

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

Serving 10 Counties, 25 Christian Faith Traditions, 2000 Congregations and 1,000,000 Christian Members

The Call...

On the Web: www.casp.org

to be one in Christ



April 2008, Number 2

A Unifying Voice in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Mission of the Gospel and the Wholeness of Communities

United Methodists and Jews Discuss Strategies for Middle East Peace

Christian Associates' Executive Director Pastor Don Green recently hosted a conversation between representatives of the Western PA Conference, United Methodist Church (UMC), and the United Jewish Federation (UJF). The dialogue focused on resolutions coming before the UMC General Conference meeting in Fort Worth, TX in April which relate to strategies for bringing peace to the Middle East. Among the United Methodist participants were several delegates to General Assembly including Deacon Joan Reasinger, and Pastors Eric Park and John Ciampa.

Attorney Mark Frank, chair of the UJF's Community & Public Affairs Committee, led the Jewish delegation which included Rabbis Jamie Gibson and Eli Seidman along with several lay leaders.

A resolution proposing that the UMC divest from holdings in Caterpillar was of concern to the Jewish representatives. Caterpillar, the large equipment manufacturer, was targeted for divestment because of the company's sale of bulldozers to Israel

which are being used to demolish Palestinian houses and build the security wall. UMC participants noted that multiple resolutions, some in opposition to the divestment strategy, would also be coming before the General Assembly. Both groups were surprised to learn of the diversity of opinion about peace making within the other's religious traditions. Green commented to the group, "I was pleased that our conversation was polite, cordial, pointed, frank and forthright. You made great strides in

Peace, on page 8

In Memoriam: Sister Cornelia Mihalko

Sister Cornelia Mihalko, OSFM, a member of the Uniontown Province of the Sisters of St. Basil the Great, was called home to the Lord on Thursday, March 6, 2008, in the sixty-second year of her religious life. She was a faithful participant of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania serving as secretary for the Church & Community Committee. A member of St. Elias Byzantine Catholic Parish in Homestead, PA, she entered the Sisters of St. Basil the Great on June 24, 1946. She was active in the ministry of education for over half of her religious life, serving as both teacher and principal. Following her years in teaching, she

served as Activities Director for the retired Sisters in the Monastery; at St. Basil Home for Women; and as the Coordinator for the Monastery community. As her last assignment, Sister served on the pastoral ministry team for the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Pittsburgh for three years, following which she expended her energies in visiting the ill and infirm of the parishes in Pittsburgh. Sister Cornelia took great joy in her vocation to the Sisters of St. Basil and in life itself. Sister was gifted with a beautiful and clear voice, and she took great pride in being a member of the Byzantine Archeparchial Choir. Eternal Memory!

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REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY



Dear Siblings in Our Lord,

“Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them. ‘I am going fishing.’ They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.” (John 21: 2-3)

Perhaps we can describe Peter and his peers as the first of the growing demographic segment called “unaffiliated,” albeit “religious unaffiliated.” Here was the core group of Jesus’ followers. Yet after his resurrection, even after the resurrected Christ has appeared to them twice, the disciples resort to their former lives and vocations. They become unaffiliated, at least for a while.

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life’s “U.S. Religious Landscape” (www.pewforum.org) reveals that religious affiliation in America is “both very diverse and fluid.” “More than one-quarter of American adults (28%) have left the faith in which they were raised in favor of another religion – or no religion at all.” “Those Americans who are unaffiliated with any particular religion (16.1%) have seen the greatest growth in numbers as a result of changes in affiliation.” How can we account for such mobility across denominational, confessional and interreligious lines?

A positive spin could suggest that this fluidity is indicative of the success of the ecumenical movement. No longer do we condemn the Christian faith of our neighbors, in fact we feel quite comfortable going wherever Jesus Christ is proclaimed as Divine Savior and Lord, regardless of denominational brand. Or conversely, this could be seen as the relativizing of truth. Such is our American civil religion – “It doesn’t matter what you believe, so long as you believe in something.”

I fear that for the Church this ease of moving from denomination to denomination or to unaffiliated is the consequence of our becoming captive to both consumerism and individualism. Denominational loyalty has been replaced with shopping to have one’s felt needs satisfied. Our congregations have frantically sought to accommodate the demand for more programming so as to offer something for everyone. All the while most of our congregations cannot support nor sustain such a menu of options for these consumers of religious services. At the same time we as Church have lost the sense of the communal, and of seeker’s responsibility to the corporate nature of faith. Individualism, “what do I get out of it,” has replaced our sense of community, communion, and an individual’s sense of “what do I give to this religious experience.”

But what about those who are like Peter and his peers, those who once were affiliated but now are not? Many of them proclaim to be “religious,” that “religion is somewhat or very important in their lives.” Is that another symptom of individualism, where we seek to be religious and spiritual without engaging in organized religion? It took an encounter with Christ to bring those disciples back to Jesus’ fellowship of believers. In this Easter season, may we have the passion and will to build such communities of faith where Christ’s presence is obvious to others. May we also look forward to Pentecost and the Spirit’s empowerment to enable us to witness with gladness, winsomely and convincingly to those unaffiliated to experience Christ in the fellowship of the Church.

In Christ’s love and transforming grace,

Pastor Don Allen

Resources for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Pennsylvania ranks 7th in the United States for the greatest number of children residing in a household headed by a grandparent or other non-parent relative. Nineteen percent (14,960) of these households are in ten counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania. While approximately one-fourth of the children in these households are in a kinship placement as part of the foster care system, there are nearly 5 times as many children being raised in “informal” arrangements.

Because of this dramatic increase in the number of kinship care givers, Penn State Extension, the outreach arm of the land grant university, has developed educational services and programs for kinship care givers and the children they are raising. Extension is asking community organizations, churches, and other agencies to help them identify grandparent-headed families and share information about these programs and services.

Easter Appeal

Thank you for your response to Christian Associates' Christmas Appeal. Through your generosity, individual donor support increased dramatically in 2007. However, even with that additional support, the association has not been able to close the gap caused by declining judicatory contributions. The Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives remain committed to the mission of Christian Associates, but recognize the increased pressure and demands placed upon judicatories for their limited financial resources. Thus, we again ask for your support of our mission. In light of a dramatic decline in the support from his judicatory, one long time Christian Associates' leader has begun making a monthly contribution in support of our journey toward unity. Could you possibly do the same? We continue to covet your prayers for our labors in prison ministry, television communications, reconciliation in Christ and witness to justice and peace. Thank you for your continued words of affirmation and critique of this ministry and for your continued financial support.

Penn State Extension in Allegheny County is planning and conducting the fourth Kinship (Grandparents Raising Grandchildren) Family Retreat. This retreat for grandparents and their grandchildren, 3 to 18 years old in their care, is planned for June 20 through 22, 2008, at the Family Retreat Center in Mars, PA. The goal of the retreat is that families will identify and build upon their strengths through a series of structured activities designed to provide family members with shared educational and recreational activities. Further, the retreat provides a stress-free setting for family members to spend quality time together.

More information about resources and registration information for the retreat are available by contacting Nancy Crago, Senior Extension Educator for Penn State Extension in Allegheny County, at 412-473-3540, or email to nxa@psu.edu.

Holy Spirit Lecture at Duquesne

Sr. Elizabeth A. Johnson, Distinguished Professor of Theology at Fordham University, will deliver Duquesne University's 2008 Holy Spirit Lecture, Wednesday, May 28, at 7:00 p.m. in the Power Ballroom of Duquesne University's new Power Center, Fifth Floor, 1015 Forbes Avenue.

Dr. Johnson, the well known systematic and feminist theologian, will speak on the “Creative Giver of Life: An Ecological Theology of the Holy Spirit.” She describes her lecture in the following way: “The ancient truth that the Holy Spirit dwells within the world, found in scripture, creed, and traditional theology, is receiving new importance in our era of scientific discovery coupled with ecological crisis. How shall we think about the Spirit's presence in the evolving natural world, of which we humans are a part? How do such thoughts in turn lead to greater understanding of the nature of God's own Spirit? And how does this framework of faith galvanize the church's ethical response? Using concepts of embracing and empowering, suffering and healing, promising and luring, this lecture explores these questions with a view toward revitalizing a theology of the Holy Spirit as Love at the heart of the universe, to practical and critical effect.”

For more information, phone 412-396-6526 or email holyspirit@duq.edu.



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ECUMENICAL EVENTS

Pittsburgh Compline Choir

Heinz Memorial Chapel
University of Pittsburgh Campus
412-682-6886
www.compline.lucpgh.com

Dates: Sun. Apr. 6, 13, 20
Time: 8:30 p.m.

Apr. 6 – R. Craig Dobbins from The Presbyterian Church of Sewickley
Apr. 13 – J. Barbara McKelway from The Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon
Apr. 20 – Paul Weber from Franciscan University, Steubenville, Ohio



St. Elias Byzantine Catholic Church

4200 Homestead-Duquesne Road
Munhall, PA 15120

Fifth Annual Day of Reflection for Women

Date: Sat. Apr. 12
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Speakers: Sr. Jean Murin, RSM; Dr. Katie McCorkle; Colleen Gattusa, RN
Cost: \$28 (includes lunch)
Call for reg. brochure: 412-322-8773

Topics include human trafficking, "Heal the World with Your Love," and incorporating humor into living to relieve stress.



Franciscan Spirit & Life Center

3605 McRoberts Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
412-881-9207
www.osfprov.org

Movement Prayer: A Path to Wellness

Date: Sat. Apr. 12
Time: 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Leader: MaryAnn Garfold
Cost: \$15, deposit \$5; Reg. by Apr. 2

These exercises are low impact and allow

for prayerful expression of our relationship with God, others and all creation.

Achieve, Accomplish, Acquire 24-7

Date: Sat. Apr. 19
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Leader: Peggy Dutch
Cost: \$20, deposit \$10; Reg. by Apr. 8

God invites us to set apart one day a week for freedom from our enslavement to things and agendas.



North Hills Interfaith Gathering

Ingomar United Methodist Church
1501 W. Ingomar Road
Franklin Park, PA 15237

Feasts, Fasts & Festivals: Celebrating Our Diversity

Date: Sun. Apr. 13
Time: 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Sponsored by: North Hills Anti-Racism Coalition
For information: 412-367-1835



Spiritan Center

6230 Brushrun Road
Bethel Park, PA 15102
412-835-3510 x112 or
spiritancenter@juno.com
www.spiritans.org

Celebrating the Wisdom Years

Dates: Fri. - Sun. Apr. 18 - 20
Times: Fri. eve. through Sun. morning
Cost: \$130; Open to women of all faiths

Carol Marozzi, SSJ will lead this retreat to celebrate the experiences and wisdom of mid life, including the search for meaning, prayer, transformation and healing.



Sisters of St. Francis

Tabor House of Prayer
146 Hawthorne Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15209
412-821-1149

www.millvalefranciscans.org/tabor

God Loves You! Are You Saying "Yes" to His Gift?

Dates: Fri. & Sat. Apr. 18 & 19
Times: begins Fri. at 7 p.m. and ends Sat. with evening meal at 6 p.m.
Presenter: Eileen Colianni
Fee: \$55; Register by Apr. 15

From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture sings to us, again and again, of how unconditionally God loves each of us.

Workshop on Stress

Dates: Fri. & Sat. Apr. 25 & 26
Times: begins Fri. at 7:00 p.m. and ends Sat. with evening meal
Presenter: Sr. Mary Jo Mattes, OSF
Fee: \$55; Register by Apr. 20

Stress is the basis for many of our physical & mental illnesses. Are we allowing it to take over our way of living?

"Spirituality of Icon Writing"

Dates: Thur. - Sun. May 1 - 4
Times: Begins 6:30 p.m., concludes when participants finish their icon
Presenter: Sr. Rosaire Kopczenski, OSF
Retreat fee: \$250

You will be allowing God's truth to be proclaimed in the color and line of the icon you create.



Music at Calvary

Calvary Episcopal Church
315 Shady Avenue (at Walnut Street)
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-661-0120
www.calvarypgh.org/music.html

Oberlin College Collegium

Date: Sun. Apr. 20
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Admission is free
Liturgical music of the 16th century is sung by this elite a cappella group.



ECUMENICAL EVENTS

Choral Evensong for Trinity Sunday

Date: Sun. May 18

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Featuring music by Herbert Howells, sung by the Calvary Choir.



Martina Spiritual Renewal Center

5244 Clarwin Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15229

412-931-9766

www.sistersoftheholyspirit.com

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner:

"Walking in the Footsteps of Yes"

Date: Tues. Apr. 22

Time: 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Presenter: Joan Pilat

Offering: \$20; Registration requested

Bring or send your volunteer(s) to show your appreciation of their life in Christ and the ministry which they provide to your organization.

Girls Day Out: Tea and Inspiration:

"Women Celebrating Women"

Date: Sun. May 18

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Presenter: Jo Ann Paradise, D.Min.

Offering: \$30; Registration requested

The day will include reflective presentations, a tea luncheon with beautiful china tea cups, and closes with Eucharistic Liturgy. Recommended but not required: hats and gloves!



Music in a Great Space

The Concert Series at Shadyside

Presbyterian Church

5121 Westminister Place

Pittsburgh, PA 15232

412-682-4300

www.shadysidepres.org

Organist Rachel Laurin

Date: Sun. Apr. 27

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Cost: \$10, \$5 seniors, free students

Her performances have a history of bringing amazed audiences to their feet - surely this spring's recital will be no exception!

Choral Festival: Rossini's *Stabat Mater*

Date: Sun. May 18

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Cost: \$10, \$5 seniors, free students

The text comes from a poem about the Virgin Mary's grief-stricken vigil at the foot of the cross.



Epiphany Academy of Formative Spirituality

820 Crane Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15216-3050

412-341-7494

www.epiphanyassociation.org

Direction-In-Common

Dates: Tues. May 6, 13, 20, 27

Time: 7:00 - 9:15 p.m.

Facilitator: Susan Muto, Ph.D. and

Marlene Milik

Cost: \$45; Register by Apr. 21



Catholic Charities 15th Annual Wisdom, Age & Grace Conference

Four Points by Sheraton Pittsburgh North

Date: Fri. May 9

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Theme: "The Peace We Seek"

Cost includes morning refreshment & lunch: \$43; \$33 for those age 62+

Bishop Zubik will deliver the keynote address and open the conference with the celebration of the Mass. For more information, contact Catholic Charities Elderly Services Program at 412-456-6979 or www.ccpgh.org.



2008 Sixth Presbyterian Spring Speaker Series

Sixth Presbyterian Church

1688 Murray Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15217

412-421-2752

www.sixthchurch.org

Living Into God's Amazing Grace

Dates: Fri. - Sun. May 16 - 18

Speaker: Dr. Cynthia Rigby, professor, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Dr. Rigby has been described as "one of the great theologians of our time," spanning the gap between church and society. Her special area of interest is setting reformed theologies in conversation with theologies of liberation, particularly feminist theologies. Sponsored by the Fred Rogers Memorial Fund at Sixth.

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Upcoming Events for Adults:

- April 18-20: Marriage Retreat
- May 14-15: Youth Leaders Retreat
- May 18-20: Pastor Retreat

Seminary Awarded Accreditation

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS Cyril and Methodius, Observatory Hill, Pittsburgh has been granted accreditation by the Commission on Accrediting of The Association of Theological Schools (ATS). The initial accreditation of the Seminary is for a term of five years.

Accreditation is a primary means of quality assurance in North American higher education. By seeking this designation, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary agrees to hold itself to mutually accountable agreed-upon standards of educational quality. These standards emphasize the importance of institutional and educational effectiveness.

"This accreditation is the result of over four years of effort by our faculty, staff, board of directors and countless volunteers," said Fr. John G. Petro, the Seminary's Rector. "With this honor, the Seminary will continue to grow in excellence and quality, and be nationally recognized as a true center of learning in the Byzantine Catholic Tradition."

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY/ORGANIST

Oakmont Presbyterian Church is seeking a committed Christian to serve as full-time Director of Music Ministry/Organist beginning July 1, 2008. This individual will lead a dynamic music program in an active church of 550 members. Visit our website at www.oakmontpresbyterianchurch.org for a complete position description and Music Vision Statement. Résumés are being accepted through May 1 and can be submitted electronically to erxn@verizon.net or via regular mail to Oakmont Presbyterian Church, 415 Pennsylvania Avenue, Oakmont, PA 15139.

Change of Date for Compassion Sabbath

Compassion Sabbath Pittsburgh, planned for Saturday, April 12, 2008, is being rescheduled. The Coalition for Quality at the End of Life is postponing the Compassion Sabbath Clergy Retreat due to unexpected scheduling conflicts and the desire for maximum inclusiveness of all faith communities in Pittsburgh. A new date will be announced as soon as the scheduling issues can be resolved. Dr. David Barnard, Institute to Enhance Palliative Care said, "We regret this inconvenience, but a new date will enable us to create the most effective Compassion Sabbath for our community."

CAMP AGAPÉ

Affordable Summer Christian Literacy Camps in Reading and Math. For more information: www.campagape.org or 724-356-2308.

MARJORIE SUCHOCKI

*Professor Emerita
and former Academic
Dean at Claremont
School of Theology*



"A PLAIN ACCOUNT OF A PLAIN ACCOUNT (OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION)"

Thursday, April 24
2:00 and 3:45 p.m.

For more information, contact
Continuing Education Office
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
412-441-3304 ext. 2196
ConEd@pts.edu
www.pts.edu



Albright-Deering Lectures 2008



J. WENTZEL VAN HUYSSTEEN

*James I. McCord
Professor of Theology
and Science, Princeton
Theological Seminary*

"HUMAN UNIQUENESS IN SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY"

Friday, April 25
11:30 a.m.
2:30 and 4:30 p.m.

For more information, contact
Continuing Education Office
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
412-441-3304 ext. 2196
ConEd@pts.edu
www.pts.edu



Henderson Lectures 2008

DR. RONALD W. RICHARDSON

*Pastor, Counselor,
& Noted Family
Systems Author*



**DR. MARSHA
FOSTER BOYD**
*President, Ecumenical
Theological Seminary*

"SIGNS OF A HEALTHIER CHURCH IN POLARIZING TIMES"

June 8-11, 2008

For more information, contact
Continuing Education Office
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
412-441-3304 ext. 2196
ConEd@pts.edu
www.pts.edu



Summer Leadership Conference 2008

Pandemic Exercise and Psychological First Aid Training for the Faith-Based Community

The last several years have raised awareness of the potential of disasters occurring in our southwestern PA region. Disasters may include but are not limited to: natural disasters such as floods or tornados; the threat of a domestic or international terrorist attack; biological, chemical, or nuclear mishaps; bridge collapses or air plane crashes; and pandemics such as avian influenza.

It is possible that such events might affect your parish/community or your parishioners directly. It is even more probable that your parish/community might become a resource for those affected by such traumas. Preparation and planning for such events is invaluable. A Pandemic Exercise will be offered free of charge, Thursday, May 29, 2008 from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (lunch included) at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, 4701 College Drive, Erie, PA.

The purpose of this course is to enable individuals in the faith-based community to have a better understanding of the implications of a major pandemic, and how such an event would affect the general population. The emotional

impact of trauma will be discussed, as well as ways to provide basic care, comfort and support to people who are experiencing disaster-related stress. At the end of this course, participants should be aware of the implications of a large-scale disaster such as a pandemic, and understand the emotional consequences that individuals may deal with following a disaster. An opportunity will be provided to complete a set of self-review questions based on course material. These questions are designed to help participants confirm what they have learned in the class and to clarify content. In addition, individuals will have the opportunity to develop planning strategies for their faith communities to deal with disasters.

Instructors for the course include: Sr. Marguerite Kropinak, CSJ, Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden, PA; Rev. Don Green, Christian Associates Executive Director; Erik Wittman, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse; John Ream III, American Red Cross. Registration forms may be secured by contacting: Kyessa Brian, WPIC/OERP, (412) 802-6905; briankl@upmc.edu.

WORSHIP SPACE AVAILABLE

Hope Lutheran Church of Forest Hills seeks Christian congregation to share worship facility in eastern suburbs of Pittsburgh. Easy access from parkway. Ample parking and handicap accessible. Rent negotiable. Call 412-242-4476 or email Hope@Lutheran.com.

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116 S. Highland Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-441-3800 www.cathedralofhope.org 

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Applications are now available for the Fall CPE unit at Family Hospice and Palliative Care. The part-time, extended unit begins in September 2008 and concludes in May 2009. Interns complete 12 hours per week of classroom instruction, supervision, and direct pastoral care with hospice patients. Accredited by the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP).

For information and an application, please contact:
Rev. Edward Pehanich, D.Min.
Family Hospice and Palliative Care
412-829-2818, epehanich@familyhospice.com

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

First Presbyterian Church of Irwin, a congregation of more than 1,000 near Pittsburgh, seeks a full-time, non-ordained Christian education director. The educator is an important element in our mission - "Building on each member's spiritual gifts, we spread His message of love and hope throughout our congregation and community." Requirements include excellent communication skills, an ability to inspire discipleship, good organizational skills, and computer literacy. Visit our Web site for details: www.firstpresbyirwin.org. Please submit your résumé or questions via e-mail to Ms. Taska Smola at smola_r@yahoo.com.

March for Darfur Villages

The Pittsburgh Darfur Emergency Coalition will hold a March and Rally on Sunday, May 18 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. beginning at Freedom Corner, Centre Avenue and Crawford Street. The Coalition wants to illustrate the enormity of the catastrophe that has occurred in Darfur and to spur the U.S. government and the international community to act decisively to stop the genocide. How can you help? Represent one of the 2,751 damaged or destroyed villages and join the march on May 18. For more information or to register contact Amy Langham, amy@globalsolutionspgh.org.

Peace, from page 1

seeking to understand each other's viewpoints. The cause of seeking the peace and justice which G-d desires was well served." He noted that he looks forward to hosting them again in May to discuss the outcomes of the General Conference and to develop appropriate next steps in the mutual concern for a just and lasting peace for both Israelis and Palestinians.

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724-352-7117

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724-443-4110

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Butler, PA 16001
724-287-2567

1201 N. Main St.
Butler, PA 16001
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