



LEXINGTON PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

Community Mission

Winter Edition



LPUMC is often referred to as the church that helps people. It's no wonder we have this reputation. We are a church that truly cares about our community and the welfare of the people in our neighborhood.

Each month on the first Sunday we take a **special offering** for the Community Ministry Fund. In **2016 you gave \$12,421** to be used to help our neighbors in need. The Community Mission Team worked together to determine how best to use these dollars.

Most of the people we help are referred to us from various helping agencies. We received 100 referrals and from these referrals helped a total of 92 people/families. We spent a total of \$13,027. **Here is a breakdown of how we helped:**

- 22 Rental Assistance
- 18 Medication
- 18 Utilities
- 10 Gas Vouchers
- 6 Car Insurance
- 4 Work clothes/shoes
- 2 ID/Birth Certificates
- 2 Car Repairs
- 2 House Repairs
- 2 Medical Appointments
- 2 Grocery Cards
- 4 Miscellaneous



We also paid for someone's admission to a treatment facility. I had the opportunity to talk with this person recently. They are doing very well and are grateful for our help. This person told me they counted on our prayers as much as the financial support we gave.

There are several other reasons our church is known for helping our community. Just look at

our facility, it's bursting with activity every day of the week. We host a Cub Scout troop's weekly meetings and monthly events, we also host eleven Alcoholics Anonymous meetings each week in our Chapel. We host monthly WARM program meetings, various community events including a Community Resource/Assistance Day and new this year a Resource Day for our Spanish speaking neighbors.

Another reason we're considered a helping church is our **outreach ministries**. Among these ministries is our **Clothes Closet**. The Clothes Closet is opened to the public every Wednesday from 10am-12pm. **We helped 600 clients in 2016.** The Clothes Closet received 72 referrals from various agencies this past year. These requests were often from St. Mary's County Public Schools for children that needed a coat, shoes or other article of clothing. **Every referral for a child is always filled.** This is made possible due to the generous donations the Clothes Closet receives. The Clothes Closet has been in operation since October 2000. This ministry has helped thousands of people!

For the past 20 years **The Blankets of Love** group has met in the church library and crocheted blankets for the elderly, veterans, folks recovering from an illness, the homeless shelters, hospice patients, and new born babies from our congregation. This outreach ministry has made and **distributed over 3,000 blankets!**

Another long standing outreach ministry is our monthly **JOY dinner**. *Jesus Others and You* meets on the last Wednesday each month and was formed so the people in our congregation could share a meal and fellowship with members of our community. It's a favorite time and much appreciated ministry with our neighbors that attend. We also have a crew of people that provides monthly support to **St. Mary's Caring Soup Kitchen**. This is a great time of fellowship as this group prepares breakfast and lunch for the community.

See other side

Community Mission Ministry

At Thanksgiving and Christmas we adopt several local families. Not only do we provide them with food and gifts, we share a time of fellowship with them and offer them support and a positive giving experience.

Our church also is a supporter of the **WARM** emergency shelter program. We are a host site each season and I serve on the WARM leadership team.

We are also known as a smart and caring congregation within the county government and local non-profit agencies. This is due in part to our church having a Community Ministry representative. Recently our Staff Parish Relations Committee changed my job description to include being this Community Ministry person. Part of my role is attending county meetings and gatherings. I also currently serve as a board member of HOPE, the Homeless Prevention Board, the Regional Homeless Board (CoC) and the WARM program.

Over the years, I have formed many great working relationships and a mutual respect with these agencies and community partners. The time I spend in the community is time well spent. A few examples: I helped develop a strategic plan to end homelessness in our community.



Not only did I help write this plan I was chosen to present this plan for approval and

adoption to our County Commissioners.

Another example: because of my community involvement I was able to help St. Mary's County realize we desperately needed a respite care facility for the homeless in our community. **This facility opened this past year at the Three Oaks Center.**

But the best example I can give is I am often asked to speak at various functions on the collaborative community work I've been a part of on behalf of LPUMC. **This is huge! Because every time this happens God and His church are in the spotlight.**

The Community Mission work we do at LPUMC is recognized as a significant resource in our community, and it should be. We are a valued community partner because we value the people we are helping and we truly want to see lives transformed.

So, I'd like to thank you for your generous contributions to the Community Mission Fund and Community Outreach Ministries. Thank you also for supporting my ministry through your regular offering. It's through these dollars I am able to do this important Community Mission work on behalf of LPUMC. **The time and gifts you give do make a difference!**

Peace,
Sara Martin,
Community Ministry
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New Exciting Ministry

Jobs for Life/Work Life

This new ministry has the potential to change our community as we help people rise up out of poverty. *Work Life* is a 20-week course teaching Biblical principles and practical skills needed to be a good employee.

Everyone who successfully finishes this program is guaranteed a job! Several local businesses have partnered with *Work Life* along with DSS, Three Oaks Center & St. Mary's County Jobs Source. But this program can only be successful with the help of mentors/allies walking alongside of each person enrolled.

LPUMC is supporting *Work Life* and so far we have eight people from our congregation, including myself working as allies.

If you'd like to be a part of this life-changing new ministry please let me know. No special skills are required and training is available.

This is a great opportunity to be involved in community outreach ministry!