

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

Serving 10 Counties, 27 Christian Faith Traditions, 2,000 Congregations and 1,000,000 Christian Members

The Call . . . *to be one in Christ*



On the Web: www.casp.org

April 2015, Number 2

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

Engage, Connect, and Deepen Understanding at the Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference

Pastors, counselors, social workers, and volunteers – “shepherds and other caretakers of the flock” – will gather in Sewickley this month for the 15th annual Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference. Enrich your own pastoral skills and knowledge by joining us on **Friday, April 24** from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at **Christ Church at Grove Farm**.

This year’s keynote speaker, Mr. Reid Carpenter, is the President Emeritus of The Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation and Founder of the Leadership Foundations of America. In these positions, he has initiated, organized, and helped fund more than 20 organizations seeking to assist at-risk youth, prisoners and their families, people with inadequate health care, families in need of housing, and individuals with drug and alcohol addictions.

Conference participants will choose from fifteen workshops, including “*Human Trafficking*,” “*Conflict in Congregational Life*,” “*Children and Grief*,” and “*Love Addiction*.” Workshops are available for those interested in addiction and recovery, marriage and family, community engagement, and many other topics. The workshop presenters, all specialists in their fields, include clergy and religious from seven different Christian traditions.

Registration, which includes breakfast and lunch, is \$45 before April 17, \$60 afterward, and \$15 for first-time attendees and students. Continuing education credits are available.

For more information, to download a registration form, or to register online, please visit www.pghpc.org.



Reid Carpenter’s keynote address, “*The Holy Spirit on Fire in Pittsburgh*,” will focus on the Spirit’s role in reviving faith and healing communities.

Catholics, Lutherans Prepare to Commemorate Reformation Anniversary

PROTESTANT REFORMATION 500TH ANNIVERSARY 1517-2017



October 31, 2017 will mark the 500th anniversary of Luther’s posting of the 95 Theses, and thus, the fifth centenary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. The Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation are urging Catholics and Lutherans to together commemorate this fifth centenary.

To begin this work locally, all clergy, religious, and lay church professionals, as well as other interested people, are

invited to a day of conversation on the quest for unity.

The gathering will take place on **Wednesday, April 29, from**

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Paul Seminary in Crafton.

The suggested donation of \$20 includes lunch and a study guide for “*From Conflict to Communion*,” a document jointly written by Catholic and Lutheran leaders.

This event is sponsored by the Catholic dioceses of Pittsburgh and Greensburg, the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, and the Southwestern

Pennsylvania synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Featured speakers will be the Rev. Dr. Timothy Wengert who serves on the ELCA/U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops bilateral dialogue, and the Rev. Dr. John Crossin, the executive director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs of the USCCB.

To register, go to <http://regonline.com/con2com>. For more information, call the SWPA synod at 412-367-8222.



“Ecumenical dialogue can no longer be separated from reality and from the life of our churches.”

Pope Francis

REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Dear friends,

Fifty years ago this spring, the nation's attention turned to Selma, Alabama as the struggle for civil rights exploded at the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

So much has changed since Selma – and yet so much remains the same. This January, the University of Pittsburgh's Center on Race and Social Problems found that African Americans here in our region are significantly less likely than their White neighbors to graduate from high school, own a home, or hold a job, and more likely to live in poverty, reside in an unsafe neighborhood, or be arrested.

As Christians, these statistics are especially convicting. Our faith that *all* of humanity is created in the image of God, and our belief that Christ came to “break down the dividing wall” between peoples, compel us to resist racism in all its forms.

In that spirit, on March 25, the 50th anniversary of the day marchers finally reached Montgomery, Christian Associates' Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives issued a public statement recommitting to racial reconciliation. The members of Council agreed to begin a process of intentional relationship-building as a first step in future work of public witness and action. “If we hope to address the injustices we observe in the wider world,” they wrote, “we must first examine how prejudice is manifest in our own structures.”

The statement (available at www.casp.org) commits Christian Associates to four action steps in 2015:

1. We will reinvigorate our connection with the historically African American churches in our membership (the Allegheny/Scranton and Pittsburgh districts of the AME, the Pittsburgh District of the AME-Zion, and the Allegheny Union Baptist Association) through one-on-one and group meetings with executives and clergy. We will share meals together, visit houses of worship, engage in prayer and fellowship, and speak frankly of the challenge of racism.
2. We will listen carefully to the voices of people of color within majority-white churches in our membership, organizing conversations to hear their experiences and insights.
3. We will reach out to churches of color not currently represented among our membership, seeking to make our fellowship more representative of all the Christians of Southwest Pennsylvania.
4. We will identify necessary next steps and craft a call to ongoing action for ourselves, our congregations, and their members, informed and inspired by what we have learned from these new and revitalized relationships.

The Council's statement concludes with these words:

“At our recent worship service, we heard the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations of the United Church of Christ, declare that “racism is a church-dividing issue.” We believe that with God's help, the effort to eradicate racism, arm in arm and heart to heart, can become a church-uniting issue, as Christians of all races and ethnicities strive together to defeat this evil and live into beloved community. May God bless our intentions and empower our action.”

In this Easter season, we celebrate that the powers of hatred and death never have the final word. Resurrection is real, and reconciliation will come. Let us pray for that day, and work to make it happen.

Your sister in Christ,

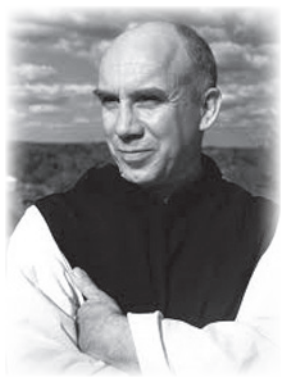


The Rev. Liddy Barlow
Executive Minister
Christian Associates of Southwest PA



Oops! We inadvertently sent the Feb-Mar issue of The Call newsletter to an outdated version of our mailing list. If it did not reach your mailbox, please visit us online to read about the new executive director of the Foundation of HOPE, Bread for the World's annual Offering of Letters campaign, and other important updates. You can read the full issue at www.casp.org/Call-Feb15.pdf.

Festival Celebrates Merton Centenary



Author, Trappist monk, activist, and artist: 100 years after his birth, Thomas Merton continues to inspire.

To celebrate Merton's centenary, Pittsburgh's Thomas Merton Center has organized a festival of events from April 16-26, including panel discussions, a poetry reading, lectures, film screenings, a Mass, and a gala reception, co-sponsored by a wide array of partner organizations.

Details on each of the festival events can be found at www.thomasmertoncenter.org/merton-100th/.



Donate Books: Bring Hope to Moms in Jail

Reading storybooks aloud with a parent builds both love and literacy. Now that opportunity is available to children whose mothers are incarcerated, thanks to Christian Associates' partner in ministry, the Foundation of HOPE.

Their program "Mother's HOPE" allows women who have completed two weeks of the pre-release program at Allegheny County Jail to record themselves reading a book to their children. HOPE sends the book and the recording to the child.

Books for children age 0-18 are now needed! Board books for infants and chapter books for older readers are especially appreciated. All books must be in new condition, with no signs of wear. Books may be dropped off at Shadyside Presbyterian Church (5121 Westminister Place, Pittsburgh, PA); please specify that they are for Mother's HOPE.

Continue Working to Stop Violence

"Now finish what you began, so that your eagerness to do so may be matched by your eagerness to complete it."
2 Corinthians 8:11



In 2009, Christian Associates partnered with the Coalition Against Violence to condemn violence in our communities and to promote the action steps in the Coalition's plan. The plan is as relevant today as it was six years ago: it is time today to finish what we began!

Visit www.casp.org to find links to the plan, which suggest specific steps houses of worship can take to stop violence.



Management & Human Resources Services/Support to Small Organizations

Sample Services/Support

Report Writing, Policy Manual Updates, Job Descriptions
Preparation for Accreditation or Licensure Visits
Helpful for congregation-based early childhood programs
Charitable Foundation Research & Proposal Writing

See complete list at www.baidos.net

Mary Ann Hvizdos, Ph.D., Co-Principal
412-807-1611

**March-June 2015: 1-Hour Informational PowerPoint
Overview & Key Changes to PA Child Protective Services Law, 2015**
\$60 flat rate, including handouts, up to 8 participants

June 2015



Trinity
School for Ministry

Pastoral Responses to Family & Sexual Violence

Joanne Martin, LCSW, MAR
PT 675/977 | June 8-12



Pastoral approaches to domestic violence, child physical abuse/neglect, sexual violence, and sexual addiction in congregational life.
Non-credit option: \$180

www.tsm.edu/intensives

Christian Associates Celebrates 40th Anniversary . . .



Freezing temperatures outside could not deter Christian Associates' Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives, and many members and friends of our member churches, from gathering in downtown Pittsburgh on February 15 to celebrate Christian Associates' 40th anniversary and install the Rev. Liddy Barlow as Executive Minister.

-- Photos by Andy Muhl --



With Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz and Rev. J. Douglas Patterson looking on, Rev. Liddy Barlow affirms her covenant with Christian Associates.



Members of the Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives, along with other worship leaders, join in song. Left to right: Rev. David Ackerman, Dr. Sheldon Sorge, Bishop David Zubik, Major Robert Kramer, Father Andrew Deskevich, Rev. Jana Quisenberry, Dr. Lamar Lee, Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz, Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, Dr. Al Towberman, Rev. J. Douglas Patterson.

"Almighty God, breathe into us the wind of unity that recognizes our diversity. Breathe into us mutual acceptance that welcomes and makes us community."

— prayer of invocation



The New Light Temple Baptist Church choir offered a gospel prelude.



Rev. David Ackerman led the children's sermon.

... Installs Executive Minister



Dr. Sheldon Sorge, chair of the Christian Associates Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives; Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz, president of the Pittsburgh Association of the United Church of Christ; and Rev. J. Douglas Patterson, pastor of Smithfield United Church of Christ, lead the rite of installation for Rev. Liddy Barlow.

"Liddy, seeing that you are called to ordained ministry by the grace of God and that Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania has been led to call you as Executive Minister, are you willing to enter this covenant with its Council, committees, member churches, and community partners?"

"I am willing, and I promise to serve faithfully, preaching and teaching the Gospel, administering the rites and sacraments of the Church, and working with God's help for the visible unity of Christ's Church and the wholeness of our communities."

- installation rite



The preacher of the day was Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, Minister of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations of the United Church of Christ.



Bishop Dorsey McConnell and Dr. Lamar Lee led the congregation in renewing their baptismal promises.



The youth of New Bethlehem Presbyterian Church (Beaver-Butler Presbytery) presented a drama, "The Life of Christ."



Rev. Liddy Barlow offers a benediction.

ECUMENICAL EVENTS

Musical Events

Curtis Stephan in concert

Thursday, April 30, 7:00 p.m.; "A Night of Worship," to include prayer, discussion, adoration and singing at St. Bonaventure Parish, 2001 Mount Royal Blvd., Glenshaw, PA 15116; free.

Friday, May 1, 7:00 pm; Concert at St. Joseph Parish, O'Hara Twp., 342 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15215; free.
Curtis Stephan, renowned Oregon Catholic Press (OCP) composer, accomplished musician, and clinician. Contact Shari Whitico, 724-766-6012 or music@stbonaventureparish.org.

Jazz Vespers

Informal service with scripture and prayer to a live jazz beat. Free and open to the public.
First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh,
320 Sixth Avenue, Downtown.

Thurs., Apr. 30: Eric Defade, sax and flute
Thurs., May 28: Alton Merrell, piano
6 p.m.: Social with light refreshments
6:30-7 p.m.: Worship
Details at www.fpcp.org or 412-471-3436

Seraphic Singers

Sun. April 19, 4:00 pm
Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church
3319 West Liberty Avenue, Pgh 15216
412-531-5564
Premier performance of 12-voice women's professional vocal ensemble. Suggested donation \$10.

Epiphany Academy of Formative Spirituality

820 Crane Ave.; Pittsburgh, PA 15216
412-341-7494; www.epiphanyassociation.org

Blessings Along the Way: An Epiphany Video Series with Adrian van Kaam, CSSp, PhD and Susan Muto, PhD

Dates: Tuesdays, May 5, 12, and 19
Time: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Jean Marie Farina, Facilitator
Fee: \$30 for the series or \$10 per session

Diocese of Pittsburgh CEUs available to those who attend all six classes

St. Joseph Spirituality Center

A Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph
1020 State Street, Baden, PA 15005
724-869-6587; www.stjoseph-baden.org

Spiritual Dimensions of Therapy, Treatment and Care

Date: Fri., April 17
Time: 9:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Fee: \$70 (includes lunch)
Presenter: Rev. Dr. N. Graham Standish

An approach for clergy, social workers, counselors, therapists, nurses and others to develop a way of understanding the relationship of the spiritual dimension with the psychological, physical, and relational dimensions of the person. 6 CE credits for mental health/health care professionals.

Northmont United Presbyterian Church

8169 Perry Hwy; Pittsburgh, PA 15237
412-486-9036; www.northpgh.org

18th Annual Interfaith Gathering Sponsored by the North Hills Anti-Racism Coalition

Date: Sun., April 26; Time: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Admission free

Representatives from 9 different faiths will demonstrate how the spiritual life of children and youth is nurtured in the faith. Faiths include Baha'i, Buddhism, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon), Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Religious Society of Friends (Quaker), and Unitarian Universalism.

Trinity School for Ministry

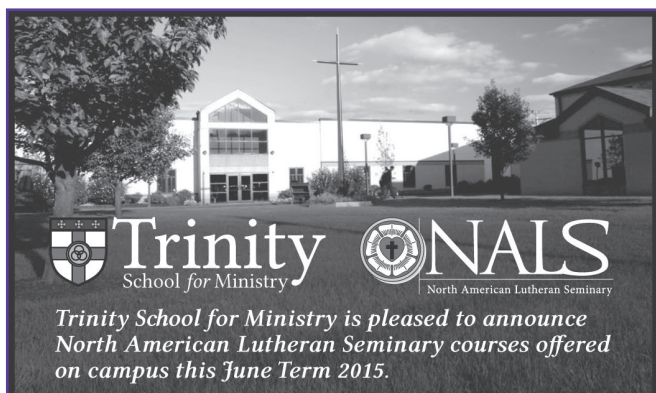
311 Eleventh St. Ambridge, PA 15003
724-266-3838, www.tsm.edu

Worship Leaders Conference

Spirit & Sacrament: Integrating Modern
Worship with Traditional Liturgy
Date: June 1-3; Cost: \$120

Ancient Evangelical Future Conference

For the Life of the World: The Church's Mission in a Pluralistic Age
Date: June 4-5; Cost: \$150



Trinity School for Ministry

NALS North American Lutheran Seminary

Trinity School for Ministry is pleased to announce North American Lutheran Seminary courses offered on campus this June Term 2015.

Discipleship:

Discipling & the Spiritual Disciplines



ME 700 | June 15-19

The Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin &
The Rt. Rev. Dr. John Bradosky

An in depth journey into Luke-Acts to see and hear how our Lord went about making disciples and how the Church followed in his footsteps; a study of this faithful witness through Christian history and the practice of Spiritual Disciplines. *Non-credit option: \$180*

www.tsm.edu/intensives



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www.antiochianvillage.org AntiochianVillageCC

UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENTS

at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Trinity: What's God up to in the World?
Albright-Deering Lectures in Methodist Studies
 April 16, 2015
Jason Byassee and Beth Felker Jones

Creativity: Speaking of God in a New Media Age
Pastor Workshop
 April 17, 2015
Jason Byassee and Beth Felker Jones

Abraham Lincoln's Faith Journey and Our Ministry Stories
Henderson Conference on Church and Ministry
 April 24, 2015
Ronald White Jr.

Mental Illness, Stigma, and the Church
 April 29-May 20, 2015, Wednesday evenings
Heather Vacek

Our Lives as Sacred Story: A Writing Workshop
 May 1-2, 2015
Carrie Newcomer

Room at the Table: An Evening of Music with Carrie Newcomer
 May 2, 2015

Immersion Experience: An Invitation to a Deeper Spiritual Life
 May 7-9, 2015
Mary Lynn Callahan and PTS Faculty

The Good Earth: Creation and Ministry in an Ecological Age
Henderson Summer Leadership Conference
 June 7-10, 2015
Norman Wirzba and Fred Bahnson



Office of
 Continuing Education
 616 N. Highland Ave.
 Pittsburgh, PA 15206
 412-924-1345
 ConEd@pts.edu
 www.pts.edu/CE



"Why don't we ... talk about it?"

Understanding & Preventing Suicide

Russ Crabtree, MDiv., (L), nationally renowned lecturer & authority in suicide prevention work, is coming to Pittsburgh to present this enlightening training on addressing suicide in the faith community.

WHEN: Apr. 14, 2015 **WHERE:** Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
 616 N. Highland Ave., Pittsburgh 15206

TIME: 8:30AM-3:30PM Includes continental breakfast/beverages/breaks;
 4:00-4:45PM A worship service modeling preaching, prayer
 & pastoral care around those who are desperate

HOW to REGISTER: Visit samaritancounseling.net and click on "Why Don't We Talk about It?" or call Pittsburgh Pastoral Inst. @ 412-661-1239

COST: \$50 per person – \$40 if you register by Mar. 31st



Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15201-1859

412-688-9070

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**Local Churches to Participate in National Blue Sunday
Day of Prayer for Abused Children April 26**



In 1983 President Ronald Reagan proclaimed April to be the first National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a tradition that continues to this day. Although prevention advances have been made nationally and locally, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania alone in 2011, 3,388 children suffered confirmed abuse or neglect and 37 died as a result of this maltreatment.

**Blue
Sunday**
Child Abuse Prevention Initiative

As members of the Body of Christ, we have an obligation to protect, support and love children entrusted to our care. Because of this shared responsibility, twenty local churches, in cooperation with the faith-based organization, *Shepherding the Next Generation*, are participating in National Blue Sunday Day of Prayer for Abused Children, traditionally held the last Sunday in April.

On April 26th during services, participating churches will lift in prayer the victims of child abuse and neglect, and those who care for them. There still is time for your church to participate.

Contact Dr. Mary Ann Hvizdos, Pittsburgh Project Manager at 412-807-1611 or mahvizdos@verizon.net to request prayer guides and educational materials, or visit www.shepherdingthenextgeneration.org/bluesunday/.