Gratitude

To be grateful for what is, instead of underscoring what is not.

To find good amid the unwanted aspects of life, without denying the presence of the unwanted.

To focus on beauty in the little things of life, as well as being deliberate about the great beauties of art, literature, music, and nature.

To be present to one’s own small space of life, while stretching to the wide world beyond it.

To find something to laugh about in every day, even when there seems nothing to laugh about.

To search for and to see the good in others, rather than remembering their faults and weaknesses.

To be thankful for each loving deed done by another, no matter how insignificant it might appear.

To taste life to the fullest, and not take any part of it for granted.

To seek to forgive others for their wrongdoings, even immense ones, and to put the past behind.

To find ways to reach out and help the disenfranchised, while also preserving their dignity and self-worth.

To be as loving and caring as possible, in a culture that consistently challenges these virtues.

To remember to say or send “thank you” for whatever comes as a gift from another.

To be at peace with what cannot be changed.

Joyce Rupp
On Friday evening, November 15, 2019 the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program hosted their annual Autumn event Dinner & Gathering 2019 at UPMC Mercy. It was a quiet, relaxing dinner with fellowship and learning. The purpose was to help participants network together about different ministry opportunities in the local Pittsburgh and Tri-State area. Participants learned from each other how they can begin a new faith community nursing program and/or health ministry team as well as re-energize an established ministry.

There were a total of 33 participants who shared their ideas and suggestions regarding their health ministries and community outreach programs. Addressing the spiritual needs of our congregations with a wholistic care approach (whole-person health) continues to be a main focus in group discussion.

Our guest speaker, Ann Depner, brought her insight and words of wisdom about the topic of compassion fatigue by encouraging participants to be self-aware from both a professional and personal viewpoint. Ann provided micro and macro strategies for avoiding overfunctioning that leads to compassion fatigue in caregivers and decreased functioning in care receivers.

We are appreciative of those who offered their time and creativity with our fourteen ministry table displays. The displays encouraged attendees to try new programming in their own faith communities or to consider volunteering in a new outreach opportunity.

We learned from each other and became better equipped to lead our faith communities through the ministry of health and healing. Our chosen Scripture as the theme for the evening was from Colossians 3:12 NIV “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” May our Lord bless our hands as hands of healing so that we can reveal love and light in our world.

God’s blessings in the new year 2020!
The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program is offering a Day Retreat on Saturday, March 7, 2020 at Martina Spiritual Renewal Center (https://martinacenter.com/)

The retreat will be facilitated by Rev. Joan Prentice, M.Div., D.Min. who is the Founder, Executive Director, and Pastor of The Ephesus Project, a Pittsburgh nonprofit. Dr. Prentice has more than twenty years experience in pastoral ministry. She began as a staff pastor to new disciples at Mount Ararat Baptist Church in Pittsburgh. Her focus at Mt. Ararat was in pastoral care, spiritual counseling for new members, curriculum development, and volunteer training. After much discernment and prayer, Dr. Prentice established The Ephesus Project in 2013 and describes it as “Traditional Church in an Untraditional Way”. The Ephesus Project exists in community as a “Church without Walls” and holds true to the principles of the Christian faith but in creative ways of ministry.

Currently, Dr. Prentice devotes her time to teaching and developing leaders for church and community ministry in the 21st century such as New Paradigm Leadership Training, Grace Space Gatherings, Open Word Bible Study and Conversation, pastoral and leadership retreats, focus symposiums, and Mothers United in Christ. She resides in Pittsburgh with her husband Marvin, and is a mother of three adult children and a grandmother of eight.

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 by 4:00 p.m. Lunch is simple with minimal talking so to invite retreatants to 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 both personal and professional responsibilities especially during this special season of 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 retreatants 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 retreatants, so early registration is encouraged. Handicap accessibility is available upon request.

The theme for this spiritual retreat is “Sacred Dance to the Rhythm of Life” which is designed as a contemplative healing retreat. In our busy lives especially those involved in ministry, we sometimes feel overwhelmed to the point of neglecting our own spiritual needs. We risk having little to pour out and then burn out. Retreatants will come together for healing, refreshment, and restoration in a safe, sacred space. There is a holy dance with which we are invited to enter into with the living Lord. As our Creator leads, we follow and find a deeper freedom in the sacred dance of the rhythm of life. “Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise in the assembly of the saints. Let them praise His name with dancing and make music to Him with tambourine and harp.” Psalms 149: 1 and 3 NIV.

Visit our website for more retreat details at https://bit.ly/2MbMetg
Health Ministry Workshops for Winter 2020

Meeting the needs of faith communities can be challenging, requiring innovative forms of ministry. Often clergy and faith leaders face compassion fatigue and burnout. Having a "companion" to come along aside during times of change in faith communities can be very welcoming. A "shot in the arm" as many would say. We would be happy to work with you, your clergy, and/or faith community team. Contact us as part of your planning this Winter & Spring 2020. Ask the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program for a presentation, workshop, or retreat 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. To learn more, visit https://bit.ly/2T5X7SM
Contact us at ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org or 412.232.5815

Opioid Crisis in Faith Communities Today: Where do we go from here?
Congregations are having to face difficult challenges every day. One of those challenges is the opioid crisis. Four key concepts that faith communities can focus on as they assist their families are the following: educate, empower, engage, and equip. Spiritual leaders in faith communities have unique roles to play as they come along side those parishioners who are suffering from drug addiction or those who are supporting family members who are addicted. We need to find opportunities to teach and role-model the spiritual dimension of whole-person health and healing. Also, spiritual leaders such as faith community nurses and health ministers must educate parishioners to recognize the signs of addiction and courageously take action where needed to reduce risk for the entire family. To learn more, visit https://bit.ly/38RQO9x

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is committed to preventing opioid misuse, overdose, and deaths. There are 5 key strategies that guide the CDC’s work in order to protect all Americans. Opioid use can occur in the workplace, in dealing with chronic illness, during pregnancy, to name a few. To learn more, visit at https://bit.ly/38RotQU

Epiphany is Sunday, January 5, 2020
As spiritual leaders, we are called to teach the children in our faith communities about special seasons and celebrations. Epiphany is a time set aside for family devotion and learning. Making it fun learning is essential with young children. See this link for children’s crafts, activities, and delicious treats at https://bit.ly/2rZ8bEP

We wish all a blessed New Year 2020 from the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program! We pray this new year will bring you & yours much love, happiness and joy.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday, January 20, 2020
To learn about interesting facts with this memorial via the National Park Service, visit at https://bit.ly/2YZu6rs
**Prevention and Wholehearted Living**

There is no doubt that our neighborhoods, communities, and family structure impact our lives... from our past to present. Public health courses focus on positive health outcomes which are the result of our surroundings. These environmental influences are called *social determinants* and they have much more impact than what we may realize or understand. For example, children who grow up in surroundings of heavy smoking are significantly more likely to begin smoking compared to children who do not.

As faith communities learn about the negative outcomes associated with their neighborhoods, they can be change agents. Health education and social programming that address social determinants unique to each faith community and neighborhood can produce good health and well-being for all ages. Faith community nurses and health ministers are instrumental to speaking the truth and confronting their congregants' concerns, fears, weaknesses, and anxieties. We must be health advocates to those without a voice, and minister outside of our comfort zones in order to make real change in people's lives.

To learn about putting prevention in context, read this article from *ChurchHealth Reader* at https://bit.ly/2Z09pM6

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**20th Annual Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference**

“for shepherds & other caregivers of the flock”

Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program is part of the Planning Team. Please join us this Spring 2020.

Friday, May 8, 2020

8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Christ Church at Grove Farm

249 Duff Road, Sewickley, PA 15143

More details coming soon at http://www.pghpcc.org/

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**Healthy People 2020**

Healthy People provides science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans. For 3 decades, Healthy People has established benchmarks and monitored progress over time in order to encourage collaborations across communities and empower individuals toward making informed health decisions. It has also measured the impact of prevention activities. Social and physical determinants affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes. For example, education is associated with longer life expectancy, improved health, and quality of life.

To learn more, visit this link at https://bit.ly/2S6d61e

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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 recent church event and we will include it in our section “News from You!” If you like, include a photo of yourself at your event too.

*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.*
Prayer is the great gift to us from our Creator. Many Christians wonder even while experiencing a life of prayer… "does it work and how it works". Spending more time in prayer may be a new year's resolution for some of us. Intentional time set aside in our busy schedules for connecting with the Divine. An "appointment" designed to motivate us to be still and open enough to listen and embrace the presence of God. Sacred space and time to enhance our spiritual health and feel refreshed that we are not walking this life alone. To really know and practice in daily life that the Holy One is right beside us in both our joys and struggles.

So as we begin this New Year 2020, let's start by taking the Winter Reading Challenge (January 2 to March 30) to read more this winter season. A commitment to strengthen our inner core and spiritual health as we equip ourselves in ministry and caring for those in need. Two books that we recommend are the following:

1) *Fragments of Your Ancient Name: 365 Glimpses of the Divine for Daily Meditation* by Joyce Rupp (ISBN—10: 1-933495-28-6) draws forth names of God from the world’s spiritual treasury. It is a collection of reflections for each day of the year in order to heighten our awareness of the Divine in our lives. There are simple and yet profound words of choice in this daily devotional.

2) *In God's Presence: Theological Reflections on Prayer* by Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki (ISBN 0-8272-1615-7) explores the dynamics of prayer, various kinds of personal and corporate prayer, and how prayer works to bring us into the presence of God. *Prayer is a partnership with- not a manipulation of- God.* The author expounds upon common questions about prayer, images of God, conditions of prayer, prayers of healing, and much more.

Our images of God can help or hinder our praying, but the God who is more than any image can adequately portray continues to inspire us to pray, hearing us more deeply than our faltering words, and using our prayers in ways that go far beyond what we can ever know this side of eternity. I’ve proposed images of water, of touch, and of dance to suggest to us the relational reality of the God to whom we pray. But finally, while images help us and we do indeed pray with some image of God in mind, it is not to the image that we pray. Nor is it an image that receives our prayers. It is God’s own self.

Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki
**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!**  ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org  412-232-5815

See our website for our Demo link at https://bit.ly/2JMKmbu
Email us, if interested in our upgrade Version 5.1
Health Observances
For a complete list, visit https://healthfinder.gov/NHO/default.aspx
See monthly tool kits too!

- **Cervical Health Awareness Month**
  Check out toolkit for information & resources

- **Glaucoma Awareness Month**
  Free information available

- **National Blood Donor Month**
  https://www.redcrossblood.org/
  Miscellaneous information

- **Thyroid Awareness Month**
  https://bit.ly/2Z1OgBb
  Brochures & information available

**Week**

**National Non-Smoking Week** 1/19-1/25/2020
https://smokefree.gov/ for tools, tips, etc.

Visit these 2 links to learn more about Autism.
https://bit.ly/36hM8rO
Medical alert bracelets

https://bit.ly/2rQcXVd
Explains Autism, awareness & much more.

**Teen Vaping**
The use of E-cigarettes is unsafe for children, teens and young adults. Most E-cigarettes contain nicotine and are highly addictive and harmful to brain development. Young people who use E-cigarettes are more likely to smoke cigarettes in the future.

Using an E-cigarette is sometimes called **vaping** which causes lung injury over time. To read about adolescent vaping, see this link from **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at**
https://bit.ly/2ExTVFS

- **AMD/Vision Awareness Month**
  Information & tips available

- **American Heart Month**
  https://bit.ly/2SHr5eq
  Information & materials available

- **National Children’s Dental Awareness Month**
  Miscellaneous posters, 2020 planning guide, activity sheets available

**Week**

- **Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Week** 2/13-2/19/2020
  https://bit.ly/36G8tPI
  Fact Sheet for download free

- **National Eating Disorders Awareness Week** 2/23-2/28/2020
  https://bit.ly/36iR8wz
  Online resources & eating myths to copy

- **Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month**
  https://bit.ly/2suKGnv
  Information & education cards

- **National Endometriosis Awareness Month**
  Information & summit info. for 2/2020 available

- **National Kidney Month**
  https://www.kidney.org/
  Information & tips available

The next edition of "The Faith Connection" is March 2020. If you have news to share, please email us by February 10th. We love hearing from our readers!
REGISTRATION FORM : Day Retreat 2020

Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program

A part of Pittsburgh Mercy and Trinity Health, serving in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy

Sacred Dance to the Rhythm of Life

Saturday, March 7, 2020 Registration & Continental Breakfast 8 a.m.
at Martina Spiritual Renewal Center, 5244 Clarwin Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15229

Please send completed registration form along with a check of $55.00 made payable to the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program by March 1st to: Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, Mercy Health Center, 1515 Locust Street, Suite 705, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-5154. For more information, call 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org Or visit https://www.pittsburghmercy.org

Name __________________________________________________________________________________________

First Name ___________________________ Middle Initial ___________________________ Last Name ___________________________

Address _______________________________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ______   ZIP ___________ Telephone ____________________________

Email Address __________________________________________________________________________________

Name of Church or Organization ___________________________________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ___________________________ ZIP ___________

Denomination ___________________________________________________________________________________

Your role within your church/organization (please check all that apply):

□ Clergy
□ Member/attendee
□ Health ministry coordinator RN
□ Coordinator health minister
□ Faith community nurse (volunteer)
□ Faith community nurse (salaried)
□ Health Minister
□ Other ___________________________

□ I permit my name & church/organization to be published on my nametag and in this retreat participant listing.

□ I would like to receive information about continuing education opportunities from Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program and Pittsburgh Mercy i.e. our free monthly E-Newsletter, The Faith Connection.

□ I prefer not to be contacted.

NOTE: 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