



CCU Christian Churches United
of the Tri-County Area

WINTER ✦ 2021-2022

The Current Comment

413 S. 19th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17104 ✦ (717) 230-9550 ✦ www.ccuahg.org

Count It All Joy

By Steve Schwartz, Director of Development

One Woman’s Journey from Victim to Regaining Her Voice and Her Dignity

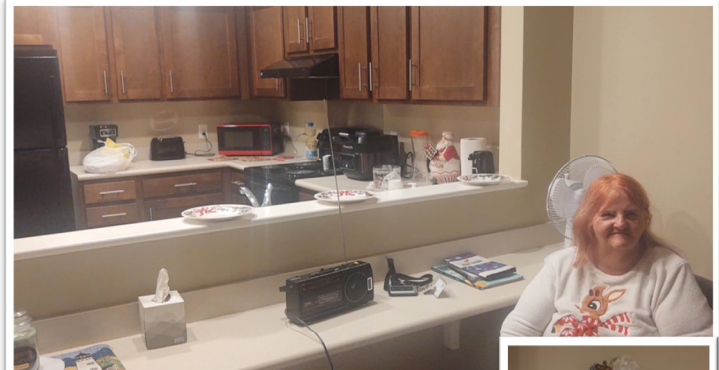
We sat in her living room as Pearl told me her story. The fact that she has a living room is a miracle in and of itself. Pearl is a walking miracle. And our staff and volunteers have been privileged to walk alongside her this past year.

Our story starts on March 11, 2021. Actually, let’s back up a bit. Pearl was born in the early 1950’s as the youngest of 18 children. Her parents were first cousins, and thus all the children had varying special needs. Due to dysfunction and abuse in her childhood home, she says “when I turned 18, I married the first man I met in a bar to get out of the house.” This relationship ended up being abusive and she had to flee with their first child. This was the beginning of years of personal challenges, difficult relationships, housing instability, and medical and mental health challenges.

Fast forward to March 11, 2021. After years of challenges, she had been living with a daughter and her daughter’s boyfriend. The boyfriend assaulted Pearl and she ended up in the emergency room with two black eyes, a broken wrist and other injuries. After getting immediate care, she was directed to the Women’s Overnight Shelter we run at Grace United Methodist church in downtown Harrisburg. She showed up late at night after the doors were locked. A volunteer encountered her and said, “We’re not letting you out here in the cold looking like this. Come with me.” Pearl was connected with shelter staff who welcomed her into the shelter. Over the coming weeks, Pearl’s kindness and spirit of gratitude impacted everyone who interacted with her.

One evening she didn’t show up at the shelter and several people including a police officer went looking for her out of concern. Turns out she had slipped on some ice, fell, and required an overnight hospital stay. She was soon back to the shelter much to everyone’s relief.

Aisha Mobley, our Community Mobilization Coordinator and member of our Street Outreach Team, recalls “there were nights I couldn’t sleep, worrying about Pearl...like God wouldn’t let me rest until I knew she was okay.” Aisha worked with our HELP Ministries staff to get her approved for an emergency hotel voucher. The day the voucher was approved Aisha went to Strawberry Square looking for Pearl as she often spent time during the day there. Aisha found her tired but with a smile on her face. Due to her broken wrist, she had difficulty taking care (Continued page 2)



Pearl shared her story from her beautiful new apartment at Paxton Place

Count It All Joy... (continued from page 1)

of her basic hygiene. Aisha got to the hotel and Leah Payne, our HELP Ministries program manager, helped her cover her cast and thoroughly bathe. Leah also provided her with new pajamas and socks. Pearl cried tears of joy at the ability to be clean for the first time in a long time. She smiled and said she felt like a queen.

Over the next several months, Aisha, Leah, and Angela Parker-Quarles, our Street Outreach & Shelter Services Manager, kept close tabs on Pearl. Aisha accompanied her on numerous medical and physical therapy appointments as she recovered from her injuries. They also connected her with counseling for the trauma she has endured both recently and throughout her life. She has found the counseling to be very helpful. The hotel staff were also caring and looked out for her while our team was seeking long-term housing.

In the fall her name came up on a list for a possible housing provider, but Pearl was hesitant because a friend lived there, and they had a bed bug problem. Aisha prayed and strategized about what to do next and two days later she got a call from Paxton Place, a newer affordable senior housing community on Paxton Street run by Paxton Ministries. Pearl was accepted. She moved in in early December. She is so grateful for the situation she now finds herself.

A special moment recently was on her 69th birthday, when the family of a friend she met in the community took Pearl to a nice restaurant. Pearl said it was unnecessary. They insisted and wanted her to order something big. She got two crab cakes, something she never had before. She was touched to be treated with such honor.

As I sat in the living room of her beautiful new one-bedroom apartment, my heart was overwhelmed by her story of hardship and all she had to endure, contrasted with the kind, soft-spoken woman who was sharing from a heart filled with gratitude.

I was overwhelmed by the care of our Compassion Action Network and Street Outreach Team staff and volunteers, who serve for this very purpose...to connect one-on-one with people on the street and walk with them on their journey to healing, stability and long-term housing.

I was overwhelmed by the attentiveness of Aisha, Leah and Angela, three women who have served their communities and their neighbors tirelessly in so many ways for many years, here humbly advocating, helping, bathing, visiting, following through, often in ways unseen.

I was overwhelmed thinking about *Joy To The Burg*, our Christmas album fundraiser that helped launch the Women's Overnight Shelter the week of Christmas 2019 that became an initial source of warmth and connection for Pearl this past winter.

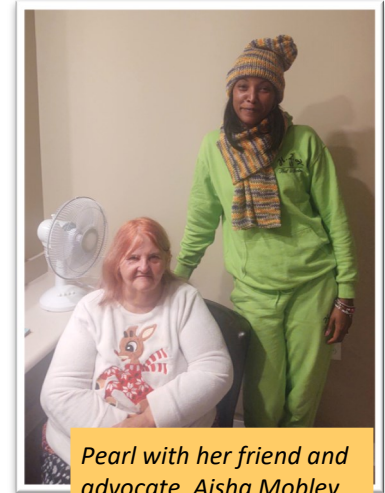
As I toured her apartment, I learned Pearl's dresser was donated by Lori Reese, who plays in the band No Last Call on the *Joy To The Burg* albums, while most of the rest of her apartment Pearl furnished herself. I also learned Pearl received a welcome home kit donated by CCU supporters.

As we finished our time together, Pearl signed a form giving us permission to share her story. For the printed name line I asked, "what is your last name, Pearl?" "Joy. My last name is Joy." As I told this part of the story to my wife, I broke down in tears at the beauty of it all. Pearl, who is so joyful amidst such hardship and was helped by so many people and programs including our *Joy To The Burg* project...her last name is Joy.

Aisha told me after my visit "Pearl has faced a lot of hardship in her life. But now she is safe, warm, well cared for." She is quite independent now that her injuries have mostly healed. She is enjoying the community and activities at Paxton Place. Aisha concluded "she's had a hard life, but now is her time to have some peace and well-being. We'll make sure of that going forward."

Please know that your support is providing a home this winter for people like Pearl. You are a source of housing, hope, healing and hospitality. Thank you.

If you would like to learn how you, your church or your agency can support people on the street through the Compassion Action Network, please contact Aisha Mobley, Community Mobilization and Outreach Coordinator, at amobley@ccuhbg.org or (717) 963-5985.



Pearl with her friend and advocate, Aisha Mobley, CCU's Community Mobilization Coordinator

**Wanna help?
Ways to support...**

- [Joy To The Burg \(page 3\)](#)
- [Winter Shelters \(page 6\)](#)
- [Welcome Home Kits \(page 7\)](#)

Joy To The Burg 2021

Local Artists Rally to Support Their Neighbors Facing Homelessness

Building off the success of the 2019 and 2020 albums, 19 local artists contributed songs to *Joy To The Burg 2021*, a Christmas album to support CCU's homelessness programs. This year's project included a one-hour TV special on ABC27 on Dec. 9 and a live four-hour Music Showcase at The Englewood in Hershey on Dec. 12. With sponsors covering all production costs, 100% of album sales, t-shirt sales, ticket sales, and donations go to the following:

- 1) Running Two Winter Walk-in Shelters in Harrisburg, one for women and one for men
- 2) The Street Outreach Team working with people on the street with a focus on obtaining long-term housing
- 3) Providing long-term housing to men who were chronically homeless through the Susquehanna Harbor Safe Haven residential facility

Funds Raised for Programs:

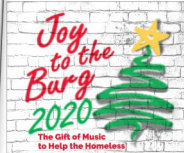
- ⇒ 2019: \$24,000
- ⇒ 2020: \$29,000
- ⇒ 2021: \$32,000 and counting

Your donations and album/t-shirt purchases can make a difference this winter! Visit www.JoyToTheBurg.com to help!



Above: ABC27 Special with Brett Thackara, Sheldon Jones, Steve Schwartz and Debra Pinkerton

Right and Below: Quite the Christmas celebration took place at the Music Showcase on Dec. 12 at The Englewood



Since 2019, Joy To The Burg has helped raise over \$85,000 (and counting) for CCU's homeless assistance programs

THANK YOU SPONSORS

RUDOLPH SPONSORS
Joy to the Burg 2021 is presented by

UPMC LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE UPMC HEALTH PLAN

In Partnership with



DASHER SPONSORS



DANCER SPONSORS



DONNER SPONSORS:
Anonymous Donors

BLITZEN SPONSORS:
LINKBANK; Rev. Marie Buffalo; Joy Daniels Real Estate Group; Carole DeSoto; Market Square Presbyterian Church; Select Medical

PRANCER SPONSORS:
Zimmerman's Automotive; Baumgardner Educational Associates, LLC; John Anthony, Fairway Independent Mortgage Corp., Mechanicsburg; Sager, Swisher and Co.

Preparing For Future Impact *By Darrel Reinford, Executive Director*

CCU is excited to announce that we are embarking on a strategic planning process that will help us clarify our mission and vision and initiate an action plan to accomplish our work in our rapidly-changing world.

We are incredibly grateful that Cheri Fogarty, a member of Mt. Calvary Episcopal Church in Camp Hill, has agreed to facilitate this process. Cheri has years of experience in community planning and believes strongly in processes that gather input and information from the “bottom-up”.

In that vein, we have pulled together a Strategic Planning Committee that includes board and staff members, but also representatives from member churches and other partner organizations in the community. The first stage of the planning process will involve interviews with key stakeholders as well as focus groups. These will be held this spring at various locations in our service area to gain input from any of our supporters who wish to be engaged in the process.

This process builds on the work of a Mission Update Task Force that had been put in place before the pandemic, but whose work was interrupted when the CCU staff needed to dedicate their energy to pandemic response. We continue to be heavily engaged in pandemic response, but now have the team in place and capacity to re-engage this process.

If your congregation would like to be considered as a host location for a focus group, please reach out to me at dreinford@ccuhbg.org. Watch our e-news for opportunities to participate once these groups are scheduled. If you are not currently getting our e-news and wish to be added to that list, please e-mail Steve Schwartz, CCU Director of Development, at sschwartz@ccuhbg.org.

We invite all our supporters to lift CCU in prayer as we engage in this important process while still working hard to meet many pressing needs in our community.

We're Hiring!

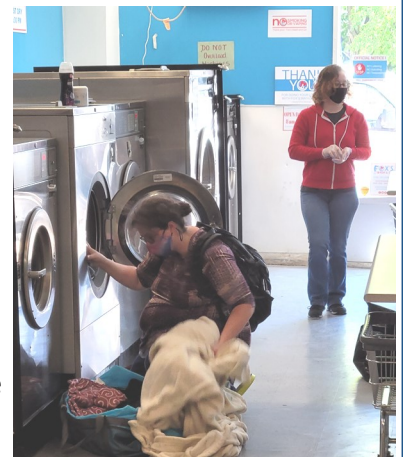
For details visit:
www.ccuhbg.org/jobs

Earn your Wings as a C.A.N. Laundry Angel!

The Compassion Action Network (CAN) in collaboration with Angel Fox, the owner of Fox's Wash and Go, located at 1254 Market St, Harrisburg, PA. 17104 are able to serve our community's unhoused population with free laundry services on the First Saturday of each month from 12:30pm-4:00pm. CAN Laundry Angels (volunteers), Angel Fox, and her excellent Staff at Fox's provide everything needed: a van ride to and from local homeless encampments, coins, detergent, softener, snacks and conversation! *Those we serve leave with dry, clean clothes, connections to services and hopefully knowing how much they matter!*

Want to Volunteer or get involved? Here are 6 Ways to earn your Laundry Angel Wings...

- 1. Sponsor:** A Laundry Angel Day (\$150-\$200). Every little bit helps. Covers the cost of machine use for 11-15 folks w/ 2-3 loads each.
- 2. Monitor or Volunteer:** For in person/direct engagement with our unhoused population. CAN Leadership Team members are always present as well as Fox Wash and Go Staff.
- 3. Provide Washer/Dryer Supplies:** We especially love Ziploc-type bags containing 2-3 detergent pods, 1-2 bleach pods and 1-2 fabric softener pods or dryer sheets.
- 4. Provide Snacks/M meal/Drinks:** All food items should be individually wrapped/bottles/cans for distribution in accordance within CDC Guidelines.
- 5. Laundry Bag Sponsorship:** Fox's has laundry bags (\$15 each) that are sturdy and durable and allows for increased dignity and pride for laundry day.
- 6. Donate a Van and Driver:** 15-passenger van preferred. CAN Leadership Team Member will accompany at all times. Pick-ups are at the encampments under the Mulberry St. Bridge and at PennDot.



To Become a Laundry Angel, contact: Aisha Mobley, CAN Chairperson and CCU's Community Mobilization and Outreach Coordinator at amobley@ccuhbg.org or 717-963-5985.

Learn more about the Compassion Action Network: www.ccuhbg.org/CAN

United In Love...In Person (Yay!)

Community Gathers for CCU's Annual Celebration Event

The 2021 United In Love Banquet—our annual celebration event—was held on November 9, 2021 in the Wesley Center at Camp Hill United Methodist Church. It was wonderful to meet in person again after almost two years of all our events being cancelled or done virtually. We had to limit attendance to 120 based on the space (our event averaged 290 in attendance in prior years) and exercise sensible masking and social distancing policies.

We had a lovely venue thanks to the staff at Camp Hill UMC and Linda Armstrong and her team of volunteers. Our committee of Linda, Beth Bard, Laura Dalton, Brad Gebhart, Darrel Reinford and Steve Schwartz worked collaboratively and creatively to ensure a meaningful and safe event. One change was to move our silent auction online so that people watching from home could bid. This also gave people in person the opportunity to bid from their tables.

We were blessed with live music from Tony Wayne. This band combines instrumental jazz, funk and rock and blessed us with a variety of music including their contributions to the *Joy To The Burg* Christmas albums each of the past three years.

Our guest speaker, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Audrey Scanlan, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, challenged and inspired us to find ways to be united in loving our neighbors. Bishop Scanlan reminded us that just like Queen Esther, we are placed here “for such a time as this” to be a light to our neighbors and our community.

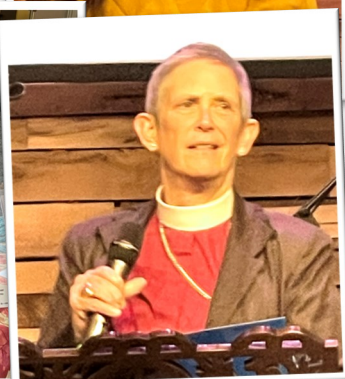
A highlight of the evening was hearing the testimonies of Tracy and Paris. Tracy shared her story of struggling to find affordable housing on a limited income after her landlord sold the property she was renting. Rental amounts have skyrocketed during the pandemic. HELP Ministries helped Tracy bridge the gap with a hotel stay while also assisting her to find and move into a new apartment.

Paris and his wife’s tailor/dressmaking business evaporated when wedding and proms were first postponed then cancelled in 2020. Paris struggled to find additional contracts to sell their designs so they fell behind on rent. Just as they were thinking they and their children needed to move south to live with family, they got a call from HELP Ministries. Through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program we were able to help them get caught up on rent and even provide a month or two of rent going forward, allowing them time and margin to focus on their business. Products started to sell again, and they are working on plans to open their own storefront in Harrisburg.

Your support makes all of this possible! Thank you!



Paris (right) told the crowd, “I can’t thank you all enough...I was one step away from giving up my dream, but because of you guys and God I can take care of my family, my two boys and my wife.”



Winter Overnight Shelters 2021–2022

Run by Christian Churches United

COVID-19 SAFE PRACTICES Will Be Observed; Face Masks Required

Shelter For Women/Non-Binary Persons Ages 18+

At: Grace United Methodist Church,
216 State St., Harrisburg
Operating: 12/6/2021 – 3/31/2022
Daily: 7:00 pm – 7:00 am

Shelter For Men Ages 18+

At: The former Tabernacle Baptist Church
1106 Capitol Street, Hbg.
Operating: 12/20/2021 – 3/31/2022
Daily: 7:00 pm – 7:00 am

Families With Children Needing Shelter should call HELP Ministries at 717-238-2851 between 8:30 am – 4:30 pm Monday – Friday. When HELP office is closed, call Crisis Intervention at (717) 232-7511 or (888) 596-4447

DONATIONS NEEDED to support women and men in our Winter Overnight Shelters:

Food Items:

- (Individually wrapped/microwavable/
just add hot water)
- Macaroni & cheese
 - Oodles of noodles (Beef or Chicken)
 - Soup
 - Poptarts
 - Chewy soft granola bars
 - Danishes
 - Fresh fruit and Fruit snacks
 - Crackers

Hot Beverage Supplies:

- (Individual Packets)
- K-Cups for Keurig: Coffee/Tea/Cocoa
 - Cocoa packets and tea bags
 - Regular cane sugar
 - Flavored liquid cream or half and half packets

Clothes: Men or Women

- Size L, XL, 2X, 3X for all clothing:
- Hoodies/sweatshirts and sweat pants
 - Thermals and Leggins
 - Underwear: Women (Sizes: 6/7/8/9/10/12/13)
 - Underwear: Men (Sizes: Sizes: M/L/XL/XXL)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Upcoming Trainings:

- Tuesday, Jan. 18, 6:00-7:00pm (Men’s Shelter)
- Thursday, Jan. 20, 6:00-7:00pm (Women’s Shelter)

To attend a training or help with donations needed above, contact Aisha Mobley, Community Mobilization and Outreach Coordinator, at amobley@ccuhbg.org or (717) 963-5985.

Drinks:

- Water:
- Gallon size (for Keurig use)
 - Cases of bottled water
- Juice:
- Apple juice,
 - Cranberry Juice
- Soda:
- Cans of sprite/ginger ale
 - Coke/ Pepsi

Cleaning Products:

- Lysol /Disinfectant spray
- Clorox/Lysol wipes
- Bleach

Paper Products

- Cups
- Bowls
- Spoons/forks/knives
- Stirrers - individually wrapped
- Toilet Paper
- Paper Towels
- Tissue

For the Body:

- Disposable wash cloths (Pre-soap filled)
- Lotion
- Hand and foot warmers
- Deodorant
- Tooth paste and Tooth brushes

4th Annual MLK Day Anti-Racism Event

January 17, 2022

**COMMEMORATIVE
WORSHIP SERVICE**

START TIME:
6:00 PM

SPECIAL GUEST
TO BE ANNOUNCED
SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS



ONE River TWO Worlds





Rev. Jason Schwartzman
HOST PASTOR
GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



REV. CARLA CHRISTOPHER-WILSON
GUEST PREACHER
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD



REV. D. MARIE TRIBBLE
WORSHIP LEADER
RESTORATION COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DOC)

HOST LOCATION

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
309 HERMAN AVENUE
LEMOYNE, PA 17043

REGISTER:

www.ccuhbg.org/MLKService
(seating limited)

For Additional Information Call 717-763-7632

Great Workplace, Church or VBS Project!

Help a Homeless Household Get a Fresh Start with a... NEW APARTMENT WELCOME HOME KIT

At CCU, when we help an individual or family obtain an apartment after being homeless, they typically start from scratch. You can help them have a fresh start with a new apartment Welcome Home Kit.

Kitchen

- Kitchen trash can (approx. 11-13 gallon)
- One plastic dish pan
- One box of kitchen trash bags (13 gallon bags, 20 bags or more*)
- One bottle of dishwashing liquid
- Kitchen paper towels (2 rolls or more*)
- Two kitchen handtowels/two kitchen dishcloths

Approx. Cost of Above: \$40

Bath and General Cleaning

- One laundry basket
- One cleaning bucket
- One household mop
- One spray bottle all purpose cleaner
- One spray bottle bathroom cleaner
- Two cleaning cloths/rags
- One Toilet Bowl Brush
- Two bottles liquid hand soap
- Broom, dustpan and brush

Approx. Cost of Above: \$40

First Aid and Toiletries

- Toilet Tissue (6 regular rolls or 4 double rolls or more*)
- One box of bandaids (100 or more* count, variety pack) OR first aid kit with bandaids
- One tube of first aid antibiotic ointment (like Neosporin or generic)
- One tube of toothpaste
- Four toothbrushes
- One bottle of general purpose shampoo
- Bath soap (two bars or more*)
- One box or bottle of Laundry Detergent

Approx. Cost of Above: \$35

Tips

- You can probably get everything for \$100 or under by using coupons, watching sales or buying generic.
- Buying generic is fine for most things! We've found generic band-aids aren't always the best quality though.
- Combine with personal shopping to save money (i.e. buying 10 pack of bath soap for yourself? Donate 2 bars)
- Work with friends or your church or civic group to do multiple kits, then you can buy bulk packs of many things and divide up.
- Or work with two additional friends, each taking one of the three sections to purchase, combining into one kit.
- Please DO NOT deliver spray bottles in large trash bags. They will roll open, spill, and ruin other items. Please ensure spray bottles are upright.



Deliver Kits To:
413 S. 19th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104

Contact: Steve Schwartz,
Director of Development
Phone: (717) 230-9550
Email: sschwartz@ccuhbg.org
Web: www.ccuhbg.org

* OR MORE: When you see "or more," there is no pressure to buy "more." We need a general minimum to include in each kit but you are welcome to get a three pack of paper towels, for example, if on sale and cheaper than two.

Christian Churches United is a 501(c)3 non-profit social service agency founded as a collaboration of area churches to help those facing homelessness, poverty and incarceration. These kits are designed as a starter to get a household through their first few weeks while they get established, it is not intended to fully outfit their apartment.

For questions about how you or your church group, civic group, co-workers, VBS or other group can put together entire Welcome Home Kits or do a drive for specific items, or for more information on our housing programs, contact Steve Schwartz, Director of Development, at sschwartz@ccuhbg.org or (717) 230-9550.

Find this flyer online for easy distribution: www.ccuhbg.org/welcomehome



of the Tri-County Area

413 South 19th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104
www.ccuahbg.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DONATE

www.ccuahbg.org/donate
or scan below



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U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 130
HARRISBURG, PA

Thank you for providing a home for the holidays for Pearl and so many others!



Thank you for providing hospitality and a home for the holidays to so many of our neighbors. Your support means a warm bed to sleep in for many.

Thank You and Happy New Year!

