A SONG WAS HEARD
At Christmas

A song was heard at Christmas
To wake the midnight sky
A Saviour’s birth and peace on earth
And praise to God on high

The angels sang at Christmas
With all the hosts above.
And still we sing the newborn King
His glory and his love.

By Timothy Dudley-Smith

“For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a Son is given; And the government
shall be upon His shoulder.
And His name shall be called Wonderful,
Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV)
Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program

Celebrates 21 New Faith Community Nurses and Health Ministers
From Cohort Fall 2018

The cohort’s shadow box has the title “I AM… Compassionate” with 6 themes. First, God is the great “I AM”. Second, compassion is demonstrated by God to us every day. Third, the cross was Christ Jesus’ ultimate love sacrifice to us and hence we must take up our own crosses. Fourth, the quilt scraps represents human brokenness and healing. Fifth, the Fruit of the Spirit represents qualities and attributes of FCNs and HMs. Finally, fingerprints are unique to each person who shares his/her gifts with the faith community in service to God.

Lelia Louise Baker, HM
Kimberly Barnes, FCN
Lois Brown, FCN
Julie Bucci, FCN
Elizabeth Dworak, FCN
John Dworak, HM
Melisa Hale, FCN
Janel Harvey, FCN
Karen Haws Clark, FCN
Kimberly Hunter, HM
Cheryl Kania, FCN
Judy Lorenz, FCN
Marion Marty, FCN
Denise McCormick, FCN
Dawna Poole, FCN
Amy Schultz, FCN
Catherine Sengenberger FCN
Ashley Stensland, HM
Phyllis Tkacik, HM
Barbara Trusilo, FCN
Roberta Woodfork, HM

Commissioning Ceremony
October 27, 2018
Our annual Autumn event held on Friday evening, November 9, 2018 at UPMC Mercy was entitled “Health Ministry: Success in Church and Community.” It was a quiet and relaxing dinner with fellowship and learning. The purpose was to help participants take a fresh look at the fruitful health ministries in the Pittsburgh and Tri-State area. The focus was on present service to our faith communities, a reflection on what we have learned in the past, and a concerted vision for the future of health ministry.

There were a total of 25 participants who shared their ideas and suggestions regarding their faith community nursing programs and health ministries. Addressing the spiritual needs of our congregations in the realm of a wholistic care approach (whole-person health) continues to be a main focus for faith community nurses and health ministers.

Our four guest speakers were the following women: Kathy Conrad, Consuelo Cruz-Martinez, Joyce Ott, and Kelly Rupp. They brought their insights and expertise to each presentation, motivating attendees to “think outside the box” in order to assist others in meeting needs. We were all inspired with their gifts of storytelling and creativity in building ministries.

We are also grateful to each presenter who offered their time in creating a display table unique to them. The displays gave tangible examples of health ministry opportunities such programs as Blue Christmas, Walk to Bethlehem and Jerusalem, Visitation Ministry, and many more.

We learned from each other and became better equipped to lead our faith communities through the ministry of healing. Our chosen Scripture reading as the theme for the evening was Galatians 6:9 NIV “Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Help us Lord to tend to Your flock and carry Your sheep close to our hearts as we care and offer the gift of healing.

God’s blessings as we soon begin the new year 2019!
**Electronic Documentation System for Faith Community Nurses**

This user-friendly electronic program was designed by FCNs, rigorously tested by FCNs, and is currently used by FCNs nationally. This documentation system offers the following:

* **Documents client problems easily** by using a concise list built-in to the system with drop-down boxes (physical, mental, spiritual, social, financial and relational areas)

* **Rates the problem** initially and at follow-up assessments using a 1-5 scale

* **Demonstrates the outcomes** of your FCN interventions

* **Includes many more useful features!**

**New YouTube Video** of the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Documentation System at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNKGJx1Fex8

**Contact us!**

To receive a link to download the demo version or to set up an online meeting where we can personally demonstrate the system, email or call us.

ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org  412-232-5815
For most of us, Christmas is a festive time of year. In many Christian faith traditions, the Incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ is one of the most amazing events that impacted human history. This book, “On This Holy Night: The Heart of Christmas” is a collection of messages from six well-known authors. They give the reader hope to once again feel the pulse and experience of energy in the miraculous story of Jesus’ birth in a crowded stable. These authors remind us of the beautiful, inspirational, and spiritual facets of Christmas that may be overlooked in the busyness of the season.

Each author offers a wealth of knowledge, insight, and understanding of God’s Word with their own unique style of storytelling. The messages are for those of us whose dreams have not been fulfilled, in wait, and/or have taken a different slant that what we originally had hoped for in our lives.

Readers are asked to peer into the manager scene. And come to a renewed understanding of God’s grace by allowing the true Christmas message to touch our hearts with gratitude.

**Read of the Month**

**On This Holy Night:**

*The Heart of Christmas*

By: Max Lucado       John Maxwell
Jack Hayford       Bill Hybels
David Jeremiah       Rick Warren

God still looks for Josephs today. Men and women who believe that God is not through with this world. Common people who serve an uncommon God.

Max Lucado

**A Christmas “Thank You” for the Gift of Time**

We want to give a special “thanks” to two colleagues who have spent countless volunteer hours on our Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Documentation System. Please meet our two Database Consultants, Dorothy Mayernik (left) and Nancy Marshall (right) who have been instrumental in designing, teaching, installing, and maintaining our computerized documentation system for many years. They have given their time, talents and gifts to us in order to enhance our Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry as a great resource for faith community nurses, health ministers, clergy, and volunteers. May God bless Dorothy and Nancy with happiness and good health this Christmas season and throughout the new year!

**Our Email Address:**

ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org

We enjoy hearing from our E-Newsletter readers about your church ministries. Send an email with a short description of your church event and we will include it in our section “News from You!” If you like, include a photo of you at your event. If you should no longer wish to receive communications from the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, please unsubscribe by contacting us at 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org

Thank you.
Visit Our Website!

**Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry**

https://www.pittsburghmercy.org/faith-communities/pittsburgh-mercy-parish-nurse-health-ministry-program/

Our website at *Pittsburgh Mercy* is full of resources and links to assist in community awareness. We are located under the tab “Faith Communities.”

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**Health Ministry Workshops for Winter 2019**

Brrrr… Does your health ministry team need a "jumpstart" this winter?

*Are you seeking fresh ideas and suggestions for church programming?*

*Do you need help motivating your team to try something new?*

*Are you tired of doing the same old programs, year after year?*

Contact us as the New Year 2019 approaches. We would be happy to work with you, your clergy, and/or team. Ask the *Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program* for a presentation or workshop at your church and/or organization. Choose one of 8 workshops or a tailor-made one to fit your group's needs and ministry goals. **Contact us at ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org or 412.232.5815**

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**10 Ways to Help those Affected by Homelessness**

Sometimes we label people based on their disease process, current health condition, social circumstances, and/or living arrangements. In health ministry, we must be intentional to show respect and care to those in need especially with those who are experiencing the difficult challenges of life.

Not only during the Christmas season, but throughout the year, people are in need. So set time aside for considering an outreach program via your faith community.

To learn more about how to help those affected by homelessness, visit this link [https://bit.ly/2lyK8QO](https://bit.ly/2lyK8QO)

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**Save the Date**

**Spiritual Retreat 2019**

March 9, 2019

“**The Spirituality and the Science of Self-Compassion**”

**Retreat Facilitator:** Anne Kertz Kernion

Illuminating self-care and spiritual practice to nurture gentleness, kindness, and patience towards ourselves; prompting deeper understanding of others.

**See details on pages 8 & 9**

Overnight accommodations available.

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**Pittsburgh Winter Shelter** for persons experiencing homelessness to open Nov. 15; shelter to open every night 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., Nov. 15, 2018 through March 15, 2019

The address is the following:

Smithfield United Church of Christ
620 Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222 (Downtown)

For more details, or if you would like to help please visit [https://bit.ly/2E0Uvh5](https://bit.ly/2E0Uvh5)
Health Observances
For a complete list, visit
https://healthfinder.gov/NHO/default.aspx
See monthly tool kits too!

- Safe Toys and Celebrations Month
- 1 World AIDS Day
- 2 - 8 National Handwashing Awareness Week
- 2 - 8 National Influenza Vaccination Week

Hanukkah...
begins at sundown
December 2, 2018
Many Jewish communities in the United States observe the start of Hanukkah, also known as Chanukah or Festival of Lights. Hanukkah is an eight-day Jewish observance that remembers the Jewish people’s struggle for religious freedom.
To learn more, visit https://bit.ly/2E1klSe

A handbook for ministry formation written by our Pittsburgh Mercy colleague

Bethany Ministry: Caring for the Sick, Homebound, and Grieving in the Parish Family
by Dorothy Mayernik, RN, MSN, FCN
St. Gregory of Nazianzus Byzantine Catholic Church, Upper St. Clair, PA

When starting a visitation ministry, volunteers may be eager to help but feel insecure about making a visit. “What should I say? What should I do?” We don't want such uncertainty to keep us from reaching out in friendship and caring to those who need our love and support. This 100-page handbook offers a concise but comprehensive preparation for visitation and a framework for establishing a ministry that is based on modeling the beautiful friendship of Jesus with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany.

Since 2001, this handbook has been tested and updated based on the active Bethany Ministry at my church and others we have shared the program with. It can be used as a self-study or conducted in a group setting in two 2.5 hour sessions. The handbook includes reference handouts and addresses 18 topics: • Spirituality of Bethany Ministry • How Illness Affects the Body, Mind, and Spirit • Understanding Mental Illness • Instilling Hope • Using Communication Skills • Visiting Those With Communication Difficulties • Making Spiritual Care Part of the Visit • The Importance of Sacraments in Healing • Confidentiality and the Code of Ethics • Exceptions to the Rule of Confidentiality • Parish Outreach • Hospice Care of the Dying • Comforting Those Who Mourn • Styles of Grieving • What to Say to the Grieving • Grieving Persons With Special Needs • Getting Bethany Ministry Started in Your Parish • Forms and Resource Material.

The spiritual care section can be modified to your own faith tradition, and all other content is universal to visitation ministry. Copies are available for $15.00 from Byzantine Seminary Press • www.byzantineseminarypress.com • call 412-322-8307

The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry wishes all a Happy and Blessed Christmas!
The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program is offering a Day Retreat on Saturday, March 9, 2019 at Martina Spiritual Renewal Center (https://martinacenter.com/)

The retreat will be facilitated by Anne Kertz Kernion who has extensive background in teaching as an adjunct professor ranging from Chemistry, Environmental Science, and Nutrition, to World Religions and Ethics. Currently, Anne is a frequent lecturer and retreat leader, presenting topics that combine neuroscience, positive psychology, and spirituality to groups around the country. Anne is a wife, mother and grandmother. She is also an owner/artist of Cards by Anne, an inspirational greeting card company since 1986. She brings her unique style and creativity to the design of this retreat.

The retreat begins with a continental breakfast at 8:00 a.m., the opening session begins at 9:00 a.m., and the retreat ends at 4:00 p.m. Lunch is simple with minimal talking, giving time and space for self-reflection. Participants are invited to a time of prayer, solitude, quiet reflection, learning, and fellowship. It is time away from family, work, and ministry responsibilities; a time to enrich one’s soul and embrace a new season… Lent.

The cost for the Day Retreat is $55.00 per person and is payable to the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program. The cost is an extra $40.00 for participants who choose to stay overnight on Friday (dinner on your own) which is paid directly to Martina Spiritual Renewal Center. Space is limited for overnight participants, so early registration is encouraged.

Jesus’ command “Love your neighbor as yourself” implies that we love ourselves. But do we? Or are we harshly critical of our mistakes and imperfections. This retreat will draw upon recent findings in neuroscience and psychology, illuminating self-care and spiritual practices that nurture gentleness, kindness, and patience towards ourselves. Far from being self-centered or selfish, these practices also generate deeper understanding of others, enhancing our faith community and relationships. As a bonus, exercising self-compassion aids in reducing stress and inflammation while slowing aging in our cells and brains. In addition, each retreatant is asked to bring one item to share which represents a definer of their life. Some suggestions are a photo of a dearly loved grandmother, a childhood toy, a piece of jewelry, a family heirloom, a treasured book or Bible, etc.

Handicap accessibility is available upon request. Please call us at 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org Visit our website for more retreat details coming soon at https://www.pittsburghmercy.org/faith-communities/education/#spiritual-retreat
REGISTRATION FORM:
Day Retreat 2019 — The Spirituality and the Science of Self-Compassion

March 9, 2019 • Saturday
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Martina Spiritual Renewal Center

Submit registration form & check $55.00 by March 1st to:
Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program
Mercy Health Center
1515 Locust Street, Suite 705
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-5154

Name ____________________________________________________________

Address _________________________________________________________

City __________________________________ State _______ ZIP ____________

Email Address __________________________________________ Telephone________________________

Name of Church/Organization and Denomination _______________________

___ Check if special dietary need and/or handicapped accommodations requested. Please explain:
______________________________________________________________

Your role within your church/organization:
(Please circle all that apply)

• Clergy
• Member/attendee
• Health Ministry RN Coordinator
• Health minister
• Faith community nurse
  (volunteer)
• Faith community nurse (salaried)
• Social minister
• Social worker
• Nursing student
• Volunteer
• Pittsburgh Mercy employee
• Other __________________
• Other ____________________

Please check any statements that apply:
___ I play a musical instrument and am willing to share my gift during our retreat. My musical instrument is: ____________________
___ I play the piano and am willing to play during specific times.
___ I have musical talent in singing.
___ I permit you to publish my name and the name of my church/organization in the retreat participant listing and nametag.
___ I would like to receive information about continuing education programs sponsored by the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry.
___ I would like to receive your free monthly E-Newsletter, The Faith Connection.
___ I prefer not to be contacted.

NOTE: This retreat is presented by the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, part of Pittsburgh Mercy and Trinity Health, serving in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy. The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program and Pittsburgh Mercy do not sell or otherwise share information with third-party vendors. You reserve the right to revoke your permission at any time. For more information, contact the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program at 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org