

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

Serving 10 Counties, 28 Church Bodies, 2,000 Congregations and 1,000,000 Christian Members

The Call . . .



On the Web: www.casp.org

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 5241, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Hicks Memorial Chapel - lower level

616 North Highland Avenue - Pittsburgh, PA 15206

to be one in Christ

December 2018/January 2019 - Number 6

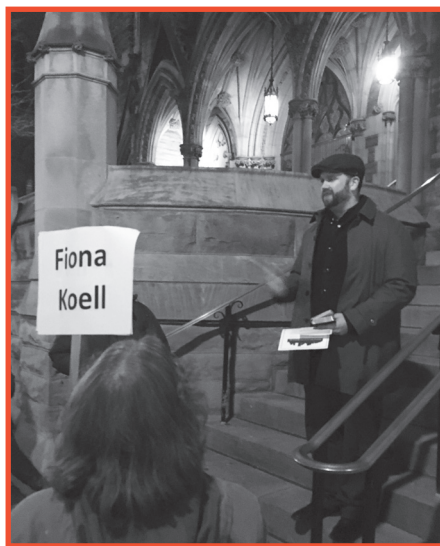
A Unifying Voice in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Mission of the Gospel and the Wholeness of Communities

Longest Night Walk on December 21 Remembers Victims of Homelessness

In Earth's northern hemisphere, the longest night of the year occurs on December 21, the winter solstice. In 1990, the National Coalition for the Homeless chose this day to be National Homeless Persons Memorial Day.

On the Longest Night, members of our community will walk to remember those who died while experiencing homelessness in Allegheny County this year, and to commit ourselves to ensuring all people have safe shelter.

At 5:30 p.m. on December 21, we will begin on the steps of **St. Mary of Mercy Church** (202 Stanwix St. Pittsburgh 15222) and follow a route that passes by churches and non-profit organizations that together provide a variety of services to individuals who are experiencing homelessness and other life-threatening crises. Walkers will carry signs with the names of the deceased, so that those who observe our walk might notice and remember these neighbors.



Rev. Dan Turis describes the ministries of First Presbyterian Church during the 2017 Longest Night Walk.

At each stop, we will pause briefly to learn about services that are offered by a particular organization. The 1.3 mile walk will end in the parklet at Grant St. and First Ave.

The downtown walk is organized by members of the Community Education Committee of the Homeless Advisory Board, which includes representatives from the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, the Downtown Ministerium, and other non-profit housing providers.

At the conclusion of the walk, participants are invited to gather for the 7 p.m. candlelight homeless memorial service beneath the highway overpass at Ft. Pitt Blvd and Grant St. The memorial vigil has been an annual tradition since 1998 and is organized by Operation Safety Net.

Join us to spend time with others who care for our neighbors, to walk and remember, and to pray that homelessness will end.

- Rev. Jennifer Peters McCurry

Film Screening Explores Moral Dimensions of Capital Punishment



Christians worship a Savior who was condemned to death – and a God who did not allow death to be the final word.

Across diverse denominations, Christians oppose capital punishment on moral

grounds, believing in the possibility of redemption and trusting God to be the final arbiter of justice.

At 7 p.m. on **Thursday, December 13**, Christian Associates will co-sponsor a screening of "*In the Executioner's Shadow*," a documentary film about justice, injustice, and the death penalty.

"*In the Executioner's Shadow*" features three powerful stories: a former state executioner who comes within days of executing an innocent person; a Boston Marathon bombing victim who struggles to decide what justice really means; and the parents of a murder victim who choose to fight for the life of their daughter's killer.

After the film, stay to learn more about the Joint State Government Report on Capital Punishment released this summer, and to consider the future of the death penalty in Pennsylvania.

The screening takes place at First Unitarian Church, 605 Morewood Avenue, Pittsburgh 15213, with co-sponsorship from Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, the ACLU of Pennsylvania, and the Pittsburgh chapter of Amnesty International USA.

Join us for this free event; RSVPs are encouraged at <http://bit.ly/ShadowFilm>.



REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Dear friends,

Eighty years ago, violent mobs encouraged by Hitler's government ransacked Jewish businesses, desecrated Jewish cemeteries, and burned synagogues to the ground. More than ninety people died on November 9, 1938 in an event that came to be called "Kristallnacht," the Night of Broken Glass.

On October 27, violent anti-Semitic hatred came to our own region, as a man fueled by bigotry and xenophobia killed eleven of our neighbors as they worshiped at the three congregations that meet at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill.

But this time, bystanders did not turn aside. People of all faiths and none have rallied around our Jewish neighbors, offering our prayers, our donations, our presence, and our support. Christian Associates played a key role in coordinating the interfaith response, and on the night after the massacre, I was honored to stand with my colleagues at Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall, offering these words:



photo by Jennifer McKinney

Grace and peace to each and every one of you.

First, to the Jewish community: When violence came to Christian sanctuaries – at Mother Emanuel in Charleston, at Sutherland Springs in Texas – you stood with us. Today, with our whole hearts, we stand with you. We will cry with you. We will resist anti-Semitism and all hatred with you. We will work with you to end violence. We will do it because you are our neighbors; and more, because you are our friends; and more, because you are our family. We love you. And we are so, so sorry.



One of the congregations at worship yesterday has the beautiful name "Tree of Life." It's an image that appears in the first pages of the Hebrew Scriptures, as the Tree of Life grows in the Garden of Eden. For Christians, we find that same tree in the last pages of our Bible, in the book of Revelation: John's beautiful dream of Eden restored, the city of God. Hear these words:

"On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."

Did you catch that, about the fruit? When this world comes to fulfillment, there's not going to be just one kind of fruit, or two kinds of fruit; there's going to be twelve kinds of fruit, all on the same tree. And if that's what the tree looks like, imagine what the neighborhood look like. I think it looks like Squirrel Hill! I think when we get to the City of God, we will find people of all religions, and all races and ethnicities, and all ages and abilities, and new immigrants and old timers—all of us rooted together. That is God's dream of Eden restored.

And did you hear the part about the leaves? Because the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Yesterday, eleven leaves fell from the branches before their time in the worst way possible. Today, they are safe in the nearer presence of God. But those of us who are still on the branches—we have work to do. It is for us to be about the healing of our nation, of our communities, of our houses of worship, and of one another. May God bless our work. *Amen.*

You can be sure Christian Associates will be part of that work, just as we have been engaged in interfaith cooperation throughout our history. In fact, just days after the tragedy, in collaboration with our friends at the JCC's Center for Lovingkindness and Civic Engagement, we brought together 150 clergy from 6 world religions and 22 Christian denominations to share our emotions and reflections and begin to find ways forward. Both in the coming weeks and in years to come, we have the opportunity to be good neighbors, and to be people of hope and love. I look forward to joining with you as together we take part in God's work of healing, peacemaking, and unity.

With Advent hope,



The Rev. Liddy Barlow
Executive Minister

Christian Associates of Southwest PA





Mount St. Macrina House of Prayer

500 West Main Street
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-438-7149
www.sistersofstbasil.org

Christmas Preparation Retreat

Date: Sunday, December 16
Time: 1:15pm-5:30pm, includes dinner
Offering: \$35
Presenter: Fr. Cyprian Constantine, OSB

The time of salvation is near: prepare by prayer, fasting, repentance, and almsgiving. The retreat includes a prayer service and the sacrament of reconciliation.

Winter Respite Retreat

Date: Saturday, February 2, 2019
Time: 10am-1pm, includes lunch
Offering: \$35, Register by Jan 30
Presenter: St. Carol Petrasovich, OSBM

The stillness and unhurried days of winter are an ideal time to experience "Rest in the Lord."



The Heritage Gospel Chorale of Pittsburgh

412-613-5825
www.thgcpgh.org

Let Freedom Sing Concerts

Date & Time: Sat., Jan. 19, 7 p.m.
Location: Ebenezer Baptist Church,
2001 Wylie Avenue, Pittsburgh 15218

Date & Time: Mon., Jan. 21, 7 p.m.
Location: Byham Theater,
101 6th St, Pittsburgh 15222



Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute

412-661-1239
www.ppi-online.org

The Ethics of Engaging Client Spirituality: a Mental Health Viewpoint

Date & Time: Fri., Jan. 25, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
Location: Calvary Episcopal Church, 315
Shady Avenue, Pittsburgh 15206
Cost: \$45-\$55 (includes 3 CEU's)

Participants in this seminar will discuss ethical standards and understand their own spiritual histories as they prepare to work with clients' spirituality in a therapeutic setting.

Heinz Memorial Chapel

4200 Fifth Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-4157
www.heinzchapel.pitt.edu

Pittsburgh Memorial to Gun Violence Victims and Survivors on the Anniversary of Sandy Hook

Date & Time: Fri., Dec. 14, 7 p.m.
Sponsors: Moms Demand Action Against
Gun Violence and CeaseFire PA

Gather in community to say no more to gun violence. Hear testimonies from family members affected by violence, and learn how you can get involved.

Christmas with Shadyside Brass

Date: Saturday, December 15, 2018
Time: 7 p.m.

Enjoy pop, classical and jazz interpretations of everyone's favorite holiday music, including a rousing finale of the Handel's Hallelujah Chorus played by Heinz Chapel Artists in Residence, the Shadyside Brass.



Pittsburgh Racial Justice Summit

412-444-8436
www.pittsburghracialjusticesummit.org

21st Annual Summit: Moving Forward Together: An Honest Confrontation and Resource for an Anti-Racist Community

Opening Ceremony: Jan. 25, 6:30 pm,
Union Project, 801 N. Negley Ave,
Pittsburgh 15206

Full Day Summit: Jan 26, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.,
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 616 N.
Highland Ave., Pittsburgh 15206

In order to pursue justice for all, we must fully acknowledge the ways white supremacy oppresses people of color, actively seek ways to equitably re-distribute power and resources, and envision a way forward which unapologetically centers marginalized folks. We will explore and re-imagine this process within the realms of education, criminal justice, healthcare, finance, and other societal institutions.



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Be a Unifier: Join Us in Mission Today Through Your Gift

You may say the words every Sunday:
“I believe in **one** holy catholic and apostolic church.”

You believe the church is one. You know that unity is God’s dream for the church. Now you can help make that unity more visible right here in our region, through your support of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania.

Christian Associates is making a real difference. Thanks to the gifts of donors like you, we convene diverse believers to build relationships and work for the wholeness of our communities.

In recent months, we’ve worked with interfaith partners to host community conversations on the opioid epidemic and gun violence. We’ve published volumes of collected sermons that have been read by people across the country. And when our region needed it most, we provided

a voice of hope and compassion heard internationally following the massacre at Tree of Life.

Your support will fuel another year of this exciting ministry.

- ❖ We’ll be launching a simple and fun new way for clergy to connect with colleagues in their communities: watch for the #300CupsOfCoffee project.
- ❖ We’ll be convening dialogues on racial justice, gender violence, hunger, and neighborhood development.
- ❖ We’ll also be preparing for a major milestone: our 50th anniversary, coming in 2020.

There’s so much good work to be done, and we’re trusting you to make it possible.

With the help of donors like you, we are well on our way to securing a solid financial future for Christian Associates – but to ensure that our work can continue for many decades to come, we need your continued support.

Please join us in our mission by giving generously to Christian Associates.

You may use the enclosed envelope to send your gift today. Checks may be made payable to Christian Associates and mailed to:

Christian Associates of
Southwest Pennsylvania
PO Box 5241
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

You can also give online at www.casp.org/donate. Your gift may qualify as a charitable deduction for federal income tax purposes.



Special Ways to Give

NEW: Be part of the Circle of Unity. Circle members give monthly, providing the sustaining support that Christian Associates needs most.

You won’t need to remember to mail in a check; your contribution will be made automatically, and can be paused at any time. To show our gratitude, we’ll send you a member newsletter and special treats throughout the year.

Join the Circle of Unity by visiting www.casp.org/circleofunity and signing up for a monthly online gift.

Remember Christian Associates in your will. Ensure that our work can continue for many years to come by including Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania when you plan your estate.

Join the John 17 Society. The Society includes our most generous donors, who give \$250 or more each year, or \$21 or more each month.

Members of the John 17 Society are invited to attend a special social event each spring, where we celebrate your commitment and offer sneak peeks at what’s next in our work together.

Make a distribution from your IRA. If you are 70.5 years of age or older by the end of the year and have a traditional IRA that requires a minimum distribution, you may direct all or part of that distribution (up to \$100,000) to Christian Associates before the end of the calendar year. The donated distribution is not subject to federal income taxes.

Your gifts make our ministries possible.

- **\$25** prints two copies of a volume in *The Word in Our Voices* preaching series.
- **\$60** provides a one-year subscription to *The Call* for 20 local clergy.
- **\$130** keeps our website, www.casp.org, online for a full year.
- **\$180** funds videoconferencing software, so we can offer online meeting space and webinars.
- **\$500** underwrites a “Faithful Responses” interfaith event.

*How good and pleasant it is
when God’s people live together in unity!*

Psalm 133:1

Special Thanks to Our 2018 Supporters!

Christian Associates is deeply grateful to these individuals, congregations, corporations, and foundations that have supported our work financially in the past 12 months. Through their gifts, they have demonstrated their commitment to the unity of Christ's church. We're looking forward to including your name in this space next year.

John 17 Society "that they may all be one" \$250 or more

Anonymous (2)
The Rev. Liddy and Mr. Gregory Barlow
Fr. Christopher and Dr. Filitsa Bender
Christ United Methodist Church, Bethel Park
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Rodef Shalom Congregation
Dr. Bonnie B. Thurston

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Ms. M. Lucille Underwood
The Very Rev. Fr. Gregory C. Wingenbach

This list includes donations made between November 15, 2017 and November 15, 2018.

We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this list and apologize in advance if any names were omitted, miscategorized, or misspelled. Please contact our office if you discover an error and we will publish a correction.

We are also deeply grateful to our member judicatories. We will print the list of our 2018 judicatory sponsors in the February 2019 issue of The Call.

Friends \$1-49

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The Rev. Patricia Arledge-Benko
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Ms. Joyce Rothermel
The Rev. E. Philip Wilson
Ms. Elizabeth A. Wolfskill

PREPARING FOR MINISTRY IN THE WAY OF JESUS



Join us for these upcoming events—

Building Trauma-Informed and Resilient Communities: Pastoral and Ministry Responses
Dec. 7, 2018
Dr. Taunya Tinsley, Counselor

Community Conversation on Race and Faith and the Kelso Lecture
Feb. 9, 2019
Herbert R. Marbury, Associate Professor, Vanderbilt Divinity School

Writing as Practice and Revelation
Feb. 23, 2019
Jonathan Callard, Memoirist and Writing Consultant

You may also be interested in these online/hybrid classes—

The Contemplative Practice of Motherhood
Hybrid Class
Jan. 12 and March 2, 2019
With Lauren Burdette, Spiritual Director, Retreat Leader, and Author; and Renée Prymus, English Instructor, University of Pittsburgh, and Managing Editor of *Christians Practicing Yoga*

Parables for the Future: Scenario and Strategic Planning
Online Class
Jan. 21-Feb. 15, 2019
James Downey, Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, PTS



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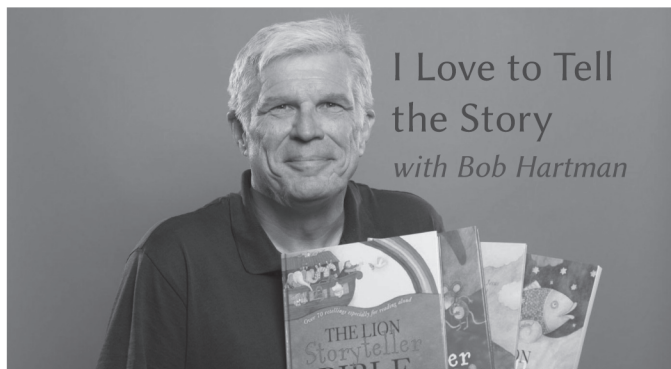
With over 450 beds, Laurelville uniquely offers diverse facilities perfect for groups of all ages and sizes. Our comfortable hotel-style rooms are ideal for adults and youth groups love our economical lodge facilities. Flexible retreat packages include on-site and off-site activities, quality meeting spaces, incredible food service and notable hospitality.

Laurelville is located at 941 Laurelville Lane, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666
Call 724.423.2056 or visit laurelville.org for more information.



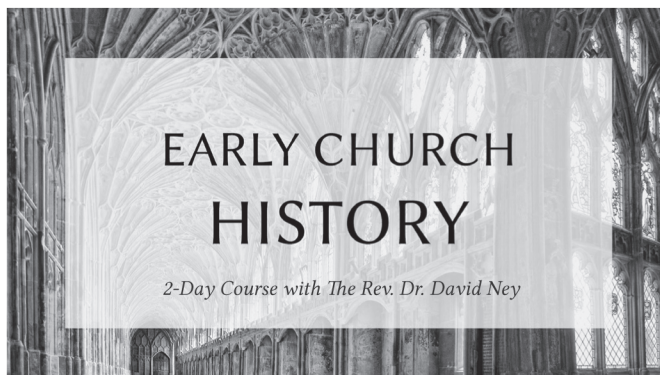
Please Join Us!

We warmly welcome you to participate in Winter InterTerm 2019 at Trinity School for Ministry. For more information on our credit and non-credit courses, and to register, visit www.tsm.edu/interterms/.



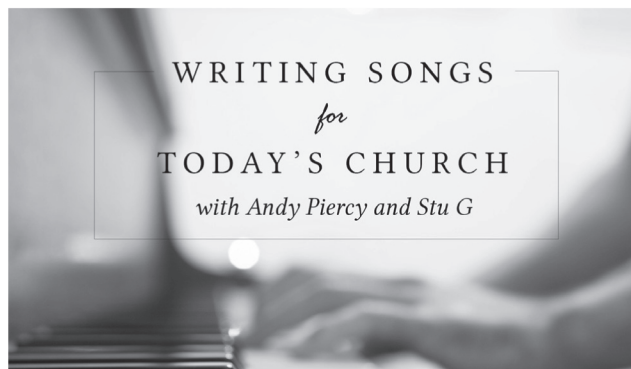
I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY
THURSDAY, JANUARY 10 | 7 PM | COMMONS HALL

The Bible is mostly narrative in nature. In Psalm 78, God's people are told to pass that story on. In this seminar, we will look at the principles and the practice of effective biblical storytelling, directed towards both adults and children. This will be a helpful tool in your preaching, your Sunday school, your regular services—in fact, in any situation where you might be called to tell God's story.



EARLY CHURCH HISTORY
JANUARY 14 & 15

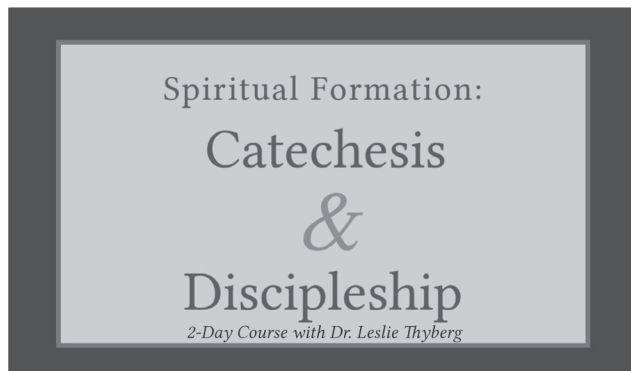
During this course, we will be zeroing in on the lives of four early Christians in order to understand not only what early Christianity was, but also what it means today. In other words, we will be asking, "What is God saying, to us, through the people and events of early Christianity?" We will be looking at Ignatius of Antioch and heresy, Irenaeus of Lyons and Scripture, Perpetua of Carthage and persecution, and Basil the Great and the Trinity.



WRITING SONGS FOR TODAY'S CHURCH
JANUARY 14-16

Free worship concert open to the public on January 15 at 7 PM in Commons Hall.

A 3 day creative retreat and workshop for worship songwriters with Andy Piercy and special guest Stu G from Delirious?. Great practical advice from highly experienced writers coupled with writing exercises and constructive evaluation constantly turn this annual songwriting workshop into a very special time together.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION:
CATECHESIS & DISCIPLESHIP
JANUARY 14 & 15

We will interactively engage the five forms of catechetical praxis: koinonia, leiturgia, didache, kerygma, and diakonia, on a personal and corporate level. A wide variety of metaphors, models, and methods will be part and parcel of our work together. This portion of the class is appropriate for personal renewal as well as for those individuals seeking to find ways of revitalizing their congregation's discipleship practices.

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

P.O. Box 5241

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15206

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*Christ the Savior
is Born*

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Save the Date: Learn Pastoral Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence

**SOUTHWEST PA SAYS
NO MORE**

This winter, spend a morning enhancing your skills in providing pastoral care to people affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

Christian Associates is partnering with *Southwest PA Says No More* to offer "Stories from the Sanctuary." Three pastors will share their experiences providing pastoral care and leadership in responding to domestic and sexual violence; after each story, a panel of experienced respondents will explore the broader context of these issues and sharing further strategies for responding well.

Plan to join us on **Tuesday, February 19** at 10 a.m. at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. RSVP now at www.casp.org/endviolence.

Pittsburgh Crèche Tells the Story of Christmas

A little bit of Bethlehem comes to the Steel Plaza in downtown Pittsburgh each year, in the form of the Pittsburgh Crèche. This exact replica of the nativity scene at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome has become a beloved part of Pittsburgh's holiday traditions since it was first dedicated in 1999.

Approximately \$60,000 is required each year to maintain and display the crèche. Please contribute to an endowment fund at the Pittsburgh Foundation to ensure this inspirational display can continue in many years to come. Visit www.pittsburghfoundation.org/creche to make your gift.

