

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

Serving 10 Counties, 27 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



February-March 2016, Number 1

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

Christian Associates Relocates to East Liberty

In early February, Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania will relocate its office from Lawrenceville to East Liberty, finding a new home in the lower level of Hicks Memorial Chapel on the campus of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

"This is the right move at the right time," said the Rev. Liddy Barlow, Christian Associates' Executive Minister. *"We'll be at the center of a campus that is itself increasingly ecumenical, surrounded by students and faculty who are eager to partner with the wider community. New possibilities abound!"*

In 1998, Christian Associates moved from downtown Pittsburgh to the former St. Augustine School building in Lawrenceville. This summer, the Capuchin Friars plan to demolish the school in order to expand the friary and construct new offices for the Seraphic Mass Association. *"We're grateful to the Capuchins for their hospitality in the past 18 years,"* Rev. Barlow said. *"We wish them all the best in*

their building project."

The new location includes offices for Christian Associates' Executive Minister and administrative assistant, and a small conference room. The Executive Director of

Our New Mailing Address:

**P.O. Box 5241
Pittsburgh, PA 15206**

Our New Location:

**Hicks Memorial Chapel, lower level
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206**

the Foundation of HOPE will also have an office in the chapel. The offices are adjacent to a spacious parking lot, and, being on the ground floor, they are handicapped-accessible.

In addition to their exclusive use of the offices in the chapel building, Christian

Associates will also be able to reserve conference rooms throughout the campus.

"The seminary has a wide array of meeting rooms available for our use, to suit gatherings of any size," Rev. Barlow said. *"We look forward to continuing our ministry of hosting meetings for our collaborating partners."*

Christian Associates will be receiving mail at the East Liberty post office: **P.O. Box 5241, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.**

"We currently receive news and information from a wide array of congregations, agencies, and organizations," Barlow said. *"I hope everyone will be sure to update their mailing lists, because we love to keep in touch."*

While the precise move-in date was not yet set as *The Call* went to press, the new office should be fully operational by mid-February, and will be open daily from 9:30 to 5:30.

Please stop by and check out our new home!



"Do you love me? Feed my lambs."

Worship Resource Helps Churches Connect with Efforts to End Child Hunger

On Sunday, April 11, churches that follow the Roman Catholic Lectionary or the Revised Common Lectionary will read from the Gospel according to John. In the assigned pericope, Jesus cooks breakfast on the beach for his disciples and then asks Peter, again and again: *"Do you love me?"*

"You know I love you," Peter says. *"Feed my lambs,"* Jesus replies. To live our love for Jesus, we must do as he did: ensure that all his lambs are fed.

Working with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Food Security Partnership (an initiative of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank), Christian Associates is preparing a worship resource, *"Feed My Lambs,"* to help our churches connect Jesus' words with local efforts that seek to reduce child hunger.

"Feed My Lambs" will offer liturgical suggestions and sermon starters for the April 10 texts, as well as bulletin inserts and mission ideas to help congregations address child hunger in their own communities.

In particular, this worship resource focuses on increasing awareness and access to the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program and the Summer Food Service Program. (see page 6)

Over 590,000 Pennsylvania children received daily free or reduced-price school lunches during the 2011-12 school year – frequently their only meal. Less than half of those children received a free or reduced-price breakfast each day.

"Feed My Lambs" will be available for download from the Christian Associates website, www.casp.org, beginning March 1. Paper copies may be ordered by calling Christian Associates at 412-688-9070.



REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Dear friends,

Having once done both in a six-week span, I know that it's true: I would rather give birth than move house. When you have a baby, you finish the day with a sense of gleeful accomplishment and a cuddly, adorable new human being. When you move, you finish the day exhausted and disoriented, surrounded by boxes labeled "miscellaneous stuff."

And so, when I found out in August that the building that has housed Christian Associates' offices for the past 18 years was scheduled for demolition this spring, I was dismayed. The thought of sorting our possessions and packing up our things, finding a new space and negotiating a rental agreement, changing our address and selling unneeded stuff – all these tasks seemed daunting at best and nearly impossible at worst.

Even more troubling, I was sure that an office move was going to distract us from our mission. If we needed to spend months preparing for and then unpacking from the move, how could we keep our focus on building collegial relationships between Christian leaders? How would we be able to sustain our engagement in the partnerships that help us work for the wholeness of our communities?

In the first column I wrote in this space, nearly two years ago, I noted that one of my favorite names for God is "the Almighty Sneaky One." So perhaps I should not have been so surprised that the Sneaky One can show up even in the midst of a move. It turns out that the One who told Abram, *"Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you"* has millennia of practice in helping people pursue mission in the midst of moving.

Instead of distracting us from our work in strengthening partnerships, it turned out that our move enriched our connections to the wider community.

Ministry in Ambridge was setting up a new video production program. Our equipment will be used to share the Good News through the airwaves – exactly as its original donors intended.

What holy synchronicity! Instead of distracting us from our work in strengthening partnerships, it turned out that our move enriched our connections to the wider community.

Then, our search for a new home led us to Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Our move will position us at the heart of a community that shares our values. Every time we wander into the cafeteria on lunch break, we'll find a room full of students, faculty, and staff who love the church and want to share the Gospel. On their way to worship upstairs, the PTS community will walk right past our new Hicks Chapel office; we can't wait to invite them in to learn more about the work we do. We will be better-positioned than ever to build relationships and foster collaboration.

I'm still not wild about the boxes that I'll need to unpack in the next few weeks. But I'm deeply grateful for the ways this move has been and will be a blessing, for us and for our neighbors.

Your sister in Christ,

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



*"Go from your country
and your kindred
and your father's house
to the land that
I will show you"*

Christian Associates Speaks Again on Refugees, Plans Meeting to Guide Next Steps

After endorsing a unanimous statement on the refugee crisis in the Middle East and Europe at their meeting on December 9 (*available online at <http://casp.org/casp%20refugee%20statement.pdf>*), the Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives felt the need to address more directly the climate of fear and hostility toward refugees and people of other faiths that has emerged in our nation's political discourse in recent weeks. These are the words they chose to share in late December:

On Faith, Hope, and Freedom in a Time of Fear

This holy season of Advent is a time for the universal Church to proclaim the hope that is in the world through the coming of Jesus Christ. This arrival did not happen all at once, but "in the fullness of time" through many journeys, long and hard, the holy family making their way under desperate conditions, the Prince of Peace born in borrowed quarters.

This is the way of our Savior. As Christians and Americans we give thanks that the United States has welcomed the hard journeys of millions, our families among them, who found here a new home. Let us do the same now, and so be true to our character as a nation. Let us not be tempted by recent calls to turn thousands away from our shores solely on the basis of their religion. We know many are rightly anxious about the security of our borders. But the specter of fear will never protect us; only by steadfast confidence in our deepest values will our beloved country remain truly secure. We stand with our fellow Americans of many faiths – Muslims, Jews, and many more – in a common commitment to religious liberty and civil public discourse.

Finally, we ask prayer for all those whom violence in their homelands has driven onto a hard and unsought-for road. We pray God's protection on them as they journey, that they may come to a safe and welcoming haven. And we pray for ourselves, that we may be gracious to all whom God sends us, knowing that when we do so, we welcome Christ Himself. (Mark 9:37)



*approved by the
Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives
12/17/15*

Now that we have affirmed our commitment to supporting refugees abroad and at home, it's time to take the next steps into action. Clergy and lay leaders who would like to learn more about practical ways to participate in refugee resettlement efforts are invited to an information session at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary on **Wednesday, March 16 at 2 p.m.** Representatives from local resettlement agencies and city government will be present to answer questions and offer opportunities to serve.

For more information, and to let us know you are coming, please visit <http://bit.ly/casrefugees>.

Harris Interfaith Lecture Will Engage the "Nones"

The fastest-growing religious group in America today is the "nones" – those who are not affiliated with any established religion.



This year, participants in the annual Milton E. Harris Interfaith Institute Clergy Luncheon and Lecture at Rodef Shalom Congregation in Pittsburgh will have the opportunity to learn more about this new demographic.

Rabbi Irwin Kula will deliver the lunchtime lecture, "Understanding and Engaging the 'Nones'" on **Thursday, February 25 at 11:30 a.m.** RSVP to the luncheon by visiting <https://rodefshalom.org/calendar/rsvp/harris>.

Admission is free for clergy and students, with a suggested donation of \$20 for other guests.



Seminarians, Bivocational Clergy to Meet at SPARK Conversations

Christian Associates continues to kindle connection among Christian leaders this winter with the next two installments of our SPARK Conversations series:

- **Saturday, February 13: Seminarians.** This gathering will convene people preparing for ordained ministry: those presently enrolled in seminary as well as others working with their judicatories to discern a call. For more details and to register, visit <http://bit.ly/sparkseminarians>
- **Saturday, March 12: Bivocational Pastors.** Clergy who serve congregations part-time, while also working a second job in the secular world, are invited to this conversation. Sign up by visiting <http://bit.ly/sparkbivocational>.

Each meeting in the series will take place from **noon to 1:30 p.m. at Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, 1840 Ardmore Blvd., Pittsburgh 15221.**



Rabbi Kula serves as the president of the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership. In 2008, he was listed seventh in Newsweek's "50 most influential rabbis" list. He is the author of *Yearnings: Embracing the Sacred Messiness of Life*, and has appeared on The Today Show, The Oprah Winfrey Show, The O'Reilly Factor and Frontline.

The evening before the luncheon, Wednesday, February 24, Rabbi Kula will offer a 7:30 p.m. lecture at Rodef Shalom titled, "Beyond Tribe & Creed: Religion as a Path to Human Flourishing."

The Wednesday evening lecture is free and open to the public.

Blessed Sacrament Cathedral

300 North Main Street
Greensburg, PA 15601
724-834-3710

www.blessedsacramentcathedral.org

Human Trafficking Seminar

Date & Time: Sat., Feb. 6, 1-4 p.m.

The Diocese of Greensburg Prayer and Outreach Group to Combat Human Trafficking will host a panel discussion and prayer service, featuring a keynote speaker from the FBI.



Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry

Parish Nurse office: 412-232-5815
ParishNurse@mercy.pmhs.org
www.pmhs.org

Foundations of Faith Community Nursing Course

Dates: Feb. 12-13 and Mar. 5, 11-12 (times vary)

Where: UPMC Mercy, 1400 Locust St., Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Free parking.

Cost: \$395 for RNs (includes continuing education credits) and \$200 for others. Limited scholarship funds available.

A five-day, 38-credit preparation course that offers valuable education and resources to faith community nurses and lay health ministers. To download a copy of the course application, visit https://www.pmhs.org/_pdf/PPNP_Parish_Nurse_Course_Application_2016.pdf.



St. Joseph Spirituality Center

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

Valentine Retreat for Married Couples

Date & Time: Sun., Feb. 14, 12:30 – 6:00 pm
Fee: \$60/couple (includes a candlelight dinner)

Presenters: Sister Marguerite Kropinak, CSJ, and Mark and Renee Marvenko

This program includes presentations on the spirituality of marriage, time for sharing as couples, and an opportunity to renew marriage vows. Please register by Feb. 5.

St. Joseph Spirituality Center

(continued)

Ignatian Living Room Retreat

Date: Wednesdays in Lent (February 17-March 23); Time: 1:00 – 2:30 pm
Fee: \$50 includes materials

Presenter: Sister Catherine Higgins, CSJ

This Lenten retreat is an introduction to Ignatian Spirituality which is based on the prayer, life, and ministry of St. Ignatian Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). This “retreat in daily life” is non-traditional in that it does not require a person to go away to a retreat center. Rather, those participating are asked to spend 20-30 minutes in quiet prayer at home each day reflecting on the Scripture passages assigned for the week and then meeting once a week with a group to share the fruits of one’s prayer. Please register by February 2.

Loss, Transition, and Transformation: Spiritual and Psychological Perspectives

Date: Fri., March 11
Time: 9:45 am – 4:15 pm
Fee: \$70 (includes lunch and refreshments)
Presenter: Martha Robbins, Th.D.

This professional workshop, which explores the multiple losses that people face at different times in their lives, offers 6 Continuing Education Credits for mental health and health care professionals. Martha Robbins, Th.D., is the Director of Pneuma Institute, Associate Professor Emerita of Pastoral Care at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, a Licensed Psychologist and a Spiritual Director.

Doorways into Our Deeper Hearts: A Retreat for Women

Date: Fri., March 11 – Sun., March 13
Time: 7 pm (Fri) – 12:00 noon (Sun)
Fee: \$120 (includes meals and lodging)
Presenter: Sister Diane McCalley, Cathy Ciccone, Chris Didio and Judy Lewis

This retreat will explore what we hunger for in our relationship with God - in the secret places of our hearts? We explore how God invites each of us to swim in the ocean God’s great mercy! Please register by February 25.



Heritage Presbyterian Church

2262 Rochester Road
412-366-1338

facebook.com/HeritageChurchpcusa

Positive Parenting Skills Workshop

Date & Time: Feb. 24, 6:15-7:45 pm; repeated March 9
Presenter: Joan Schenker, Anchorpoint Counseling Ministry

Heritage Presbyterian Church

(continued)

This workshop is for parents, grandparents, teachers, children’s ministry leaders, clergy and others who care about kids (Elementary-age focus). Free babysitting is provided. There will also be a complimentary family style meal at 5:45pm. For more information and to register, call the church office at 412-366-1300.



Kearns Spirituality Center

9000 Babcock Blvd.
Allison Park, PA 15101
412-366-1124
www.cdpsisters.org

Book Discussion: Christ Actually: The Son of God for the Secular Age

Dates: Wednesdays, March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Time: 10:00–11:30 am
Fee: \$20 for the 5 week series or \$5 per session, plus book.
Facilitators: Joan Coultas, CDP, Ph.D. and Jean Rene Seiler CDP, MS

Join in conversation about *Christ Actually: The Son of God for the Secular Age* by James Carroll (William Collins Publishing, 2014). Book is available through Amazon.com or you can order through Peggy Huwe at Kearns. (Our probable cost: \$18.) Breakfast rolls and beverage provided.

Lecture: Co-Creating an Unfinished Universe: Challenges and New Directions

Date & Time: Sun., March 6; 2:00 pm
Fee: \$20

Sister Ilia Delio OSF, Ph.D. is Director of the Catholic Studies Program and Visiting Professor at Georgetown University. She is the recipient of a prestigious Templeton Course in Science and Religion award. She is actively engaged in the religion and science dialogue, with interests in evolution, physics, and neuroscience and the importance of these for theology.

Book Release Event: A Year of Spiritual Companionship

Date & Time: Wed, March 9; 7:00 pm
Fee: Free, donations accepted.

Anne Kernion will present her new book, *A Year of Spiritual Companionship: Fifty-two Weeks of Gratitude, Balance and Happiness*, which combines the wisdom of spiritual luminaries and insights from social science and neuroscience. This week-by-week spiritual guide is filled with engaging stories, practices and wisdom for a dynamic life of the spirit. A social, book signing and hors d’oeuvres will follow a short presentation. The book will be available for sale.

ECUMENICAL EVENTS

Mount St. Macrina House of Prayer

510 W. Main St., Box 878
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-438-7149

Lenten Day of Prayer

Date & Time: Sat., Feb. 27, 9:15 a.m.-1 p.m.
(includes lunch)

Presenter: Rev. John Chirovsky
Fee: \$30.

Lenten Day of Prayer

Date & Time: Sun., Feb. 28, 1:15 p.m.-5:00
p.m. (includes dinner)

Presenter: Rev. Thomas Dansak
Fee: \$30

Tuesday Reading Series

Dates: March 1, 8, 15, 22
Time: 10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.
Presenter: Sr. Barbara Jean
Free will offering

Spiritual Reflection Morning

Date & Time: March 5, 2016, 10:00 a.m.
- 1:00 p.m. (includes lunch)
Presenter: Becky Johnen
Fee: \$25



Westminster Presbyterian Church

2040 Washington Road
Mount Lebanon, PA 15241
www.westminster-church.org

Organ Artists Series Concert

Date & Time: Sun., Mar. 13, 4 p.m.
Fee: \$12 adults, free with student ID

Recital by Isabelle Demers, head of the organ program at Baylor University in Texas. A native of Québec, she is rapidly becoming recognized as one of North America's most virtuosic organists.

Tickets available at <http://oas-series.com>.



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Christian Associates'
email newsletter!**

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to add your name to
our mailing list.**

Dutilh United Methodist Church

1270 Dutilh Road
Cranberry Twp, PA 16066
(724) 776.1094
www.dutilhumc.org

The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Ministry: Serving in the Hope of the Risen Lord

Date & Time: Sat., March 5, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Presenter: Rev. Dr. Andrew Purves
Fee: \$45 before Feb. 19, \$55 afterward

"To participate in Jesus' ministry requires our being willing to crucify any understanding of ministry as ours, so that we may more fully experience the resurrection hope and power of Jesus' ministry in and through our lives." A conference for clergy from any denomination, featuring keynote addresses, peer discussion groups, and worship.

Participants will each receive a copy of Dr. Purves' book. Register online at <https://wpa-reg.brtapp.com/RessurrectionOfMinistry>.



Bread for the World Workshop Will Focus on Nutrition for Mothers, Children, and Immigrants

The Southwest Pennsylvania *Bread for the World* team will sponsor a spring advocacy workshop for people of faith who want to learn more about ending hunger.

The workshop will take place on **Saturday, April 2 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Christ United Methodist Church in Bethel Park.**

The morning session will focus on *Bread for the World's* 2016 Offering of Letters campaign, which encourages congregations and other faith communities to write to their Congressional representatives about upcoming hunger-related legislation.

This year, *Bread for the World* is focusing on the Feed the Future program, a food security initiative impacting mothers and children globally.

At the workshop, participants will learn how to organize an Offering of Letters, and will have the opportunity



breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

to learn more about hunger issues both internationally and locally.

In the afternoon, the workshop will explore the relationship between immigration and hunger, including guest speakers from regional organizations who serve immigrants and refugees.

Learn more about the connection between hunger advocacy, poverty, and

immigration, and find out how local congregations can get involved.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with Continental breakfast. Box lunches are available with pre-registration at a cost of \$8, and will include a turkey or veggie wrap, chips, cookie, and a drink.

RSVPs are requested by March 29. To register, or for more information, call **412-835-6621 ext. 109** or email jmsimmons@christumc.net.

Congregations interested in planning an Offering of Letters may request a planning kit by emailing publications@bread.org.



Summer Food Program Help Needed

Of the 97,540 children in our region who face food insecurity, only 16,222 children participate in the Summer Food Program on an average day, according to Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.



This federal nutrition program from the USDA is critical to ensuring that children still get good nutrition during the summer months, when school lunches and breakfasts are not available.

We need your help to reach more of these kids over the summer!

Would your congregation, or another organization that you know, like to host a summer feeding site and have meals delivered there for the kids? Would you like to volunteer at a site doing fun activities with the children? Would you be able to spread the word in the community about this program?

Please contact Chris West, Child Nutrition Outreach Coordinator at Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, to find out how you can help: cwest@pittsburghfoodbank.org or 412-460-3663 x307.

It's our hope to develop a network of summer feeding sites that can serve every hungry child. Beginning in May, you will be able to dial the United Way helpline at 211 to find your closest summer feeding site.

RECALIBRATING THE
CHURCH FOR THE 21ST
CENTURY

April 8-9, 2016

Join the World Mission Initiative at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and other mission leaders in our region to share ideas, encouragement, and connections.

Keynote Speaker: **ALAN HIRSCH**,
Founding Director, Forge Mission
Training Network

worldmissioninitiative.org
412-924-1449
wmi@pts.edu

SOUL SHOP is back!

Ministering to Suicidal Desperation

A 1-day training to equip pastors to address suicidal desperation as a regular aspect of their ministries. Clinicians will gain skills to help clients from a spiritual perspective.

Fri., February 19, 2016

8:30 AM-4:00 PM • Cost: \$50

Christ Church at Grove Farm

Licensed counselors add \$10 for 5.5 CEUs

412.661.1239, ext. 10

cporto@ppi-online.org



Russ Crabtree, MDiv., a.k.a. Fe Anam Avis, combines inspiration, hope and personal experiences with practical instruction. Russ teaches from his background as a pastor who emerged from the darkness of suicidal thinking. He is certified in ASIST (suicide intervention training) through LifeWorks Education.



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UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENTS

at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Conflict Resolution as Spiritual Practice:
Following the Path of Meister Eckhart to
Turn Challenge into Opportunity
Spiritual Formation Elective
May 16-19, 2016
Deidre Combs

Journey Inward, Journey Outward
An Event for Christian Educators
March 16, 2016
Heath Rada

Lake Institute Executive Certificate in
Religious Fundraising
April 18-21, 2016

BEING CHURCH CONFERENCE

*Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Henderson
Summer Leadership Conference*
Certificate in Gracious Leadership
June 5-8, 2016
Eric Law

*Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Miller
Summer Youth Institute*
June 10-11, 2016
Rachel Held Evans
Nadia Bolz-Weber



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Continuing Education
616 N. Highland Ave.
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www.pts.edu/CE



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Leadership through Conflict
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Leanna Fuller

Ezekiel: Prophet of the Presence
and Absence of God
May 2-27, 2016
Steven Tuell



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Save these dates to support Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania!

Christian Associates Sunday

"The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us."

On **Sunday, April 24**, the lectionaries used in many of our churches appoint Acts 11:1-18 as the New Testament reading, as Peter realizes that the gifts of God are given to Jews and Gentiles alike. The Gospel lesson for the day is John 13, the new commandment that all the disciples of Christ love one another.

What perfect texts to introduce Christian Associates and our work to your congregation, to pray for the unity of the church in our region, and to support our ministries through a special offering!

We will be producing bulletin inserts and offering envelopes to include in your worship bulletins on this first annual Christian Associates Sunday.

Please call our office at 412-688-9070 to let us know how many copies your church will need.

John 17 Society: First Annual Reception

This year, Christian Associates has established the John 17 Society, recognizing the individuals, organizations, and congregations that support our ministry with annual gifts of \$250 or more.

To celebrate the dedication of our most generous donors, all members of the society will be invited to a reception on **Tuesday, May 17** from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the John Knox Room at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 616 N. Highland Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.

The reception will feature live music, drinks and hors d'oeuvres, and the opportunity to learn more about Christian Associates' ministries. Enjoy connecting with others who share your commitment to ecumenism!

Make your gift of \$250 or more before May 15 to receive two tickets to the party. You can give online at <http://www.casp.org/donate.html>, or send your contribution to **Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, PO Box 5241, Pittsburgh, PA 15206**.