

# Voice of the Spire

The Newsletter of Arch Street United Methodist Church  
*A Reconciling Congregation*



Autumn 2017

## Arch Street United Methodist Church

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## Voice of the Spire

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## How United Methodists Respond to Disaster

Rev. Tom Lank, Northeast Jurisdiction UMVIM Coordinator

*Editor's Note: We have all been shaken and humbled by the natural disasters that impacted so many people in our country and elsewhere this summer. Rev. Tom Lank, who coordinates volunteer teams for our jurisdiction, kindly agreed to explain the role of two major United Methodist organizations that provide assistance in these situations and how we can help.*



At times like these, it can be hard to know how to maintain focus on all of the human and environmental damage being done by hurricanes, earthquakes, monsoons, mudslides, and wildfires.

Luckily, as United Methodists, we are part of an organization that keeps us committed to the recovery efforts for the long haul. After the news cameras have moved on, United Methodists will be serving in places like Houston and Puerto Rico and Mexico City for years to come. The two main branches of the church that make that possible are UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) and UMVIM (United Methodist Volunteers in Mission).

UMCOR is the humanitarian relief arm of the church, engaging in efforts that alleviate human suffering—from assistance to migrants to sustainable agriculture to disaster response. They provide financial assistance, expertise, and networking to help communities and churches recover.

The labor comes from UMVIM volunteers. These are people just like you who want to put their "Christian love into action" and reach out in com-

passion to those in need. In disaster situations, UMVIM mobilizes short-term volunteers from all around the country to walk alongside the survivors, offering spiritual and emotional care. They also do the grunt work of mucking out mud from flooded houses, and even rebuild them when necessary.

### Ways You Can Be Involved

- **Donate money and supplies.** When you give to UMCOR Disaster Response, 100% of your donation goes to your designated project. There are also relief supply kits that you can assemble and donate that will be distributed through local partners in affected communities ([www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org)).
- **Pray.** Pray for the survivors. Pray for God to use you in the response. Pray that we would have the foresight to prepare for disasters before they occur.
- **Get trained.** Each annual conference offers training for Early Response Teams and Team Leaders who will take volunteers into disaster-affected areas. Contact your Eastern Pennsylvania coordinator, Greg Ellis, for details ([gellis@epaumc.org](mailto:gellis@epaumc.org)).
- **Form a team and go to help through UMVIM.** But don't go until the churches have the capacity to receive you! When they are ready for volunteers, the bishop in the area will extend an invitation. Connect with me through Facebook ([facebook.com/NEJUMVIM](https://facebook.com/NEJUMVIM)) or on the web ([umvimnej.org](http://umvimnej.org)) to find out how, when, and where to serve responsibly.

## News & People

### The Youth Mission Trip

*Marge Donnelly*

This summer, for the ninth time, ASUMC's youth group—both present members and alumni—traveled to Robeson County, North Carolina to be in mission and service to that county's residents. By now, the youth are well acquainted with Robeson County. They've borne witness to the tremendous need there—a kind of need that comes from persistent and pernicious poverty. But they have also experienced Robeson's treasures, including the warmth and embrace of the folks who live there.

In natural disasters, the economically disadvantaged suffer disproportionately and often cruelly. Such was the case when Hurricane Matthew hit Robeson County last October and caused catastrophic flooding. Arch Street's youth could have been forgiven if they had approached this year's mission trip with a bit of apprehension. Some of the projects that they had personally worked on over the years were known to have been destroyed in the flood.

The states of other projects and of the people they had helped were unknown to

the group. But our youth had no misgivings, and threw themselves into a project that turned out to be one of the most rewarding they have ever had in North Carolina.

A lot of the hurricane recovery work that's been done in Robeson has been the result of a partnership between the UMC Virginia Conference and UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief). Using volunteer labor from around the country and grants and cash donations to purchase construction materials, this collaboration hopes to restore 100 low-income families to their homes by the end of December.

This summer, the Arch Street group worked on one of those homes while its construction was in the completion stage. Its elderly owners had been deeply traumatized by their losses and by being displaced and separated from their home. Our youth group was tasked with landscaping—essentially, making a beautiful outdoor space for this couple who had suffered so much.

The project quickly became a labor of love for the group. The porch and porch swing were painted. The yard on which so much sand and sediment had been

dumped by the flood was raked, graded, and mulched. New shrubs and perennial flowers were planted by the house. Large planters with perennials were placed in the yard. And Arch Street's resident artist, Rachel Ternes, oversaw the painting and restoration of concrete lawn ornaments that were dear to the homeowners.

At the end of our week in North Carolina, I don't think there was any member of the group who didn't understand how much more than physical labor they had contributed to the owners of that home. By throwing themselves into their work, body and soul, they had helped to restore beauty and balance to two lives.

Soon after our group left Robeson County, the house they had worked on was dedicated by Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the North Carolina Conference. You can see a video of the dedication at <https://nccumc.org/bishop/connections-every-household-restored/>.

To make next year's mission trip an experience just as special and meaningful, you can donate (by cash, check, or online at [archstreetumc.org/give/](http://archstreetumc.org/give/)) and designate your gift for the Youth Mission Trip.



*(Photos courtesy of Marge Donnelly)*





(Photos courtesy of Rachel Ternes)

## A River of Hope

*John Buzby*

September 10th marked the new season of Grace Café and with it, the unveiling of a new mural in Nichols Hall. Rachel Ternes, our former US-2 missionary, has gone on to seminary but her legacy lives on in this beautiful mural.

Although many of us helped, this was Rachel's brainchild. I asked her, "Did you have a template that you followed?" She replied "No, it all came to me as I went along." She simply started envisioning the various shapes of the river and outlining them with masking tape. Next she penciled in numbers from 1 to 9, corresponding to the shades of blue that would make up the river's colors. Then it was the job of her volunteers to match the paint colors to their corresponding numbers.

I mentioned to everyone "This is very therapeutic," to which we all agreed.

Along the river's path, which wraps around Nichols Hall, are nine medallions representing scenes from the Bible that depict what the Grace Café means to our congregation. (The medallions remain incomplete as of this writing but Charlie Meyers, our church secretary, is organizing a crew to finish the work. If interested, please call the church office. It's definitely worth your time!)

I will not list all the medallions in the hope that you will check out the mural for yourselves. But the one that strikes me the most is the medallion representing the washing of feet. It could be Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, or it

could be the unnamed woman washing Jesus's feet, but that doesn't matter to me in the least. For what it symbolizes is Jesus's teaching of hope and love.

It reminds me of Pope Francis's washing of the prisoners' feet at the Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility during his 2015 visit to Philadelphia. (Incidentally, the Pope was presented with a walnut throne made by the inmates.) After bathing the inmates' feet, he said "Life is a journey along difficult roads, different paths, which leave their mark on us. We know in faith that Jesus seeks us out. He wants to heal our wounds, to soothe our feet, which hurt from traveling alone, to wash ourselves clean of the dust from our journey."

To me, this image embodies what we do best at ASUMC. We don't actually wash the feet of our guests, although the nurses may bathe their feet in a soothing medicinal bath. However, we provide succor to those in our community who are suffering the horrors of homelessness, addiction, mental illness—those pushed to the margins of our society who are struggling and suffering within our community. And getting worse in our current political climate, where all of this nation's great wealth continues to be sucked up by the wealthiest in our society, leaving more people at the margins.

So, we at ASUMC must get stronger in wielding our sword of light and love. It was Franklin D. Roosevelt who said "We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone." To sum up, our mural represents who we are: a River of Hope.

## The Center – Philadelphia

*Rev. Robin Hynicka*

In the *Summer Spire* issue, I announced establishment of The Center–Philadelphia as a nonprofit organization out of ASUMC that will extend our legacy as a strong advocate for social change.

By making transparent the various ways we are already engaging with our surrounding community and building trust with our partners that has a clear structure and future, we will further our capacity to create spaces for the centering of voices that are not often found in a Center City venue.

Having a related but distinct nonprofit entity to generate dollars for capital projects and operational support that would otherwise be inaccessible to us will also expand our ability to invest in the valuable work that our partners and programs are engaging in.

Our Board of Directors has held its first meeting, bringing together the vision and experience of Brittany Alston, Janis Moore Campbell, Jordan Harris, Rev. Jeffery Haskins, and Michelle Whittaker. We expect to submit our Articles of Incorporation and establish bylaws within the next month, and will then be able to move forward with establishing The Center–Philadelphia as a 501c(3) organization.

This is an exciting time as we continue to live into our core commitments to the principles of social justice, advocacy, civic engagement, community-building, love, and liberation through The Center–Philadelphia.

## Columns

### Minister's Message



Rev. Robin Hynicka,  
Senior Pastor

For four Sundays in a row this late summer season, I asked those persons in worship at the 8:30 and 11:00 AM services to share one word or a short phrase that described their experience.

Some people shared exactly how they felt: *warm, loved, called, hopeful, blessed, revived, peaceful, challenged, encouraged, safe.*

Others offered these descriptions of the experience: *welcoming, genuine, inspiring, restoring, comforting, supportive, challenging, familiar, uplifting, relevant, inclusive, open, free, renewing.*

Still others testified that the service provided *community, discernment, learning, hope, conviction, grace, hospitality, and reconciliation.*

And yet more responses expressed that the experience prompted *justice, peace, love, conviction, liberation, and action.*

Several phrases were shared: the service is where “the sweet, sweet spirit abides”; it is “a revitalizing morning smoothie”; “fuel for the week ahead.” One person said, “I learn something new every week.”

Of course, my favorite response came from a very young worshipper: “I like the Passer [Pastor]; I will always feel safe here.”

That is quite a list. Take time to process these words—I know I will. Perhaps, out of our collective musing, descriptive names for our worship services will emerge. Keep me posted and let me know. I am curious to see what might come out.

#### A Busy Time for POWER (Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild)

POWER's strategy teams have created action plans for 2017/18 to: (1) distribute all state education funding through the Fair Funding formula and end the SRC; (2) gain a Living Wage of \$15/hr for Philadelphia's contracted and subcontracted workers; (3) secure PECO's commitment to source 20% of its energy from local renewable sources by 2025; and (4) end cash bail. Watch the weekly “What's Happening” bulletin for ways you can be part of this important work.

### Reflections from the Mentoring Program

Rev. Robin Hynicka

In October 2016, a group of six young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 committed to a year-long mentoring program designed to assist them in discerning their call to ministry. Through a process of monthly one-on-one sessions with me, a series of training sessions, and monthly peer group meetings, the members of the group bonded and developed a vibrant community.

On a weekend retreat in September 2017, the group explored how to create a theory of change. They also spent time developing questions to assist with evaluating their experience and articulating the lessons learned.

When asked to express what the program meant to them, they responded with these thoughts:

“A lot of this year has meant that the fight for justice is something I am not alone in doing.”

“Having a group like this makes me realize I am not alone.”

“This group provides me with a sense of community that I never thought I would have.”

“Since joining the group, I learned that there are a lot of ways to show love and one main way is to show up.”

“The group helps me see where I stand in the midst of the forest of the world.”

One participant shared these lyrics from a song: “When the world is sick, no one is well. But I dreamt that it was all beautiful and strong.”

Before the retreat ended, the group decided to continue their journey together and will organize ways to do it themselves.

I experienced this group of young adults as spiritually inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and full of fun.

## The Trans Health Conference and Other Reconciling Events

*Jarrold Bolden*

The 16th Annual Philadelphia Trans Health Conference was held September 7th–9th at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. The conference is a program of the Mazzone Center, which has addressed the health and wellness needs of the LGBTQ community in the Philadelphia region for over 35 years.

The goal of the conference is to educate and empower Trans individuals on issues of health and well-being; educate and inform allies and health service providers; and facilitate networking, community-building, and systemic change. To reach the greatest possible audience, the conference doesn't charge a registration fee. According to post-conference data released by the Mazzone Center, the 2017 conference attracted over 4,500 attendees from North America and around the world.

The Reconciling United Methodists of Eastern Pennsylvania (RUM-EPA) re-

served a table to circulate pamphlets and literature about welcoming churches and the work of the organization. Throughout the conference, a baptismal renewal liturgy was made available. The intent of the service was to allow persons transitioning to male or female to renew their baptismal vows in their new name, if they wished.

During my volunteer shifts, I had the opportunity to work with Ariel Gonzalez, Darlene DiDomineck, Nancy Megley, and Pat Taylor. Each day, we approached our shifts with cheerfulness, courage and openness to learn more about others, and a sense of camaraderie. The perseverance, teamwork, and everyone's overall good nature were inspiring.

Through it all, I believe each one of us grew closer by learning more about each other's faith and our life experiences with the LGBTQ community. Furthermore, as an openly gay black man, I found it a

rewarding experience. I also left each day feeling that I had gained a greater spiritual connection with the Trans members within my community. After all, they too deserve the same things that each of us deserve as we pass through this life—comfort, compassion, and dignity in our daily interaction with others.

RUM-EPA has a similar outreach activity planned for Philadelphia's 27th Annual Outfest on October 8th, 2017. Philadelphia Outfest is the largest National Coming Out Day event in the U.S.

If you think you might be interested in participating at this year's Outfest, please reach out to Ariel Gonzalez at 973-985-7694 or [arcanum32@gmail.com](mailto:arcanum32@gmail.com). For information concerning Outfest, go to: <http://www.phillygaypride.org/outfest-map-2>. For the Mazzone Center, visit [mazzonicecenter.org](http://mazzonicecenter.org). And to learn more about the work of RUM-EPA, visit [reconcilingepa.org](http://reconcilingepa.org).

## Our History: Rev. James M. Haney

*Dale Shillito, Arch Street Historian*

Before coming to Arch Street UMC, Rev. James Haney had been a pastor for 20 years. After graduating from Drew Theological Seminary in 1943, he held pastorates in New York, Washington DC, and New Jersey. In Eastern Pennsylvania, he pastored in Bryn Mawr, Radnor, Pottsville, and Coatesville. His ministry in Philadelphia before coming to Arch Street was at St. Matthew's.

Rev. Haney was appointed to Arch Street by Bishop Fred Pierce Corson on May 24, 1964. The bishop considered Rev. Haney's "spiritual depth, congenial personality, preaching ability and administrative know-how" to be ideal for this challenging post.

Rev. Haney was pleased to serve at Arch Street because he felt that there was a great need for bolstering city churches. His previous church in Coatesville was now thriving with 1,800 members and Sunday school attendance of 1,200.

Rev. Haney was shocked by the number of city churches that were closing. He dreaded seeing these empty churches, which reminded him of churches in the Soviet Union closed by that atheist state. On a visit there in 1963, his dismay had been transformed to hope by the Patriarch of Georgia, who paraphrased Matthew 16:18: "He will build His church

on the faith of the believers, and the gates of Hell cannot extinguish it."

Rev. Haney lived to see the breakup of the Soviet Union in the 1990's and the reawakening of the Russian Orthodox Church.

*Recently, I received a package from Janitta Haney Carithers, one of Rev. Haney's daughters. She is also an organist. She sent me a CD recording of her organ music. She wants to make it available to us old-timers who remember her and her parents. To borrow the CD, contact me at [dale.shillito@yahoo.com](mailto:dale.shillito@yahoo.com) or through the church office.*

## Events

### United Methodist Events

*Fri Oct 13: "Exploration 2017"—*

Conference event for those who sense God's call to ordained ministry (<https://www.epaumc.org/conference-calendar/exploration-boom-event/>)

*Sat Oct 21: Conference UMW Annual Meeting & Celebration, Havertown UMC, 9AM-5PM (contact Sandy Wilson at wilsonsan1@aol.com)*

*Sun Nov 26: UMC Student Day—Special offering provides scholarships and loans for students attending United Methodist-related and other accredited colleges and universities*

### ASUMC Calendar

Please check the "Events" tab on our website ([www.archstreetumc.org](http://www.archstreetumc.org)) for the latest calendar activities.

*Sun Oct 1: World Communion Sunday*

Special offering provides scholarships for U.S. racial- and ethnic-minority students and international students

*Sun Oct 22: Native American Sunday and Annual Charge Conference*

*Sun Nov 6: All Saints' Sunday*

*Sat Nov 18: Nationalities Service Center Thanksgiving Celebration*

*Thurs Nov 23: Thanksgiving (office closed Nov 23 and 24, AA will meet Nov 23)*

*Fri Dec 1: World AIDS Day*

*Sat Dec 9: Eliza Shirley Christmas Party*

*Sun Dec 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

*Mon Dec 25: Annual Christmas Breakfast for the Homeless (office closed Dec 25 and 26)*

*United Methodist Men* meet the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM. *United Methodist Women* meet the second Sunday of the month immediately after the 11:00 AM service. The *Native American Indian Awareness Group* meets the third Sunday of the month at 12:30 PM. Refer to the weekly "What's Happening" bulletin for exceptions to these dates.

## Birthdays

### October

3 - Emi Starr  
 5 - Joan Ferron  
 10 - Nicola Jefferson  
 11 - Sylvia Rose Kim  
     George Logan  
 15 - Kalolaine Tapealava  
 18 - Pat Taylor  
 19 - Nemahun Tucker  
 20 - Terry Whaley  
 22 - Tolu Ogunkeye Ajise  
 23 - Janis Campbell  
 24 - Yema Tucker  
 26 - Joe Gutman  
 28 - Charles Fry  
     Siafa Lewis  
 31 - Katie Donnelly

### November

2 - Gaspar Santos  
 3 - Daniel Timmerman  
 4 - Joe Kalil  
 6 - Gwendolyn Beatty  
 10 - Ray Mount  
 11 - Cathy Minecci  
     Abel Wediongo Adungy  
 12 - Francisco Santos  
 16 - Savannah Mae Lindquist  
     Danyale Small  
 17 - Molly McNeill  
 19 - Pamela Thomas  
 20 - Dorothy Twiggs  
 22 - Phil Gressman  
     Serafim Santos  
 24 - Rev. Robert Booker  
     Mary Crawford  
 25 - John Kitterell  
     Sue Kruse  
     David Mordell  
 28 - Myrna Brown  
     Patti Manuel  
 30 - Debra Wood

### December

2 - Regina Bedell  
 4 - Aaron Carson  
 6 - Kobina Amisshah  
     Don Robinson  
 16 - Fornati Bedell  
     Elizabeth Lexa  
     Bob Reeves  
 19 - Gladys Ackerman  
     Heather Warley  
 20 - Alice Ming  
 22 - Carol Jones  
     Steve Raytek  
 24 - Stephanie Ann Carroll Carson  
     Magumbu Chritelle  
 25 - Janice Ciampa  
 26 - Nathaniel Collazzo  
 28 - Juanita Campbell Ford  
 29 - Barbara Prince  
 30 - Zoey Bonfante  
 31 - Jonathan Liu

## Native American Sunday— and Charge Conference!

*Dale Shillito*

Our Native American Sunday this year will be presented on October 22nd. The speaker will be Barbara Hill, a First Nations Canadian of the Ottawa tribe. Pastor Robin met her at a conference/tour of the Holy Lands last spring, where she compared the present-day plight of the Palestinians to that of Native Americans in North America. This was an interesting comparison that few people have considered.

A combined service will commence at 10:00 AM in the sanctuary of Arch Street UMC. Spirit Wing, our old friends Barry Lee and Barbara Andrews-Christy, will provide Native music. Light refreshments will be available after the service at a special Get Acquainted Time that will serve as a bridge to our annual Charge Conference at 12:30 PM. Charge Conference, chaired by our District Superintendent the Rev. Tracy Bass, is your opportunity to learn more about the inner workings and programs of ASUMC.

Be sure to come to our 10:00 Native American service and plan to stay on for fellowship, refreshments, and Charge Conference.

## Celebrating Thanksgiving with Our New Neighbors

*Margaret Harris*

For several years, ASUMC has partnered with the Nationalities Service Center (NSC), our neighbor at 1216 Arch Street, to welcome refugees and celebrate Thanksgiving by sharing a Thanksgiving feast. This year's celebration will take place on Saturday, November 18th from 1:00–4:00 PM in Nichols Hall. Marge Donnelly will once again be our chef in charge of providing delicious traditional American Thanksgiving fare. We will also provide some non-American food choices for our guests who want the comfort of food that is more familiar to them.

At last year's celebration, we welcomed close to 400 people from around the world and we hope to have as many, if not more, this year. Besides eating way too much fabulous food, we enjoyed music and dancing, children's art activities and games, and a photo booth where families had the opportunity to get family photographs. We expect to do the same again this year.

As the current administration scapegoats refugees and immigrants and seeks to end the U.S. refugee program, it has never been more important for us as people of faith to welcome and support refugees. Refugees are well aware of how they are characterized by the current administration. They worry that Americans do not want them here. The Thanksgiving celebration gives us the chance to show that we welcome them. We are grateful that they have come to our country and our community. We are glad that they have escaped persecution, violence, and trafficking. We are thankful for their safety, and their presence in our city and community. We welcome them as brothers and sisters.

To find out how you can participate in this wonderful celebration, contact Margaret Harris at [margaretharris@me.com](mailto:margaretharris@me.com).

## Sanctuary Update

*Rev. Robin Hynicka*

An immigrant rights organizer in Ohio said this in a recent email: "I don't know if you remember talking with me about your experience as a sanctuary church, but I called you one day and you kindly took time to talk with me. You also sent me the list of several questions a church should ask itself before becoming a sanctuary church. I followed up with Rev. Lentz and I know he called you to get guidance. I just wanted you to know that things are going extremely well. We are working to extend the sanctuary movement in northern Ohio. Thank you very, very much for your guidance."

Juntos, Javier, and ASUMC are still inspiring and instructing others about Sanctuary.

Javier has been with us for 10 months. In August, his case was reopened and some action is happening, but nothing definitive.

As part of this new development, Javier was required to be fingerprinted. This presented a nervous few days because in order to comply, Javier would need to go to the immigration office at 41st and Powelton Streets. His attorney secured a written statement that Javier would be under no threat of arrest while fulfilling this requirement. Trusting immigration officials is not easy. After careful consideration with Juntos, myself, and his family, Javier decided to take the risk.

The trip to the immigration office and back was without incident. So now the process is churning away, with the timing and outcome uncertain. In the meantime, Juntos, ASUMC, and others continue to press for immigrant justice. Javier keeps himself busy painting and working around the church.

Please continue to be in prayer and to hold out hope that liberation for Javier is at the end of this long journey.

## Arch Street Moves Its Endowment

*Nancy Megley and Ken Bere*

ASUMC is blessed to have an endowment, thanks to the generosity of present and past members who donated in their lifetime or bequeathed gifts to the church in their wills.

The United Methodist Church urges congregations to invest according to the Church's Social Principles. The Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation (MAUMF) is a portfolio manager that provides investment plans to make this possible, and also offers training on planned giving and how to grow an endowment.

Although we have been well served by our portfolio advisors at Morgan Stanley, after meetings with representatives of MAUMF, the Endowment Committee and Church Council decided to make the transfer of oversight of the endowment to MAUMF, effective October 1st.



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### Future Dates

New Year's Day  
*January 1*

Human Relations Day  
*January 14*

Martin Luther King Jr.  
Day of Service  
*January 15*

Ash Wednesday –  
Lent begins  
*February 14*

World Day of Prayer  
*March 2*

Daylight Savings Time  
begins  
*March 11*

Easter  
*April 1*

Read past issues of  
*Voice of the Spire*  
and follow events at  
our website:

[www.archstreetumc.org](http://www.archstreetumc.org)

### Arch Street United Methodist Church



On the 2017 Youth Mission Trip to Pemberton County, NC, Arch Street's young people landscaped a yard devastated by Hurricane Matthew, then went a step beyond and restored lawn ornaments dear to the homeowners—a true labor of love!

*(Photo courtesy of Marge Donnelly)*

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