
- **Ken Smailes** has been appointed as part-time local pastor of the Blissfield UMC effective December 1, 2011. Ken just recently was approved by the Three Rivers district committee of ordained ministry to be a certified candidate and eligible for appointment. He has been serving at Blissfield as a lay speaker.
- **Roberta Fuller** (Killbuck UMC) has been approved for disability benefits effective December 1, 2011 and will be taking incapacity leave.

We request prayer for these servants of the Lord, their families, ministries and respective churches during this time of transition.

Impact your Community and the World by Engaging your Neighbors

- Media planning, placement, design, customization and funds
- Event-planning resources and assistance
- Event registration software
- Public relations tips and strategies
- Training

Impact Community encourages people of The United Methodist Church to effect change in their local communities. Several basic elements should be incorporated to ensure a successful event experience. The composition of the event day should include training specific to welcoming the community and a service project that meets the needs of the community. The impact should be sustainable and there needs to a worship/celebration component.



United Methodist Communications is very excited to be joining our churches together to reach out to communities in need as one church family, proving what we say we believe with what we do! Want to impact your community through grass-roots outreach efforts? We want to support you with advertising – **at no cost to you**. Checkout [our Impact Community Handbook](#). Media services, planning, estimates and placement, are still available at **no cost to all our congregations** by calling toll free **877-281-6535** or emailing us at ImpactCommunity@umcom.org.

To learn more visit www.umcom.org/impactcommunities or click on the video to the left to see what other churches have done in their communities.

Ministry Management Best Practices FREE Webinar...

Learn How to Use Technology to Engage and Grow Your Church

Join our webinar from the comfort of your office or home!

- Keep new visitors from slipping through the cracks
- Better manage members ministry experience
- Improve tracking of attendance
- Increase your volunteer base
- Grow and stabilize church income



This FREE webinar is available exclusively to United Methodist Church Staff and Volunteers!

Click on your choice of the dates below to register!

[Monday, Dec. 5 at 11:00am PST](#)

[Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 8:30am PST](#)

UMC? There's an App for That



Mobile device users can now access [UMC](#) information with a **FREE** UM application for iPad and iPhone. It will soon be available for Android smartphone users. The application enables daily devotions, news, videos, photos, social media sites and a searchable index of UM churches. The "Ask InfoServ" feature connects users who have questions about the church or requests for resources with church staff who can help. In early 2012, another new mobile application will be launched that will make it easier for users to connect with General Conference. The application will allow delegates and others to track proposed legislation, keep up with events and access meeting information. [Click for iTunes preview](#). To download go to your device's app store. Search for "UM." Tap the **free** official mobile app for The UMC icon to install. —UMCOM

Christmas Ministry in Three Rivers

Killbuck UMC (Rev. Paul Gerycz) will be having a **"Blessing of the Toys"** ceremony during morning services on Christmas Sunday. Children are asked to bring their favorite, non-scary, non-noise-making toy to be blessed. This might be a toy that was just opened Christmas morning or one that has been a favorite for many years. This is a special way to include the joy of home celebrations into the worship service. It's also a way to celebrate with kids and recognize God when they play with their toys.



Roscoe UMC (Rev. Coralee Cox) Following their Christmas morning service, **Christmas Angels** (anyone willing to make "doorstep visits") will deliver messages of gratitude and tokens of appreciation to community members who will be working on Christmas Day (firefighters, police, hospital staff).

"The hinge of history is on the door of Bethlehem's stable."

[Ralph W. Stockman]

The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased." *Luke 2: 10-14 NASB*



Coshocton Community Choir Concert: *Come to the Stable*

Sunday December 4 at the Coshocton High School Auditorium at both 3 and 7:30 p.m. the Coshocton Community Choir which includes over 100 singers in the choir, along with a youth choir, children's choir and brass ensemble will perform "Come to the Stable." Tickets are available at the Three Rivers District office.



CLERGY FAMILY CHRISTMAS FELLOWSHIP

Three Rivers Clergy and Families

(active and retired)

Coshocton Grace UMC 422 Walnut St, Coshocton

Monday, December 12 @ 6:00 p.m.

Dinner and Entertainment

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED : RSVP to the District Office by December 5th

"A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens will be presented by talented story-teller, Rev. John Ferris, who has recited this tale from memory as a part of his ministry for 45 years. It tells about one man's last chance to make a change in his life that will affect the people around him for the better. Most people know the story, its plot and characters, and its happy ending. But to hear and see the progression of the events in Ebenezer Scrooge's life awakens hope in many listeners' hearts.

UMCOR UPDATES

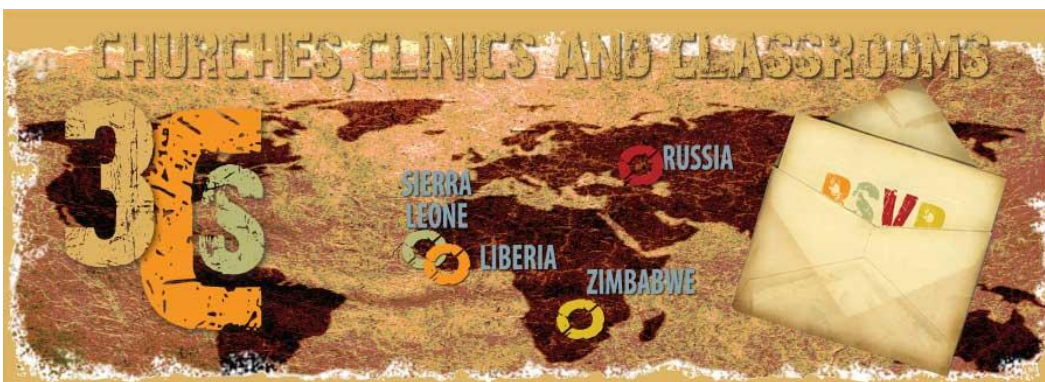
TURKEY: RELIEF FOR EARTHQUAKE SURVIVORS. Food and medicine are most in demand after a 7.2-magnitude earthquake shook eastern Turkey Oct. 23, leaving more than a thousand injured and at least 240 dead. The UM Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is in conversation with partner International Blue Crescent to help meet these and other needs, such as blankets, plastic sheets and hygiene kits for survivors. Donations can be made to International Disaster Response, [Advance #982450](#).

US: AFTER THE FLOODS IN NORTH DAKOTA. Flooding in 2011 effected the Dakotas in areas that hadn't seen rising rivers in more than a hundred years. In October, UMCOR's board of directors voted to support the Dakotas Conference recovery plan with a two-year grant in the amount of \$463,000 including a full-time associate disaster response coordinator to work directly with those affected by this disaster for the duration of their recovery. Gifts to US Disaster Response, [Advance #901670](#), provide the means for UMCOR to respond to both immediate needs provoked by a natural or human-made crisis and over the long haul of recovery, as in the Dakotas.

There will be a VIM Meeting for the [Northern Alabama Volunteers in Missions Team](#) on [Monday, December 19th at 7:00p.m. at Keene UMC](#) . Details about the March 2012 trip will be discussed. All those who have reserved a spot are encouraged to be present for the meeting. Contact John Hill or Rev. Jim Humphrey if unable to attend.

3Cs Mission Distribution of Funds

At the most recent meeting of the East Ohio 3Cs Mission Task Group \$55,900 -money so graciously given by local churches and individuals was distributed for the 3Cs Mission work – a total of \$55,900. This is a great celebration of the mission work that East Ohio is doing in West Africa, Zimbabwe, and Russia in supporting Churches, Clinics, and Classrooms.



An Invitation.... please R.S.V.P.

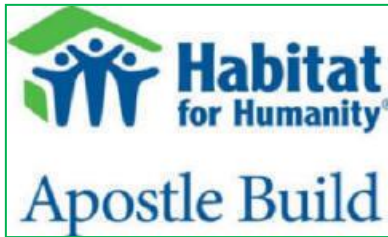
- Relationship
- Service
- Vision
- Prayer

Every mission site always cares for the whole person — body, mind and spirit — with a church, a medical clinic and a school. Thus, the **3Cs Mission Project — Churches, Clinics and Classrooms** — was born. East Ohio has responded to the needs of others by providing churches, clinics and classrooms in Russia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Zimbabwe. We have built a foundation of relationships, work teams, supply lines and financial resources that will be sustainable for decades.

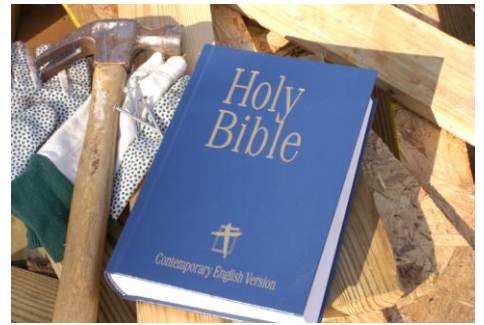
Visit <http://www.ecumc.com/3Cs> where you are invited to see how your love is being put to action that will strengthen the fabric of our faith.



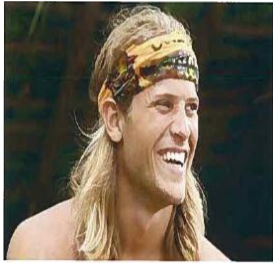
Click on the 3Cs icon to watch the video that was shown at the 2011 East Ohio Annual Conference at Lakeside, Ohio in June. This summer volunteers from Mt. Vernon's Gay Street UMC visited the Camphor Mission in Liberia. You can visit their website at <http://gaystreetumc.org/> to read the [August 2011 newsletter](#) about their trip. Pictured to the left is Kate, Meghan and Catherine of Gay Street UMC.



The Apostle Build sponsorship commitment is \$20,000 and should be pledged by December 31, 2011. Prayerfully consider how your church can participate. Collectively we feel that this is an obtainable goal. Checks should be made out to Three Rivers District. The ground breaking ceremony is scheduled for late March 2012 in



West Lafayette. We are asking also that churches and individuals seek the Lord's direction in how they can support the Apostle Build as volunteers (construction, meals, promotion, etc) but especially with prayer support. This project creates unique opportunity for local Volunteers in Mission team members, who cannot travel to other states for disaster relief work, to use their time, talents and treasures.



Your Identity in Christ

A 3-day winter getaway for 19-24 year olds where you will discover a deeper understanding of YOUR IDENTITY. First knowing WHO you are in Christ leads you to complete freedom in being who YOU are. Guest speaker, Matt Elrod (CBS's Survivor Redemption Island), will deliver a message on how to maintain your identity and lead a Survivor Style Challenge Game. Engaging worship, relevant messages, activities, healthy menu, t-shirt, give-aways and accommodations for \$79. Begins Tues. Dec. 27th at 3:00p - Dec. 29th at noon at Camp Aldersgate near Carrollton, Ohio. RSVP deadline Dec 16th.

Parents Night Out : Camp Wanake, Beach City, December 16-17

Do you need to shop without your children; prepare for Christmas without interruptions; or just take a break? Camp Wanake has a win-win solution. Beginning at 5:00 pm on Friday, Dec. 16, and continuing to 6:15 pm on Saturday, Dec. 17. Cost is \$69 per child with a \$10 discount for each additional child in a family (this is less than \$2.90/hour) and includes 3 meals, snacks, fun, games, and crafts children can use as gifts. [For more information](#) or email info@campwanake.org or call 330.756.2333.

YOUTH LOCK-IN: Calvary UMC - Newcomerstown

Saturday, January 21, 2012 -- 8:00 a.m. Sunday, January 22, 2012

Each youth is asked to bring sleeping bag, pillow, bible, personal hygiene items, a change of clothes, games, and a snack to share with the group. They need to RSVP to Angela by Sunday, January 13, 2012.

Angela D. Braniger
 Three Rivers District Youth Coordinator &
 East Ohio Conference Senior High Youth Coordinator
 46279 TR 285 Coshocton, OH 43812
 Phone: 740-829-2182 home or 740-502-1169 cell
 E-Mail: angelabraniger@yahoo.com



MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Youth Annual Conference 2012: June 15-17

The theme this year is "Set Free". Visit www.eocumc.com/youth/yac2012 to discover all the details about this leadership development weekend for our youth. More information in the January 2012 issue of The Three Rivers Current.

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

DECEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Mary did you know that your baby boy will one day walk on water? Mary did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters? Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new? This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you. Mary did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man? Mary did you know that your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand? Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod? And when you kiss your little baby, you have kissed the face of God. Words by Mark Lowry</p>				1 	2	3
4 Coshocton Community Choir Concert Tickets available at Dist Office	5	6	7	8 Cabinet	9 Office Closed	10 Rev Jim at Delegation Meeting
11 Nellie Chapel Charge Conf	12 Three Rivers Clergy Christmas Party @ 6p Grace UMC 	13 Howard UMC Charge Conf	14	15 Cabinet	16	17
18	19	20 January Newsletter Deadline	21	22	23 Office Closed Dec 23, 2011 - Jan 2, 2012	24
25 	26 Office Closed Dec 23, 2011 - Jan 2, 2012				30	31 

JANUARY 2012



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Area Center & District Office Closed	3	4	5	6	7
			Cabinet			
8	9	10	11 Compass Group # 3 Jelloway @ 7p	12 dCOM	13	14 Compass Group # 4 Wolf @ 10a
15 Rev Jim speaking at Southern Hills Event	16 Martin Luther King Day EOC Center Closed District Office Open	17 Compass Group # 2	18 Compass Group # 1 (Ryan's MtV)	19	20	21 3 Rivers DYC Dist Youth Lock-in
		Cabinet				
22	23	24	25 Compass Group # 6 Fredericktown @ 10:00	26	27	28 3 Rivers Leadership Event at Mt. Vernon Mulberry 1-4:30p
29 3 Rivers Leadership Event at Coshocton Grace 2-5:30p	30	31 Rev Jim speak at Mogadore UMW Mtg	¹⁷ Learn to do good. Seek justice: help the oppressed; defend the orphan; plead for the widow. ¹⁸ Come now, and let's settle this, says the LORD. Though your sins are like scarlet, they will be white as snow. If they are red as crimson, they will become like wool. ¹⁹ If you agree and obey, you will eat the best food of the land. Isaiah 1:17-19 Common English Bible			



The Three Rivers

Current

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Wishing everyone a Very Blessed Christmas
and Joyous New Year
Rev. Jim & JOY

