

Conference Missions Coordinator
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“I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it unto me.”—Jesus
“Love your neighbor as yourself.” —Jesus

What a busy, blessed, and productive year it has been in the life of our seven (7) conference mission projects and church and community worker. As I reflect on the year behind us, I would say there are three words that would rightly describe the life of our mission projects this year: Change and Confirmations and Celebrations.

First, came all the changes....

I have heard it said that “the only constant is change”, how true that statement is. And it is no different with our project directors; we experienced three changes this year. In the spring of last year, Vickie Ballengee retired from Heart + Hand Outreach Ministries in South Charleston. Eddie Buckland now serves as the Director. Then Scotts Run Settlement House saw a change in leadership when Shay Petito left her position as Executive Director, and Michael Richards has stepped into that position. Then lastly, Brenda Hunt retired from Heart and House in Philippi in December and Buck Edwards came on board as Director.

What a year of ministry it has been for all 7 of our mission projects and Church and Community Worker. The project directors meet periodically by ZOOM with Judy Raines, the Chair of the Global Ministries Team to share happenings, concerns, celebrations, and resources with each other. All of their reports are included in this section on Global Ministries Team. The mission projects are involved in so much ministry it is hard to get it all in, things like: Children’s ministry, mentoring, feeding ministries, food baskets at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, outreach to youth, homeless ministries, dance and music classes, gardening, assistance to families for rent, utilities and other necessities of life and the list goes on and on. You can “read all about it” in the pages of this section and I encourage you to do so.

Second, came the confirmations...

During the year of 2022 the Global Ministries Team conducted two (2) Reviews and Evaluations of our mission projects. In May we were at Scotts Run Settlement House in Osage with Shay Petito and her staff, volunteer and board of Directors. Then in October, the Evaluation and Review of The House of the Carpenter in Wheeling took place. In each of these cases, the on-site team was amazed and enthralled with the amount of mission and ministry taking place.

This process that takes place once each quadrennium, where all 7 mission projects host members of the team, interviews are done and recommendations are made to enhance, encourage and better improve the onsite ministry. The visiting group is made up of The Conference Mission Coordinator, The Chair of the Global Ministries Team, a member at large and one project director.

This year there will be two more of the projects evaluated: Tyrand Cooperative Ministries with Belinda Toms in March and Heart and Hand House in Philippi with Buck Edwards in the fall.

Then there were the Celebrations...it has been a wonderful year !

*** At the Annual Conference session in June, on a mild Thursday afternoon, an exuberant crowd gathered in the front of the Upshur Parish House to celebrate 30 years of ministry in that place.

***In September a great celebration was had at The Bunk House on the Tyrand Cooperative Ministries site as they celebrated 60 years of ministry. Lots of good food, fellowship and cheers to the staff of this vital ministry

*** And then last but not least came the “granddaddy “of them all as long time supporters, volunteers and staff gathered at Wesley United Methodist Church in Morgantown to celebrate the 100th anniversary of that project, located in Osage,(the actually name of the community is Pursglove), WV. Just recently The United Methodist Reporter Newsletter had a article written about the history of 100 years. It is online if you would like to read it.

Then lastly I give thanks to all the churches, parishes and individuals who have supported these ministries either directly by monetary gifts or through your prayers and support. I will also give thanks to the many churches who through their apportionments have been a part of these vital ministries that bring hope and help to our neighbors in need. Through your apportionment giving you are helping to make an impact on the lives of the individuals and families that are served by our mission projects, now and into the future. Thank you.

I will end with these words of scripture...”Give from the heart and bless the Lord—for the Lord loves a cheerful giver.”

To God be the Glory!