

## Wilkinsburg Community Ministry

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*Wilkinsburg Community Ministry*

*Churches United - Serving Together*

## The Well – Winter 2010

Wilkinsburg Community Ministry  
702-704 Wood Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

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Winter 2010

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“For everything there is a season,  
and a time for every matter under heaven.”

Ecclesiastes 3:1

### **JOYS AND CONCERNS AS A NEW YEAR BEGINS**

WCM considers carrying out its programs (Food, Energy Assistance, Urban Survival) to be its most important function and concern. We are committed by our faith and by our Bylaws to “place emphasis upon extending the ministry of the churches within the Wilkinsburg area to all people, with the primary concern being to mediate the saving grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ to all people.” Therefore I’ll emphasize the WCM programs in the “successes and concerns”. The finances (income and expenses) will receive secondary consideration.

#### **PROGRAM SUCCESSES**

**Food:** WCM continues to deliver nutritious meals on weekdays to about 60 home-bound Wilkinsburgers through the **Meals on Wheels** program. Our **Angel Food Meals Program** disburses low cost food packages once a month to 25 or more families and individuals who apply for them. We distributed the makings for **Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinners** to about 150 families just prior to these holidays. Our **Emergency Food Pantry** is always ready to service those families and individuals who can show need. Once each week, the Ministry office has a **Free Bread Distribution**. WCM provides cooked **Lunches for Day-Care Children** on weekdays from the spacious kitchen of South Avenue Methodist Church. We greatly appreciate this donation of their space.

**Energy Assistance:** WCM continues to help the utility companies provide aid to individuals whose gas or electricity has been turned off for nonpayment. (see Utility Assistance on p. 3 )

*(Continued on page 5)*

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



New Year brings hope and courage,  
Resolutions, plans and schemes.  
May our lives be free from blemish,  
Always worthy of our dreams.  
As we walk the days ahead, Lord,  
May our paths be straight and clear,  
Leading on to new horizons  
Free from danger, doubt and fear.

May we share a wider friendship  
Reaching out to those we meet,  
Laughter lighting darker moments,  
Raising smiles along the street,  
As the months go swiftly by, Lord,  
Help us value every day,  
Let us build a new tomorrow  
Knowing you will show the way.

*Iris Hesselden, UK.*

HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all. Hope that you all had a wonderful holiday season, and that things are going well for you so far this year. Also, that you are all still being faithful to those new years resolutions! God has been good to us during the holiday season with donations of food and money from individuals, our faithful churches, and foundation grants. A big thanks to Jami Broom for working hard sending out grant applications.

I have also been blessed with a Social Work intern from Carlow University - Jennifer Matich. She has been immensely helpful in contacting churches, assisting with fund raising and organizing drives. Thanks Jennifer. Also a big thanks to all our staff for their dedication to their jobs. Ray, Anita, Bert, Sharon, Ed, Beverly, Ken from AARP, Dora and Tonya from EARN. Thanks also go to Roger Schneider and John Walter for all the time they have given working on our small computer network.

March is our Senior Hunger Awareness month – ‘March for Meals’. Over 5 million seniors in the US – 11.4% of all seniors - have experienced some form of food insecurity. Of these 2.5 million were at risk of hunger and 750,000 suffered from hunger due to financial restraints. We are asking our Mayor, John Thompson to deliver meals again this year on March 24<sup>th</sup> and to pledge that he will help to end senior hunger. You can also help by:

1. Volunteering to deliver meals to the seniors in your community either as a driver or as a helper.
2. Donating change to our ‘End Senior Hunger’ boxes which will be located in various locations around the community.
3. Signing our pledge form to help end Senior Hunger, which will also be located at the same locations as the box.

I know times have been hard for everyone over this past year, but as the poem says, we can build a new tomorrow - our futures have not yet been written. No matter what has happened in the past we can try to make our future better.

Blessings,

*Ann*

## SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS HELP MEET ON-GOING LOCAL NEEDS

### Food Pantry Statistics from Raymond Tolbert

	July '09	Aug. '09	Sept. '09	Oct. '09	Nov. '09	Dec. '09
<b>Households served:</b>	13	8	6	7	3	15
<b>Individuals served:</b>	30	30	26	15	8	34
<b>Age of individuals:</b>						
0-17	12	11	8	4	3	13
18-34	2	4	6	5	0	9
35-59	15	12	11	4	4	11
60+	1	3	1	2	1	1

The WCM Food Pantry is now serving East Hills, Swissvale and Homewood at the request of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. Residents in need from those areas must receive a referral from the Community Food Bank. Their phone number is 412-460-3663.

When the WCM freezer broke in October 2009, there was no money budgeted for a new one. An Emergency Response application was submitted to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank for equipment assistance. In December that application was approved and a much-needed freezer was purchased. WCM greatly appreciates the positive response by GPCFB in this time of need.

### Angel Food Ministries Program:

	Sept. '09	Oct. '09	Nov. '09	Dec. '09	Jan. '10
<b>Individuals served:</b>	21	15	25	18	22

The "menu" for each month generally includes 15 items for the low cost of just \$30.00. A "Senior Box" is also available, which includes 10 perfectly seasoned, nutritionally balanced fully-cooked meals that are ready to heat and serve. The cost is only \$28.00. In addition there are monthly specials ranging in price between \$18.00 and \$23.00. Distribution day is on a Saturday at South Avenue United Methodist Church between 9:30 AM and 12:00 Noon. Participants must bring a large box to hold the food. Food stamps EBT are accepted. South Avenue United Methodist Church is located at 733 South Avenue. The latest menu is always available at [www.wcm15221.org](http://www.wcm15221.org).

**Holiday Food Assistance:** WCM distributed food at Thanksgiving and Christmas again this past season.

**Utility Assistance:** Since the time Dollar Energy opened in October 5, 2009 to the beginning of the moratorium on December 1, 2009, Wilksburg Community Ministry has received and processed 116 applications. There are no applications pending. The LIHEAP program will remain open until April 2, 2010. All income eligible applicants must apply for federal grants and qualify before applying for Dollar Energy Fund assistance.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR 'SERVICES FOR SENIORS' PROGRAM

### **Volunteers delivered 1,281 Meals-on-Wheels in December 2009!**

- Volunteers served over 6000 meals to Wilkinsburg residents in the last 5 months of 2009.
- About 70 meals were distributed each weekday.

In October we received this gratifying note from a regular Meals-on-Wheels recipient. News like this makes all the volunteer effort worthwhile:

*"Please cancel my Meals-on-Wheels at the beginning of the month. I'm feeling a lot better than I was earlier. I'm driving again and can now shop by myself. I appreciate the people who prepared and delivered healthy meals to me. I'm sure that helped me recover."*

### **Drivers are still desperately needed for our 4 Meals-on-Wheels Routes.**

Our volunteers are dedicated and always take on the burden of delivering extra meals if we are short of drivers/helpers. We hope that you will consider taking part in our March events to end Senior Hunger.

**Please contact Anita McKeithen at 412-241-8072 to volunteer.**

## COLLEGE INTERN EXPRESSES THANKS

Hello, my name is Jennifer Matich, and I started interning for Wilkinsburg Community Ministry in September 2009. I am a social work major at Carlow University and will graduate this May. By the time I leave in April, I will have interned here for 500 hours. I have had a wonderful experience, as Ann has taken me under her wing to show me the in's and out's of WCM as a growing community organization. I have been helping to build correspondence with at-large community members, other community organizations, and the churches in and around Wilkinsburg. In December, with help from churches and community members, WCM was able to donate 25 care-packages for the homeless to Operation Safety Net. I appreciate the opportunity that WCM has given me as I have learned about fundraising, outreach, and most importantly serving a community in such a need as Wilkinsburg.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO TWO VERY SPECIAL PEOPLE

We want to take this opportunity to thank two individuals who have made significant contributions to WCM as former members of the WCM Board:

**Gail Gratton** recently ended a long-term appointment to the WCM board as a representative from Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church. We appreciate her service to WCM and to the community.

**James Garner:** 1940 – 2009. Our friend and helper for WCM departed this life on October 23, 2009. James Garner worked his faith. James retired in 1997 from a 32 year career with the Westinghouse Air Brake Company. He gave many, many volunteer hours to the Veterans Hospital on Highland Drive where he had a special ministry as a retired marine. He served WCM in many ways - as a Meals-on-Wheels volunteer, as a Board member, and he walked in several CROP Walks, even though he had bad feet. He was a deacon in the Christian Church of Wilkinsburg, and served as a volunteer in the "One Step" program for Junior High youth where he was a strong and gentle role model. Since James did not drive a car, he walked or took a bus everywhere he went. Yet whenever James saw a need, he responded quietly and without fanfare. Our beloved brother was a "doer of the Word and not merely a hearer". (James 1:22) Let us give thanks for James and all of those quiet, gentle workers of the Lord who touch our lives with the love of Jesus. *(From a tribute by Rev. Janet Hellner-Burriss for James's funeral service.)*

## **JOYS AND CONCERNS** *(Continued from p.1)*

**Urban Survival:** WCM has facilities to distribute used furniture and small amounts of clothing to hand out to those in need. This is done in cooperation with New-To-U. WCM is also able to provide occasional help with bus passes and also hand out bus schedules. Referrals are also made to other agencies for particular problems better handled by them.

### **PROGRAM CONCERNS**

**Meals-on-Wheels:** There is always a need for more **volunteer drivers and helpers!** Please contact the WCM office (412-241-8072) if you can be of assistance. One day a week (two hours) of your time (and car if you are a driver) would be a great help. Thank you.

**Food:** Please talk to your church friends and ask them to assist WCM in providing food to those in need. Please bring unexpired canned goods and other non-perishables to the WCM office.

### **FINANCIAL SUCCESSES**

#### **2009 Grants:**

WCM received \$37,361 in grants from foundations and organizations, \$40,533 from churches, and \$23,516 from individuals. The amount received from foundations is substantially more than in 2008, while the others are also increases.

#### **2009 Grants-In-Aid:**

Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank: New Food Freezer  
Beulah Presbyterian Church & CVS Caremark: Giant Eagle gift certificates to purchase holiday turkeys

#### **Fund-Raising Events:**

Wilksburg Sings at Christmas, the Spring Praise Sing, the Good Friday Offering, Septemberfest, Luminaria sales, and the 2009 Pittsburgh East CROP Hunger Walk netted \$3707 for WCM. Of the total funds raised this past year in the CROP Hunger Walk, 15% came back to Wilksburg and Wilksburg Community Ministry – nearly \$2,000.

### **FINANCIAL CONCERNS**

The recent recession has resulted in a decrease in income from the Pittsburgh Presbytery and from some congregations and businesses. The decreased income and increased expenses due in part to increases in the minimum wage have forced us to renegotiate our lease. We have given up the second floor (708 Wood Street), and we will be consolidating to the first floor of the Sapienza-Donnelly building at 702-704 Wood Street at the end of February.

Each new year presents challenges and opportunities for service. Since 1968, Wilksburg Community Ministry has been striving to address the needs of the citizens of the Wilksburg community. WCM has now become a pillar of stability for many residents in the Wilksburg area due to our dedication to improving people's quality of life. We are proud to be known as an organization made up of "People Helping People Through Christ", for it is through Him that we are able to achieve all that we do.

Jack Pepper, WCM Board President

## **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!**

*Many thanks to the following organizations, businesses and individuals  
who made contributions to support WCM in 2009.*

### **Individuals:**

Lois Jean Adam	William C. & Linda F. Knapp	Erla Jean Reeves
Marian B. Allen	Curtis W. Kovach	Thomas A. & Ann E. Resignalo
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William F. & Patricia Kirkpatrick	Arthur S. & Narda Rathbun	John F. & Gloria J. Young
E. M. & R. A. Kittner	William C. & Barbara J. Rau	

### **Businesses:**

James Floral & Gift Shoppe	The Wagner Investment Company II	Wilkinsburg Rotary Club
Kiwanis Foundation of Wilkinsburg	Wilkinsburg Boys & Girls Club	Wilkinsburg Saturday AM, AA
Pittsburgh Dry Cleaners & Furriers	Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce	
Thomas A. & Ann E. Resignalo	Women's Club of Wilkinsburg	

## **MORE THANKS!**

### **Foundations:**

Citizens Bank  
Dominion Foundation

Hayes Foundation  
PNC Institutional Investments

PPG Industries Foundation  
United Methodist Foundation  
of Western Pennsylvania

### **Churches & Church Groups:**

Beulah United Presbyterian Church  
Christian Church of Wilkinsburg  
Wilkinsburg Church of the Nazarene  
Covenant Church of Pittsburgh  
Covenant Fellowship Reformed Church  
East Liberty Presbyterian Church  
First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood  
Forest Hills Presbyterian Church

Hebron United Presbyterian Church  
Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church  
Mt. Calvary Baptist Church  
Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church  
Oakmont Presbyterian Church  
PW in Westminster Church  
Pittsburgh Presbytery  
Saint Mark's AME Church

Sixth Presbyterian Church  
South Ave. United Methodist Church  
St. Stephen's Protestant  
Episcopal Church  
The Church of the Holy Cross  
Waverly United Presbyterian Church  
Wilkinsburg Ministerial Association

## **WILKINSBURG CHURCH CHOIRS CONTINUE TO BRING GREAT MUSIC TO WILKINSBURG**

WCM's thirty-eighth "Wilkinsburg Sings at Christmas" and its third annual "Spring Praise Sing" were well-attended and well-received happenings in 2009! Thanks to the efforts of Wren Price twelve churches participated in the former program at Mount Calvary Baptist Church on December 13, 2009 in spite of the nasty winter weather. Seven churches were represented at the Spring Praise Sing at Ethnan Temple Seventh Day Adventist Church on May 17, 2009.

Make plans now to attend and participate in the **Fourth Annual Spring Praise Sing** on May 2, 2010 at Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church.

### **YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED AGAIN THIS YEAR**

Please consider making a new or additional contribution to WCM at this time. Please use the form below and send your tax-deductible contribution to WCM, 702 Wood St., Pittsburgh, PA 15221. WCM also participates in the Contributor Choice program of the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania. To designate WCM at work, simply fill in part D-1 of your pledge form. Our agency code is 242.

I/We want to join in your efforts to help others and give those who are less fortunate an opportunity to live with dignity, and will subscribe the following amount:

\$25  \$50  \$75  \$100  \$200  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Payable: Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Quarterly \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  No thank you is needed

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  Please consider this gift to be anonymous.

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