

Ministry Minutes

Health & Wellness Ministry Information & Updates

Summer 2019

Created in Christ for Good Works



▲ **Amy Armanious receives the Blessing of the Hands from Bishop Kusserow.**

► **A mini resource fair featuring helpful programs and services was held as part of the event reception.**



Ministers, health care professionals, and volunteers gathered at St. John's Lutheran Church of Highland on May 15th for the Health & Wellness Ministry's annual Anointing & Appreciation event. Guests were first treated to a celebratory worship service, led by Bishop Kurt F. Kusserow of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

During his sermon, Bishop Kusserow reflected on Ephesians 2:1-10, which concludes: *For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.*

"Caring for others in self-giving service is the whole point of being saved by grace. It frees you to be who you were made to be, so that God's kindness for the world may be made known through you," he explained.

He went on to say, "Your ministry is God's blessing for the world, which is why we take time every year to stop...and say thank you."

After hearing this inspiring sermon, guests were invited to come to the altar to receive the Blessing of the Hands and anointing for their

personal ministry. Guests also were invited to the table for Holy Communion later in the service.

President & CEO David Fenoglietto shared remarks on behalf of Lutheran SeniorLife following worship. Then, as guests munched on gourmet popcorn, they became the first audience to see a short video showcasing the ministry activities of several congregations. The video was dedicated to the memory of volunteer exercise instructor Jan Wherthey, who had been filmed for the video shortly before she passed away.

Guests enjoyed a reception with refreshments and giveaways, as well as a mini resource fair with representatives from Lutheran SeniorLife, the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, and the Synod Resource Center. Health & Wellness Ministry Coordinator Patty Davidson conveyed final words of gratitude: "It's a joy to meet with the volunteers and be able to help with their ministry," Davidson said. "I see God's hand at work during every ministry team meeting I attend."

Special Thanks

Our special thanks to the following individuals who helped to make this year's event a success:

Bob Cairns, Deacon Beth Caywood, Kathy Conrad, Linda Cunningham, Adam Davidson, Patty Davidson, Sandy DeLorenze, The Rev. Bill Diehm, Barb Eback, David Fenoglietto, Gene Kesner, The Rev. Kurt Kusserow, The Rev. Sarah Lee-Faulkner, Mary Lynne Martin, Mark O'Donnell, Carol Ruckert, The Rev. Kari Smail, Ann Soroka, Judy Sparlin, The Rev. Melissa Stoller, Joseph Tuttle, Emilee Wessel, and of course, everyone who attended!

The Health & Wellness Ministry is provided as a partnership between the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Lutheran SeniorLife.

CPR, AED, ...DNR?

Many congregations have begun hosting biennial training on cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) machines. These practices are proven to save lives.

These trainings can bring to mind the concern about *do not resuscitate* (DNR) orders, and subsequently, the possibility of the congregation obtaining and keeping on file any such orders from parishioners.

As well-intentioned as this thought may be, there can be many pitfalls associated with attempting to keep a list of DNRs on file at the church. Consider:

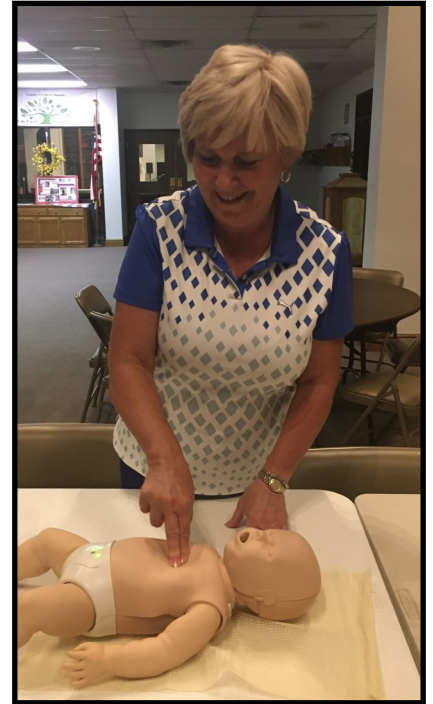
- How many precious minutes will be wasted trying to determine whether or not the victim has a DNR order?
- What if the available person trained in CPR does not know who the victim is, and is therefore unable to determine whether or not they have a DNR order?
- What if the victim is simply a visitor to the church that day?

These are but a few concerns related to keeping DNR orders at the church. If your congregation asserts that DNR orders will be honored, you may be held liable if the orders are not. Conversely, volunteers are protected under Good Samaritan laws from being sued or otherwise being held liable for attempting to save a victim's life if that victim is unable to respond to a request for permission to help.

Therefore, the best practice is to empower your ushers and volunteers to save the life if possible.

There is a time and place for DNR orders. If the individual informs his/her doctor of the desire not to be resuscitated, the doctor will make the order part of the person's medical chart. These orders can be part of a person's living will or other advance directive, which should be kept with other important documents and discussed with loved ones.

If you are interested in having a speaker visit your group or congregation for a detailed presentation on end-of-life decisions — decisions which should be made now and revisited periodically — please contact Patty Davidson at (412) 367-8222 or patricia.davidson@lutheranseniorlife.org.



Volunteer Deb Roginski learns infant CPR as part of a CPR/AED training held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Butler.

Videos Now Available

Thank you to the many pastors and volunteers who took time to be filmed for the production of our 10th Anniversary video.

Health & Wellness Ministry Coordinator Patty Davidson is happy to “take the show on the road” and arrange a special screening for your congregation or group! In addition, the video is now available for viewing on Lutheran SeniorLife’s website at lutheranseniorlife.org/healthministry and on Lutheran SeniorLife’s YouTube channel.

We are also in the process of creating shorter videos out of footage from the full-length video, with the goal of engaging and exciting viewers about specific aspects of health and wellness ministry. These videos will be posted on social media as well.

Be sure to Like and Share these videos, starring your colleagues in ministry!



Those present for the video unveiling on May 15th were treated to gourmet popcorn.

Ministry in Action

Congregation Reaches Out to Grieving Members with Book Ministry

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Irwin, PA**



From left: Barbara Gregar, Dee Withrow, Pat Simmers, Jeanne Suehr, and Patty Davidson

When Jeanne Suehr, the wife of now-retired Pastor Clif Suehr, lost her father 2½ years ago, her grief was powerful.

Jeanne soon began to receive Stephen Ministries' *Journeying through Grief* book series from the Health & Wellness Ministry. She received a different book at four crucial points throughout the first year following her loss.

Jeanne was so impacted by the books that she felt led to bring the ministry to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Irwin. She quickly formed a team of three parishioners, who had all experienced recent loss and were eager to help others in the same position. Health & Wellness Ministry Coordinator Patty Davidson met with the group and shared general information about the books, as well as logistical details and a budget guide.

After reading it, this was the best I felt since Sue's passing. I would recommend it to anyone going through the grieving process. Love,

An excerpt from a thank-you note written by a grateful recipient of the *Journeying through Grief* books

Team member Dee Withrow states, "The whole concept of this ministry is wonderful. You forget your own hurt when you are helping others."

With the approval and support of Church Council, Holy Trinity officially launched the ministry in January 2018, with Barbara Gregar coordinating the effort.

Barbara, a retired administrative assistant in the Norwin School District, organizes and types letters that accompany the books. She enjoys being able to put her skills to use in ministry, but more importantly, she says, "I participate because I know how much I would have appreciated someone reaching out to me during that difficult first year without my husband."



Part of Barbara Gregar's volunteer work includes determining when it's time to send the next book.

The team decided to make the books available to an immediate family member of anyone whose funeral service was held by Holy Trinity, including individuals from out of state. Barbara comments, "I like that we are using this as an outreach to serve people who may or may not be from within the church."

Team member Pat Simmers adds, "You don't know who will be most impacted by the content of the books. Some of the people I didn't expect to be very moved by the books were the most vocal about how helpful they were in their grief process."

As the Suehrs settle in to their new home out of the area, they are prayerful that this ministry will continue at Holy Trinity. "These little books make a big difference," says Jeanne. "I'm thankful that Barbara, Dee, and Pat are committed to providing the ministry on an ongoing basis. I can see this one day growing into more areas of care and outreach for the congregation."

To learn more about this ministry, contact Patty Davidson at (412) 367-8222 or patricia.davidson@lutheranseniorlife.org.

Blessing of the Hands

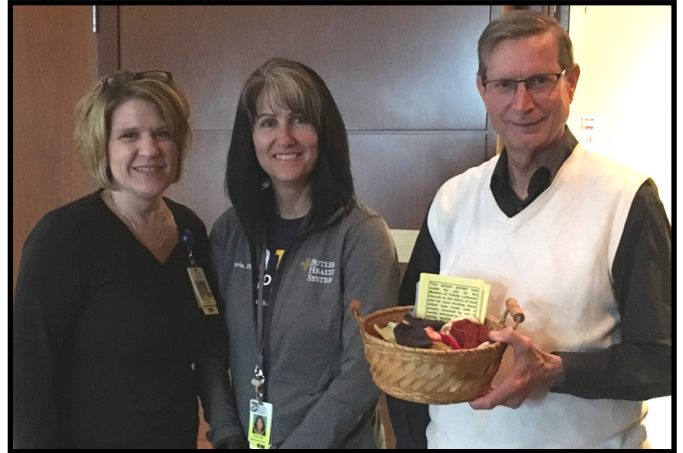
The Health & Wellness Ministry was thrilled to support Trinity Lutheran Church of Butler in their outreach to the employees of Butler Memorial Hospital during the hospital's Health Care Employees Week celebration in May.

The outreach activity was a "Blessing of the Hands" ceremony, where hospital employees could have their hands blessed and anointed with oil. The health team at Trinity discovered the idea at the annual Anointing & Appreciation event held by the Lutheran Synod and Lutheran SeniorLife.

After discussing the concept with Health & Wellness Ministry Coordinator Patty Davidson, Pastor Joel Benson of Trinity shared the idea with Cheryl Ramsey, hospitality services manager for Butler Health System.

Ms. Ramsey and other coordinators of the hospital's celebration were excited to have the church offer this activity to employees. "We appreciated this opportunity for our staff to reflect on the importance of finding balance between their caring hands and hearts and the science of healthcare," Ms. Ramsey stated.

While the hospital's administrative team focused on publicizing the opportunity to staff, Trinity's health team worked with Patty Davidson to coordinate logistical matters, including creating an appropriate atmosphere for the service.



Volunteer Carl Baughman (right) offers "prayer pockets" made by Trinity's prayer shawl ministry to health care workers after they received their blessing at the service.



Volunteer Donna Baughman (left) stated, "Seeing how appreciative the hospital employees were, I got as much out of the experience as they did."

Eight members of Trinity's health team volunteered for a combined 12 hours, to allow anyone from any shift to receive the blessing. A total of 60 hospital employees took advantage of the opportunity.

There is already talk of returning for next year's celebration at the hospital. Ms. Ramsey noted, "I heard from several people in my department on how much the prayer touched them."

After receiving the blessing, hospital employees were offered a handout with additional prayers and blessings, as well as "prayer pockets" made by Trinity's prayer shawl ministry.

Blessing Words

I bless your hands in the name
of the Father who created,
loves and sustains you, the Son
who redeems you and the Holy
Spirit who empowers you. May
these hands bring comfort and
healing to those they touch, to
the honor and glory of God.

Amen.

***To learn more about the Blessing of the Hands ceremony,
please contact Patty Davidson via the information below.***

Remember: We're Here to Help!

Patty Davidson is ready to assist you with all of your health and wellness ministry endeavors. Patty is available to share ideas, provide resources, train volunteers, coordinate informational speakers, and more!

(412) 367-8222 • patricia.davidson@lutheranseniorlife.org