Register today to be part of the Conference’s fall fundraiser, One Night Without A Home – Lehigh Valley. Not only is it a chance to raise funds to support the Conference’s mission, but it is also an opportunity to experience what it is like to be homeless. You can participate individually, or gather your friends, family, and co-workers to create a team.

On November 13th, we invite you to sleep outside, in your yard or in an approved public or private space, to raise awareness of the difficulties faced by those who are homeless. The event is 12 hours, with live on-the-hour virtual programming until midnight. Activities, information, and advocacy of the homeless will be featured.

If you are fortunate to have a job, a place to live, and food on your table, homelessness might seem like something that happens to other people. However, many people are one paycheck away from being homeless. Losing a job, becoming ill, or another seemingly small event, can result in someone losing their home and becoming part of the homeless population.

Register to be a part of these 12 impactful hours. If you can’t participate, donate to someone who is. Your contribution supports the Conference and its mission – to provide healing, housing and hope to the most vulnerable in the Lehigh Valley.

Register online through our website, www.lehighchurches.org/events, and post a photo of why you are sleeping out and doing your part to end homelessness.
With Faith Like the Grain of a Mustard Seed, Nothing is Impossible

Let’s talk about mustard for a minute. Mustard is made by mixing mustard seeds with a variety of sour, salty, and bitter ingredients. The seed that makes it mustard is only about 2mm in diameter, just a smidge bigger than a poppy seed. It is really, really small.

In Matthew, after Jesus heals a boy possessed by a demon, His disciples ask why it was that they could not cast out the demon, but He could. Jesus tells them they didn’t have sufficient faith that it could be done. But, Jesus said, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to the mountain, ‘Move.’ And it will move. And nothing will be impossible for you.

Facing down your demons with a smidge of faith the size of a mustard seed seems like quite a leap, doesn’t it? As humans, we are desperate to believe that things will work out, that we will be successful, that our deepest desires will come true. But so often we open the door to doubt. We remember our unmet expectations. That tiny seed can be very hard to find, to hold on to.

The best of part of my working day is first thing in the morning. As I pull up to Dubbs Memorial, I see the front of the building packed with people. Some are chatting; some are waiting for breakfast to be served. Others are there early for appointments with counsellors. Some wait at our door because they simply did not know where else to go. They are here with their tiny mustard seed, wanting very much to believe that we can help.

I don’t spend much time wondering why they are here. I am just glad that they managed to find their way to our door. For these men and women, making the choice to wake up and come to Dubbs might have felt more like the mountain than the mustard seed. But they made it. I like to think we are growing their faith by greeting them with a smile, giving them a hot meal, asking ‘how are you today?’ and listening to the answer.

Thanks to The Barn, we have recently renovated our front waiting area with a patio and seating to make our guests more comfortable, to encourage them to stay longer. After all, even tiny mustard seeds need good soil to grow in.

If you have lost your faith, please visit. Eat lunch with us, stay and chat. See that all things are possible with just a smidge of faith. We have enough seeds for everyone. If you are a person of faith, help us prepare the soil of our community for the tiny seeds at our door. Volunteer. We need you. They need you.

ISO Board Members

Want to deepen your involvement with the Conference?

Looking for new ways to put your faith into action?

Free on the third Tuesday of the month?

THEN CALL TODAY!

We have openings on our Board of Directors and are looking for passionate, engaged members to guide our impactful work in the Lehigh Valley.

Contact Abby Goldfarb at 610-433-6421 ext. 6108 or agoldfarb@lehighchurches.org today to learn more.
Calling all Christmas Heroes!

The holidays are always challenging for low-income or unemployed families, and with the COVID-19 pandemic, even more families are now affected with just trying to make ends meet. Families are forced to choose between paying rent and utilities and giving their family something to open on Christmas.

By participating in the Conference’s Christmas Hero program, you can help families not only enjoy opening Christmas presents on Christmas Day, but you also contribute to the family’s continued housing stability. If you are interested in helping a family, please contact Chris Moran at cmoran@lehighchurches.or by November 12th.

If you are unable to sponsor an entire family, a toy donation or gift card is also helpful and welcome.

The Corner of 5th & Allen Street in Downtown Allentown Looks Quite a Bit Different!

Thanks to a generous gift from The Barn and the hard work of our very own Ray Desmond, the front of our campus received a makeover!

The landscaping has been replaced with a brick patio and a walkway connecting entrances to the building. Picnic tables and benches make up a beautiful seating area; potted flowers and shrubs have been added to give the space color and a welcoming feel.

An outdoor seating area has a longstanding request by our Daybreak members. A very special thank you to The Barn for making this vision a reality.
Weather Alert Boxes

If you had no food and the grocery stores were closed, what would you do?

Severe inclement weather may force various services in the Lehigh Valley to cease and providers to close. In an attempt to still provide services to the unsheltered, and encourage the unsheltered to prepare for such weather, the Conference is enhancing their outreach efforts.

When inclement weather is forecasted, the Street Outreach Team will visit the encampments in the area to warn about the weather and encourage the encampment residents to seek temporary housing in one of the area shelters. The team will also provide them with a “Weather Alert Box” that includes shelf-stable food, such as, read-to-eat tuna or chicken packets, fruit cups, juice boxes, bottled water, beef jerky, granola bars, etc.

If the Conference Kitchen should have to close due to weather, the boxes will also be handed out prior.

Following Daybreak’s motto “People Helping People,” the current Daybreak members are excited to put the “Weather Alert Boxes” together.

Along with the “Weather Alert Box,” and encouraging encampment residents to seek alternative shelter, the Street Outreach Team hands out hand warmers, sleeping bags, tents, flashlights, batteries, propane, and socks, and is always looking for these types of donations.

Please donate to a “Weather Alert Box” or Outreach items, because no person should be hungry or cold.

Welcome New Member Churches

Being a member church of the Conference gives you access to over 65 years of resources and experience to draw on, speakers for services and special interests, free tickets and discount bulk tickets for various events, support to pastors and congregations, plus many other benefits. The Ecumenical Associate, Genie, is always excited to speak with potential new churches of all faiths.

Join us in welcoming three new church partners: Grace Episcopal Church Allentown, Central Moravian and Life After Death Prophetic Ministries.

Grace Episcopal Church is a community of passionate people, living out their faith in an ever-changing city. They believe their life in service of God’s mission are nurtured and nourished by the presence of Jesus Christ. Love of neighbor and neighborhood has been guiding them since 1866.

Central Moravian Church is an inclusive community of God’s people, which assembles for worship, education and fellowship as members of the worldwide Moravian Church. Their members are committed to meeting the needs of society and nurturing individuals on their spiritual journeys as they honor their Moravian heritage. They live their lives serving and fulfilling the mission of Christ in the world.

Life After Death Prophetic Ministries is a healing center to nurture and encourage, through bible-based teaching. There is a spirit of encouraging those who long for healing beyond their brokenness and encouraging those who are hurting to live past any situation or tragedy.
A Client Story

Two Months from Homeless to Having a Home

JC was recently living with her daughter, but when her daughter asked her leave, her support system, and home were gone. JC was homeless for the first time, living in her car. She did not understand how Medicare benefits worked, so her medications lapsed and at that point, everything else started to fall apart.

Not knowing where to turn, someone told her of the Conference, and she visited us for the first time in May.

After connecting with us, she used the Drop-in Center for showering, so she could maintain her job stocking shelves. We provided her with toiletries, clothing, and food from our Conference Kitchen. She used our computers to search for an apartment after being accepted into the Rapid Rehousing Program.

JC also connected with a Certified Peer Support (CPS) Specialist to help her through this process and within two months, JC was in her own apartment.

Today, JC continues to live independently and maintains her job. She still checks in to her CPS from time to time. We are so proud of her accomplishments and glad we could help her get back on her feet.

If you know of someone in a similar situation, please have him or her contact the Conference for an assessment.

Meet our New Community Engagement Coordinator

My name is Christopher Moran, the new Community Engagement Coordinator at the Conference. I am very excited and grateful for the opportunity to be here and I look forward to working with all current and new volunteers and donors.

I graduated from Delaware Valley University in 2016 and just recently completed my master’s degree. Some of my hobbies include playing basketball, watching movies, spending time with family, and enjoying quality time with my puppy.

I take pride in the ability to do something bigger than myself, so please don’t hesitate to send me an email or give me a call at cmoran@lehighchurches.org or 610-433-6421 ext. 6113.

We rely on our volunteers and the time and donations you provide to keep us going. We are in need of sweatpants, sweatshirts and other cold weather clothing. I have updated our needed items on AmazonSmile.

https://smile.amazon.com/hz/charitylist/lis/2MQ1E9ZV91YDG/ref=smi_ext_ink_lcl_cl

Donations and contributions can be made at the Conference or by giving online. Thank you for your support and for helpingJC achieve this milestone in her life.
Addressing the Challenge of Locating Affordable Housing

It’s no secret that affordable housing is in short supply, and when affordable housing does become available, there is a great deal of competition for the unit. Landlords are able to overlook those with poor credit, an eviction, or those with a criminal history. Apartment searching is difficult, and with such obstacles, it also becomes discouraging and depressing. The eviction moratorium, that was put into place since 2020, by the government, has caused affordable housing to become even scarcer.

The Conference’s Landlord Engagement Coordinator (LEC) was put into place by the Lehigh Valley Regional Advisory Board to soften the effects of apartment searching, encourage landlords to partner with housing assistance providers, and be a liaison to apartment seekers and landlords.

Connecting with landlords is the essential function of the LEC, Yuslendy. She is able to speak with landlords directly, tell them more about housing programs, and why they should partner with housing assistance providers. Through grants and private donations the Conference, along with other agencies who have a LEC, are able to provide landlord incentives and special programs to encourage landlords to rent to this population.

With Yuslendy’s hard work, she was able to partner with 13 new landlords since this past July.

If you are a landlord and have, or will have, affordable units to rent, reach out to Yuslendy to see why you should partner with the Conference, and if you qualify for any incentives.

610-439-8653 Ext. 6259

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Did You Know

Everything that housed people can do just by walking into another room of their house usually requires a person experiencing homelessness to travel several miles.

More than half of the people who are hungry are not eligible for public benefits because they are above the poverty line which is $23,000 for a family of four.

People who are eligible for parole but don’t have a home plan cannot be released from prison.

The leading cause of homelessness is a lack of affordable housing.

46% of people living in emergency shelters are intact families.

It is estimated that 1,426 people are experiencing homelessness in Allentown today.

The age at which people are at the highest risk of entering a homeless shelter in the United States is infancy.

In no state, metropolitan area or county can a full time, minimum wage worker afford a modest two bedroom apartment.

93% cannot afford a one bedroom apartment.

Over 7.5 million extremely low income renters are severely housing cost burdened, spending more than half of their income on housing.
Our “We Need” Wish List as We Head into Colder Weather

The Outreach Team is looking for these items for people who are homeless:
- Men’s & women’s sweatpants, sweatshirts, and hoodies
- Backpacks
- Tents
- Sleeping bags
- Individual bags of chips
- Women’s sports bras
- Men’s and women’s underwear
- Cases of water
- Socks

We are creating Weather Alert Boxes this winter and could use the following:
- Ready-to-eat tuna and chicken packets
- Fruit cups
- Juice boxes
- Bottled water

The needs for our Drop-in Center are:
- Bingo prizes
- Arts and crafts supplies
- Individual bags of chips
- One use shower flip-flops
- Adult sized bath towels

We serve three meals a day, five days a week at our Conference Kitchen and always need:
- Volunteer groups to prepare or donate breakfast/lunch/dinner
- Restaurant sized spices
- XL, Large, and medium sized disposable gloves
- Plastic utensils (forks & spoons)
- Financial donations
- 3 compartment individual disposable trays
- 10 oz. and 8 oz. Styrofoam cups (8oz lids)

Housing Services would like the following:
- Full size shampoo, soap, deodorant, toothpaste
- Size 3 and up diapers
- Baby wipes
- Feminine products

Our staff would appreciate these items:
- Tissues
- Disposable masks

Please contact Chris Moran at cmoran@lehighchurches.org if you can help. Thank you!

Summer Stats

2,959 dinners served since beginning July 7th
10,211 all meals served since July 7th
572 households came to the Conference seeking housing assistance
124 individuals accessed services at our drop-in center, 54 of the 124 were homeless
3 new member churches joined us to do good in our community!
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