

Cornerstone District Celebration Highlights

- We had special guest Dr. Raymond Mande Mutambo, General Conference Delegate from the North Katanga Annual Conference in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He shared how the money given has helped to build churches and parsonages, and the vision to do more.
- Superintendent Larry Baird delivered a message entitled “Fishers of Folk.” In it he emphasized that our main task as Christians is “to gather new people into the Kingdom of God.” “All other Christian ministry and witness stems from that primary task.” He stated the most significant indicator that we are fulfilling our mission is the number of “Confessions of Faith or adult baptisms” we are able to report. Contrary to popular opinion, he stated, “Worship does not produce vital disciples. It is a sign we have vital disciples.” He challenged the district to 1) Place a focus on helping churches make disciples. 2) Emphasize building, deploying, and supporting Christ-honoring pastors and laity. 3) Renew commitment to upholding the doctrine and Discipline of the United Methodist Church. He called upon the district to consider the following new initiatives: 1) An examination of the ministry and mission in the Greater Jamestown area with a goal of strengthening the church in that city. 2) Renew and enhance our native American ministries. 3) Work to interpret the Christian witness of stewardship of financial resources.
- We worked through all our reports and thanked all those on our committees for their hard work and dedication. We also honored those completing Candidacy and any level of the Disciple classes. We had 10 new lay speakers since last year!
- The DASH (Divorce and Separation Healing) Ministries spoke briefly. With the divorce rate going higher and higher, it is time that churches reach out to people who are experiencing this pain. So with the help of Susan Coburn's home church (Edwards Chapel UMC) and other interested parties, DASH was formed. Panama UMC was chosen and happily offered their facilities to hold this weekly support group. They are now in their fourth year of helping those going through divorce and separation find real healing through our Lord. They have now broken out into two sessions one more for beginners using mostly the divorce care materials and one using Keys to Loving Relationships by Gary Smalley. DASH meets every Saturday night - year round: 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Panama UMC. If you are interested please contact Susan Coburn at 716-355-4344 or Barb Leroy at 716-782-3942.
- Southern Tier Cancer Support Ministries is made up of 10 different churches and several non-clergy coordinators. Teddar Brooks spoke briefly and he encouraged us to invite those we know so that they can be ministered to. It provides everyone who has cancer or knows someone with cancer the armament to fight this deadly disease. The Southern Tier Cancer Support Ministry meets on the last Tuesday of each month at the Cattaraugus United Methodist Church. The meetings include presenters and discussion highlighting various aspects of the "Paradigm for Health Living and Recovering from Cancer." They talk about the standard medical treatment, holistic treatments, and the spiritual healing. Once a month they have an anointing and healing service in the sanctuary and it is amazing to see God work. Knowing that our Lord Jesus Christ is the answer to eternal life, no matter what ill befalls us.

- Royal Family Kid's Camp is sponsored by the Bemus Point UMC. It is one of only 3 certified RFKC in New York State. This summer, August 2-4 will be their 7th year. RFKC offers a carefree week of residential summer camp for abused and neglected children between the ages of 7-11. These are children who are in contact with the Department of Social Services and in most cases, are in foster care. Often this may be the first time they have a happy and secure experience. It can be a life-changing encounter for these children. We take 32 campers each year and the children are all from Chautauqua County.
- Chautauqua County Jail Chaplain - Dennis Johnson is a gift of the Cornerstone District and to our region. His ministry extends to the families of inmates and to the churches. Not all inmates at the Chautauqua County jail come from Chautauqua County. They come from all over the state. This year we collected enough money to raise his salary by 52% but that is still a far cry from what a full time local pastor should be making. Thank you for supporting this vital ministry.
- Roy Miller gave a brief report of the status of **The Better Place**. He was pleased to announce that the complete board of directors will be meeting for the first time on the 5th of May. He asked us to keep that in prayer. He explained how swiftly all these legal steps have taken place. 1. The Corporation was completed, 2. He received an ID#, 3. They received 501 C-3 status in 105 days, and 4. They are now registered with the NYS Attorney General's Charities Bureau. The next step is to raise \$45 million.