



2022
Bulletin of Annual Reports

2023 Congregational Council

Kathy Arndt

Ken Baker*, *treasurer*

Justin Cooley

Kim Criswell*

Emma Danowsky*†, *co-president*

Theresa Furman, *secretary*

Kathy Guffey*, *president*

Lisa Rabuck*, *vice president*

Michelle Shearer

* *denotes council member in their second term*

† *denotes youth council member*

Pastor's Report

Dear United In Christ,

Every once in a while, I find myself reeling from the fact that we have been together for over five and a half years now. In so many ways, it still feels like we are just getting to know each other, but more and more recently it has felt like we are reaching that point in a relationship where we're now comfortable with each other and can encourage each other in new ways. It feels like we've crossed a new sort of threshold where I can now genuinely look back at our track record together and say "oh, that's how *we* do things," not simply "that's how *they* do things." In a lot of ways, it feels like we've finally reached the point where we know just what to expect from and with one another.

And yet, 2022 has seemed like a year completely *unlike* any other in this place. Even as we began to make a return to form in the wake of the pandemic's height, it feels like the year blew away any sort of expectations we could have possibly brought for it. But, you know, I don't think we would have wanted to have it any other way! The movements of this past year have been so encouraging and are worth celebrating for all they have offered. Looking back, it seems as if there were a few major themes running throughout the course of our year together. By and large, it seems as if almost everything we accomplished this past year was either reflective of a movement toward (re)connection with one another, our investment in the kids of our community, or in pursuit of innovative ideas for the sake of God's kin-dom. Let me show you what I mean.

(Re)Connection

One of the biggest challenges we faced in 2022 was figuring out how to continue making *responsible* forward momentum coming out of the pandemic. As we began to emerge with more in-person activity, our challenge was in finding out how to do so in a safe way that recognized and respected the fact that different families, for various safety-based concerns, were making those returns at different paces. When you look back at our worship trends through the year, you can see that this was a slow but steady process. When we started out in winter of 2022, our in-person worship attendance was in the mid to low fifties while we retained a solid core of



individuals worshipping with us regularly online. While we continue to have folks tune in with us each and every week through our streamed service, this past Fall saw an encouraging return to form with an average attendance of about seventy through the months of October-December, a number much closer to our pre-pandemic attendance!

Beyond worship, though, you all forged new connections in incredibly meaningful ways. In 2022, we had the joy of welcoming **sixteen** new members into the life of the congregation. This has been a group that has genuinely jumped in with both feet to catalyze new energy and new ministries among our already thriving initiatives. I mean, just look at the Social Ministry report later in this document and you'll see all of the ways in which this core of energy has been given the space to thrive together! Perhaps most reflective of both our earnest efforts to re-connect with one another while also forging new connections with new faces in our midst was our picnic this past summer where over ninety folks came out to join in fun and fellowship with one another! The excitement that day was downright contagious!



But more than simply seek ways to bolster ourselves, you used your connections – both old and new – this past year to forge new paths of understanding together. You sought to leverage your sense of community to steep yourselves in challenging conversation and new patterns of faith formation. I don't need to look much further than the "Dialogues on Race" and "Dialogues on Sexuality" book studies that you took on last winter to see that your best



connections take place when you are deep in the work of understanding. Continuing with our *Womanist Midrash* Bible study this past Fall, you continue to reinforce that some of your best connections are forged when you ask questions about faith and its daily application together. It's that recognition that led us to find a new and very different way of embracing those connections by going on the move with our new "Theology on Tap" gathering. This gathering happening every other week has afforded ample opportunity to continue asking the big questions about God, faith, discipleship, and

more in a way that has allowed each of us to see that we are far from alone in those questions! On the whole, all of these opportunities in 2022 have given the groundwork for fantastic ways of connecting with the new folks in our community and re-connecting with one another in the wake of the pandemic's throws.



Kids

Holy smokes, have we seen a new pace of living with the kids in our community this past year! Some of them have been right out in front while others have happened more quietly, but just as meaningfully, in the background. For starters, in 2022 we began to see the beauty of a new community being made out our combined Confirmation and Youth Group programs with



our neighbors at Milton Lutheran Church. This group of students has been faithfully gathering each and every month for great conversations about their own lives of faith while also creating a sense of community with one another that has built wonderful support among them, even across our congregations. Likewise, through the wonderful investment of Sherry Bingaman and the crew of volunteers around her, our youngest

students have found genuine excitement around the “Faith and Fun” programming taking place after worship every Sunday. The joy with which those kids come *charging* out of “Faith and Fun” to proudly show their parents their latest craft is absolutely contagious! If you haven’t seen it, I encourage you to stick around with us after worship one Sunday just to see those floodgates open up!

What’s just as beautiful, though, is that you harnessed that energy and that relationship with Milton Lutheran Church this past summer by hosting our first Summer Day Camp in partnership with Camp Mount Luther! This past July, thirteen students got to participate in a week of sacred and silly faith formation together at West Milton Park. While most students came from our two congregations, there was new joy to be found in connecting with kids from our community who do not have a church home. Your support of this ministry allowed us to shine the light of God’s love for these kid’s in genuinely life-changing ways!



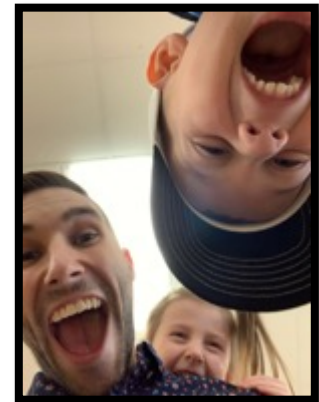
But perhaps where we saw the most visible investments in the kids among us has been in the ways in which we have fostered an environment in which our kids have become *active* participants in our ongoing life of worship. You have always maintained a wonderful practice of inviting kids into worship participation with things like acolyting and helping out by holding the communion trays. In 2022, however, you *unleashed* that potential by inviting our kids and showing them priority in incredible ways. Most visibly, you gave them a priority of space with our



new “prayground” right at the front of the sanctuary. Rather than create a quiet space for rutchy little ones to be outside of the sanctuary, you gave our kids the front row seats to worship and gave them the things they need to be engaged in a whole service! Their new vantage from up front has allowed them to more fully see and hear what is happening throughout worship. It is what has allowed us to invite them in to do the sacred work of leading prayers during our time of worship. It’s what’s

gotten them excited to help out in ushering to collect their art work and put it on display in the fellowship hall. It’s what’s encouraged their help in communion and led to a veritable footrace to see who will get to hold which trays on any given week!

All of this together has shown how you as a congregation have made the intentional decision to *prioritize* our kids in worship and make sure that they are fully equipped so that they can actually *be* the church of today, not just the church of our future. And you know what, UIC? People have noticed. Frankly, you’ve gotten a bit of a reputation out there! Over and over again I have heard from visitors and community members that part of the reason why they come and check things out here at UIC is because of the environment you have created for our kids. Genuinely, this is one of the ways in which 2022 has seen you beautifully live out your values of welcome and inclusion; by prioritizing our students, supporting them, and trusting them with the most sacred of things in our life together!



Authentic Innovation

Through it all, what has been most rewarding to see as your pastor has been the spirit of authentic innovation you have harnessed this past year. In an unbelievable number of ways, you have been able to live out your authentic values as a community in new and unprecedented ways together. It’s that spirit that shepherded things like the prayground and day camp and “Theology on Tap” from above. But just as importantly, it was that trailblazing way that brought to fruition so many life-giving patterns for our community this year.



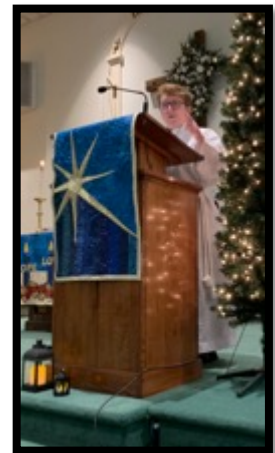
One of the clearest examples of this pattern of living out your convictions in new ways was the celebration of receiving the official designation as a “Reconciling in Christ” congregation this Fall. After years of intentional work in exploring just what it means to live out a sense of



welcome (something you have authentically done well as a community), we affirmed that value with a Welcoming Statement that explicitly names our commitment to “strive to welcome all of God’s beloved in their diversity of race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic bracket, political affiliation, education, nationality, marital status, physical ability, and mental ability.” In that, we became the first fully-fledged congregation in our synod to offer such an explicit welcome of hospitality and receive the designation as RiC. That public witness has already moved in such life-

giving ways in and beyond our community; by doing this new thing together from your conviction, others have genuinely come to find a renewed sense of God-given dignity. For that Spirit-led innovation alone, I give more thanks than you probably know.

As if you simply cannot help but to outdo yourselves, this year you went even further to try an additional unprecedented thing in this place. One of the ways in which you have been a gift to me ever since my arrival has been in how you have helped form me and given the space to grow as a “new” pastor in ministry. In the second half of 2022 it was my genuine joy to be able to share that gift with the arrival of Vicar Katy with us. It has been a privilege to watch as you stepped forward to try on this new sense of call by sharing your gifts of grace and understanding with Vicar Katy. Seeing the ways in which she has already grown and how your mutual care has allowed ministries and ideas to thrive has given me great courage. I am so looking forward to how the rest of Vicar Katy’s time together shapes up in the months ahead.



A New Normal

Remember during the height of the pandemic when everyone was talking about how we would be looking at a “new normal” in its wake? It was an idea that got thrown around a lot, but it seemed like no one ever really knew exactly what that was going to look like. Through this past year, UIC, I think we have finally begun to get a glimpse of what our “new normal” might look like. Our new normal will challenge us to find ways to continue living out our values in new and creative ways, like with playgrounds and RiC. It will call on us to make our community one that reflects the core of who we are in ministry (like the expansion of our food delivery program and the pillars of OAKS and our diaper pantry) and in our visible footprints (like with our new beautiful new paraments and communionware). Our new normal will call on us to incorporate our historical keystones into the fabric of a community made up of different faces than what we knew from our past.



In so many ways, 2022 has been a sign of the things I truly hope are yet to come for us here together. There is no doubt that this year has reflected a changing shift in culture for our community – not just in the sixteen new neighbors in our midst, but with the newfound sense of focus, purpose, and energy for God’s unfolding mission in this world. It’s been a year of more fully living into the values we cherished and I think it’s left us well equipped. Already in 2023 we are seeing the signs of its strengths – just look at the immediate response to the fire at Milton Developmental Services. Undoubtedly, we will see more of this unfold ahead, but I suppose we’ll save that for next year’s report.

For now, simply know that I am grateful for your continued partnership in God’s ministries here in this place. Thank you for taking this call of discipleship seriously. Thank you for being true to yourselves. Thank you for the gifts you share in connection, with our kids, and in always thinking in innovative, yet authentic patterns. Thank you for the Spirit you share in encouragement with one another. Thank you, United In Christ, for being you.



As always: yours, united in Christ,

~ Pastor Justin



United In Christ Lives in Transition

2022 Baptisms

Dylan Cromwell

2022 New Members

Heather Allegar

Bonnie Katherman

Garrett Baker

Jared Rutt

Donna Corazza

Madeline Rutt

Diane Gottlieb

Kristin Sprenkle

Emily Haussmann

Randy Sprenkle

Mark Haussmann

Sarah Sprenkle

Mae Haussmann

Lizzie Sprenkle

Kate Haussmann

Charlie Sprenkle

2022 Funerals

Grace Yost

d. 7/29/22

Property Committee Report

Maintenance Items Completed in 2022:

1. Restrooms - Replaced men's room tank bolts & seals, handicap room flush valve, and women's room vanity seals.
2. Snow Removal - Obtained Mike Culp Trucking to remove snow and salt parking lot and walks for \$65/hr + salt cost.
3. New Shrubbery - Signed maintenance contract to Hillyard's to fertilize, weed control, and prune April thru Nov - \$835

Projects Completed in 2022:

1. Sign Out Front - Installed hip roof style concrete cap - \$1,038
2. Sunday School Addition Roof - GSH Roofing replaced roof over restroom area that was leaking - \$8,808
3. Electric Supply Contract - Our current electric supplier, Better Buy, was going to raise our rate from \$.0949 / kwh to \$.1899. Locked in a new supplier, Direct Energy, at \$.1199 / kwh for 48 mo. This is fixed, no cancellation fee, no cost to make changes at any time to follow lower price, or extend contract, if in our favor.



Future Projects to Consider

1. Replace remaining portion of SS Addition Roof - \$44,554
2. Paint Exterior Woodwork and Belfry - \$23,100
3. Recoat parking lot
4. Increase door glass size - 3 doors - Fellowship Hall, 2 doors to Office Hallway
5. Polish / Seal Basement Floor
6. Paint Interior Walls / Woodwork
7. Remodel Kitchen
8. Paint heater covers in Fellowship Hall.
9. Paint and install vinyl floor in Narthex and hallway to elevator. Have flooring on hand.
10. Install interior & exterior wayfinding signage
11. Timers - Replace water heater and narthex heat timers

Submitted by Ken Criswell

Social Ministry Report

Social Ministry really took off in 2022. The committee began meeting again on a regular basis and gained lots of new members!

MONTHLY FOOD COLLECTION: Social Ministry collects non-perishable food items each week.



Our Little Free Pantry
in West Milton

Your donations get delivered to the Our Little Free Pantry in West Milton, by the gas station across from the on ramp to 15. In 2022 you donated 1,038 food items!

How you can help: When you are grocery shopping, pick up an extra food item and bring it to church. Place it in the wicker basket in the Narthex (main entrance to the church).

MILTON PANTHER PACKS: Panther Packs provides backpacks of food over the weekends, when school meals are not available. Every week there are over 250 children that take home food backpacks. You donated 1,220 food items on Souper Bowl Sunday and 1,044 on Harvest Home Sunday. That's 2,264 food items! Karen Baker and Trudy Swartz setup and decorated for Harvest Home Sunday. The Boy Scouts helped deliver the food to Panther Packs from Souper Bowl Sunday and Harvest Home Sunday.



COLLEGE VALENTINE'S: With your help, Social Ministry was able to bless our 5 college students with care packages containing gift cards and snacks!



SHARING OUR TABLES COMMUNITY MEAL: In 2022 UIC joined the Sharing Our Tables free community meal, which is takes place every other month. UIC participated in 6 meals. Every month you donated food items for the meals and came out to help prep, cook, serve, and clean up. Throughout the year we gave out ??? meals. On Souper Bowl Sunday \$140 was collected for UIC’s Community Meal Fund.



COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT: Michelle Shearer does a phenomenal job organizing this event every year! The congregation donated candy and Michelle, along with a few members of the church, stuffed all the eggs. Milton School District sent an event flyer to all of their elementary families.



EASTER BREAKFAST: Social Ministry resumed having an Easter Breakfast before worship on Easter morning by coordinating a pot luck style breakfast.



SOCIAL HOUR: In May UIC resumed Social Hour!

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE: Meal were made and packaged in individual serving containers the same day as OAKS Senior Center. Kathy Arndt organized and delivered meals to the Ronald McDonald House in Danville. We packaged 15 meals on each of the following dates: April 12, July 12, September 13, and October 11. The families staying at the Ronald McDonald house really appreciated the meals being served individually instead of large containers that needed to serve themselves from. Snacks were also donated so families could grab things on the go.

UIC FAMILY PICNIC: On Saturday, June 4 we had our 1st Annual Family Picnic at West Milton Memorial Park. The event took the committee months to plan and will most definitely be a new yearly event! We played games, had a craft table for the kids, launched water balloons at Pastor Justin, ate lots of food, and most importantly, we got to spend time together!! We also celebrated Pastor Justin’s 5 years of ordination. We secretly took up a collection and put together a coffee basket and our very own, Theresa Furman, created a rainbow stole. Leftover food was taken to Milton Developmental Services and Haven Ministries and also served at the following OAKS Senior Center.



WELCOMING VICAR KATY: To help Vicar Katy get off to a good start, the church collected gift cards to Giant and Weis to help her stock her food pantry. Mark and Lisa Rabuck, Bob and Trudy Swartz, and Sherry Bingaman loaned the church furniture items that were used to furnish Vicar’s apartment. Social Ministry held a luncheon for Vicar Katy. The church purchased 80lbs of chicken leg quarters, which Steve Shearer, and family, barbequed. Everyone else brought a side dish to share.



BACKPACKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES: UIC took up a collection of backpacks and school supplies. Kathy Guffey delivered all the backpacks and school supplies to Baugher Elementary School, which then got distributed to those in need within the Milton School District.



HAM AND BEAN SOUP: A yearly tradition at UIC, which hasn’t been done for the past few years because of Covid, resumed in 2022. Mark Rabuck, Thrivent Action Team, \$250 gift card and a Weis Markets \$25 gift card, Fetter’s gave us ham at \$1 a pound. Overall we sold 201 quarts and 108 bowls of soup, along with almost 50 bottles of water. Proceeds of \$1,770 went to Lutheran Disaster Relief.



BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY WORKSHOP: Sherry Bingaman, Terri Cromwell, and Michelle Shearer attended a workshop put on by Rose Williams, director of our area’s Getting Ahead and Staying Ahead programs. We learned a lot that day!

TRUNK-OR-TREAT: UIC partnered with Milton Lutheran Church and Saint Paul’s U.C.C. to hold a joint Trunk-or-Treat at 1125 Mahoning Street in Milton. The turnout was great!!!!



GETTING AHEAD MEAL: Getting Ahead is a 19-week program where you learn the tools you need to manage your life better and set goals for the future. They rely on meal sponsors every week to feed program participants and their children. Social Ministry prepared and served their meal on Thursday, December 8th. They had around 30 people.



COUNTRY COMFORT GIFT SPONSORSHIPS: There were 5 residents at Country Comfort Assisted Living that have no family. Members of the church signed up to sponsor Christmas gifts for each of them.

BLESSING BAGS: 47 blessing bags were put together this year and handed out to every resident at Country Comfort Assisted Living and to each of our Senior Express participants. Blessings bags contained lotion, shampoo, body wash, deodorant, chap stick, bandages, candy, and a Christmas card.



ELCA GOOD GIFTS: This year you gave the following items to those in need. 3 Goats 2 Pigs 1 Rooster 1 Set of School Supplies 3 Chicks

ADVENT OFFERING: 2022 Advent offerings were divided equally between Haven Ministry, a homeless shelter in Sunbury, and Our Little Free Pantry in West Milton. Each will receive about \$250. The money for the pantry in West Milton will be used to purchase items for the pantry.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING: Christ Lutheran Church in Lewisburg invited UIC to go caroling through downtown Lewisburg.



SENIOR EXPRESS FOOD PROGRAM: UIC is one of only a handful of Central Pennsylvania Food Bank partners that actually delivers food boxes to senior citizens instead of having them pick them up. In 2022 we have more than doubled our participation in this program. We went from 11 participants to 26 participants! A huge THANK YOU to BJ and Kristie Koch, Cheryl and Dale Robuck, Dawn and Landon Warren, Theresa and Bob Furman, Ted and Shirley McPherrin, Michelle Shearer, Heather Allegar, and Sherry Bingaman. Sherry Bingaman chairs this program. Each month she puts together the delivery routes and even includes greeting cards on holidays.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT WORKSHOP: UIC and Milton Lutheran Church held a joint Christmas event on November 26th at Milton Lutheran Church. Members of both churches hosted craft stations. The event was well attended and everyone had a great time!

Thank you to Heather Allegar, Kathy Arndt, Ruby Baker, Sherry Bingaman, Donna Byerly, Donna Corazza, Terri Cromwell, Alecia Engle, Kathy Guffey, Michelle Shearer, and Al Stark.

**The Social Ministry Committee is open to everyone! We love fresh ideas!
We meet on the 1st Sunday of the month, after worship, in the fellowship hall.**

Submitted by Terri Cromwell

Office Financial Secretary's Report

UIC ended the year with a deficit of \$18,751.90. We moved \$5,000 from UIC's Endowment Fund to our Checking Account.



UNRESTRICTED INCOME

\$112,394.91 Offerings in Church
 \$26,640.17 Offering through Tithely
 \$108.83 Amazon Smiles
 \$250.00 Facility Rental
 \$51.00 Thrivent Choice Dollars

\$139,444.91 TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INCOME

UNRESTRICTED EXPENSES	BUDGETED	ACTUAL
Administrative	\$22,900.00	\$23,532.70
Benevolence	\$9,150.00	\$7,500.00
Capital Fund Contribution	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
Christian Education	\$1,000.00	\$1,739.00
Employee FICA Tax	\$2,300.00	\$3,473.55
Evangelism	\$1,050.00	\$653.69
Fellowship	\$500.00	\$1,100.80
Pastoral	\$81,202.00	\$81,135.31
Property	\$24,535.00	\$26,051.34
Social Ministry	\$200.00	\$0
Stewardship	\$200.00	\$0
Youth Activities	\$300.00	\$281.91
Worship and Music	\$10,500.00	\$10,328.51
Totals	\$156,237.00	\$158,196.81

Throughout the year you also generously gave the following.

ELCA World Hunger	\$165
Lutheran Disaster Response	\$590
Advent (Haven Home and Our Little Free Pantry)	\$536
ELCA Good Gifts	\$265
Lenten (Lutheran Disaster Relief: Eastern Europe Crisis)	\$1,014
Souper Bowl of Caring (Community Meal)	\$160
College Valentine's	\$416

Submitted by Terri Cromwell



Rich Huff Committee Report

The Rich Huff committee continued its mission of helping children in need during 2022. In addition to regular activities, multiple families received direct aid with the help of the Rich Huff Fund's assistance.

10,220 diapers were given out through the monthly diaper pantry
 3 - \$500 Student Scholarships were given
 24 backpacks were purchased for Milton's back-to-school drive

Thanks to the work of Jane Mertz, the committee received a \$5000 grant from Community Aid, a \$1000 gift from Geisinger, a \$3000 gift from UPMC, and a \$5000 gift from PA Skill to help continue their vital ministries! Well done!

Worship and Music Report

Throughout the year, Worship and Music continued to see to the needs of special services like Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, and All Saints Sundays. We have also been moving through a slow transition over the year of re-incorporating our full liturgy into Sunday morning worship

In addition, we made some wonderful additions to our weekly worship supplies:

Communionware:

This summer, Garret Baker donated a new set of pottery communionware to the congregation! We have been using it ever since and have found that it matches beautifully with the style of the congregations! Thank you, Garrett!



Paraments:

This Fall, Theresa Furman has been hard at work designing and making new paraments for use in weekly worship. In 2022, she has completed matching sets in white (for special occasions), blue (for Advent), and green (for "ordinary" time). These quilted paraments are a gorgeous gift and reflect the quality of our community in remarkable fashion! Thank you, Theresa!



Submitted by Pastor Justin



OAKS SENIOR CENTER 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

INCOME		EXPENSE	
Meal Donations	\$693.20	Food	\$517.45
CommunityAid	\$152.76	Supplies	\$142.14
TOTAL INCOME	\$845.96	TOTAL EXPENSE	\$659.59

OAKS Senior Center has slowly started growing again. We had 14 new people attend this year. Milton Lutheran Church visited to see how we run things and they started their own senior center! It's a true blessing to be able to share what we do here at UIC with other churches in hopes that they too will start a ministry like ours.

Senior Attendance												
Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
0	15	18	21	19	25	22	30	33	27	16	30	256

OAKS Senior Center had a surplus of \$186.37 for the year, which wouldn't have been possible without the following items being donated: All bingo prizes for the year, 30lbs of ground beef from Nation Beef, turkey from Fetter's, and miscellaneous food items by committee members!!

OAKS partnered with UIC's Social Ministry this year to prepare and package 60 meals for the Ronald McDonald house. Cost of the meals were covered by OAKS.

Because of Covid, January, February, and March we gave everyone attending lunches to take home instead of eating in person. On April 12, OAKS completely opened back up and resumed eating in person. In April everyone left after lunch and no one stayed for the activity. In fear of this happening again when a speaker was here for OAKS the committee decided to change the schedule. We moved the speaker/activity from after lunch to before lunch. Everyone attending prefers this as a lot of the seniors say they get sleepy after lunch.



OAKS SENIOR CENTER

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

New OAKS format:

10:00 am: Doors Open
10:00 am - 10:30 am: Social Time
10:30 am - 11:30 am: Bingo
11:30 am - 12:00 pm: Speaker/Activity
12:00 pm: Lunch

Activity/Speaker:

- Dea Schader, Union-Snyder Agency on Aging: Share Housing and ECHO program
- Jeff Seebold and Kassondera Walters, Union County Library: Technology Training Services, what is available for older persons (audio books etc.)
- Game: Pictionary
- Taryn Wilk, Evan: Strong Body, Strong Mind
- Brad Gill, Lewisburg Pharmacy: also administered flu shots
- Melissa Bottorf, PA Link 8: Senior Chat program
- Kim McCarty, Geisinger: Geisinger 65 Forward



Submitted by Terri Cromwell

