

## **Project Serve Moves Forward**

J.R. Reed and Sue Mascolo got the October Project Serve off and running with a discussion of the needs of the elderly. J.R. gave a review of the demographics of the "elderly" and stated that the baby boomers are different from previous generations. They expect more to be made available to them in retirement and most want to live in their own homes rather than in a retirement facility.

Many of the elderly who are served are outside of the State College area but there are still needs in the State College Area. Low income housing requires an monthly income of \$1000 thus leaving many out of luck. Transportation is also a need. CATA and Office of Aging provide transportation within the State College Area but not to medical appointment outside of the area.

Many seniors are in need of help getting groceries delivered. Many are in need of house cleaning, installation of tub bars or ramps. Many are left almost in isolation without any visitors or someone to converse with. It was stated that 60% in long-term care never get visitors. Some are victims of financial exploitation by relatives or others and may need a "guardian."

Senior Centers are mostly providing social activities and may be in need of a change of mission. The one in State College presents problems with parking.

There are issues with volunteering to serve the elderly such as liability questions and proper background checks.

One idea was floated that involved a church team "adopting" one or more families or individuals and meeting some needs such as visiting them, taking them for rides, and getting their groceries. It seemed possible to get recommendations for needy individuals and families from the county office, and also to develop a "partnership" with the Office of Aging. A calendar of social events in the area can also be made available.

There was certainly plenty to think about and discern what we may as a congregation do to serve those in our community.

The November Project Serve will be held on November 17 and 19 and will feature Ruth Donahue, Director, Interfaith Human Services and Carol Pioli, Executive Director of the Food Bank. These sessions are open to all.