Did you know that Shippensburg has received multiple grants to assist residents during the current COVID-19 Pandemic? Did you know that, thanks to Volvo and their employees, Shippensburg Community Resource Coalition (SCRC) recently hired a COVID-19 Social Worker? Did you know that a free meal is available every week, Monday through Friday? Did you know that the Shippensburg Area School District provides breakfast and lunch to any child 18 years and under? Did you know that the Shippensburg Area School District will deliver those meals to families without transportation? Did you know that there are gift cards available to help those impacted by COVID-19? Did you know that Shippensburg has many resources available, even if you have not qualified in the past? Did you know that a group of dedicated professionals and volunteers from churches, government officials, school district teachers & staff, Shippensburg University, and the community members meet via Zoom every Tuesday morning on your behalf? Did you know that all those people from different backgrounds learned to quickly work together so that they could help you and our community? I suspect that there are many things going on in Shippensburg that you just don’t know about…I didn’t!

I became aware of the Tuesday morning meetings a few months ago. On behalf of your Ministry and Missions Commission, I decided to “listen in”. I learned that the local organization, SCRC, coordinate the weekly community conference calls via Zoom. I learned that about every agency in Shippensburg and many churches cooperate to stretch resources and avoid duplication of services. The meetings originally had up to 47 participants but now average about 25 participants. I learned that several surrounding communities also “listen in”, because SCRC and what it provides is somewhat unique. I learned that our town is doing a terrific job of making sure that the right hand knows what the left hand is doing!

It became difficult to be just a listener. I found myself wanting to be a part of what was happening. I listened for ways that our church could give back. I listened for ways to let people know that there is help out there, if they just know where to look. Our Women’s Work made and donated about 1100 masks to SCRC to distribute. Our Bread of Life and Family Night Program donated excess meat and canned goods to those providing meals. Our congregation provided SCRC with a list of volunteers to help wherever needed. However, when I look at the countless hours that SCRC participants spend because they really care, I have to wonder...can we do more? Getting involved in helping others is a great antidote for the loneliness, isolation, and discouragement that many are experiencing in a world that seems to be turned upside down and inside out.

The purpose of this article is two-fold. First, I encourage those who can to get involved and spread the word. Second, I want to provide you with the knowledge and contact information for help. Rather than give you an extensive list of phone numbers and emails, I’ve opted to keep it simple. Since our church has formed a partnership with Christ Among Neighbors (CAN), you can call them at 717-532-7577. You can also call SCRC at 717-477-9100, Tri County Community Action at 717-532-8611, or dial 211 and follow the directions given. Applications for COVID-19 Gift Cards, COVID-19 Relief Fund, CARES Rent Relief Fact Sheets, and a list of free community meals are available in the church office or on SCRC’s website: www.shipresources.org/resources-covid-19

You might consider sending a thank you card or note to SCRC (130 S. Penn Street) to be shared at the next zoom meeting. It’s a small thing...“just do it”.

Linda Morgan, on behalf of Ministry and Missions Commission