

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



February-March 2020, Number 1

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

Spring Jubilee Celebration Will Commemorate 50 Years of Christian Associates

"And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you ..." - Leviticus 15:10

Please join Christian Associates in 2020 as we hallow our fiftieth year!

Throughout this year, we will be looking back to our founding in 1970 and the ways the Spirit has been present with us in our many joys and achievements in the past five decades. We will also be looking forward, ready to chart the next fifty years on the road to unity in Southwest Pennsylvania.

The highlight of our anniversary commemorations will be the **Jubilee Celebration**: a festive evening of song and prayer at **Shadyside Presbyterian Church** (5121 Westminister Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15232) at **7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 28**.

The event will include musical ensembles representing churches from throughout Southwest Pennsylvania, as well as readings and reflections from past and present members of Christian Associates' Council of Bishops & Judicatory Executives and a few special guests.

The event will include the public debut of the winning hymn from our hymn contest (see page 5), as well as recognition of the winners of our student essay contest (see page 3).



Following the first meeting of the Council of Bishops & Judicatory Executives at Shadyside Presbyterian Church on April 15, 1970, its leaders gathered for a photo. From right to left: the **Rev. Dr. William F. Ruschaupt, Jr.** of Pittsburgh Presbytery, the Council's Chair; the **Rev. Dr. Hopson** of the Allegheny Union Baptist Association; **Bishop William G. Connare** of the Diocese of Greensburg; and **Rev. Lee Hicks**, founding Executive Director.

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Mark your calendar now, and plan to bring a group from your congregation! Tickets are available by name-your-own-price donation at www.casp.org/jubilee.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available for the Celebration and other anniversary festivities. Through their sponsorships, organizations, congregations, and

individuals can express their support for Christian Associates and help our ministries flourish in the next half-century.

For more details about sponsorship options, visit www.casp.org/sponsorship.



State Funds Available for Security Improvements in Houses of Worship

Mass shootings and acts of terror in houses of worship across our country have inspired an uncomfortable question: could that happen in my own church?

To help prevent another tragedy, Pennsylvania's 2020 budget has allocated \$5 million for security improvements to houses of worship and community centers across the Commonwealth. The funds will be distributed to organizations that serve populations that may be targets of hate crimes: including Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christians.

Grant applications are due on February 14, and may be found at <https://www.pccd.pa.gov/schoolsafety/Pages/Non-Profit-Security-Grant-Fund.aspx>.

The funds may be used for security enhancements to protect the safety of the users of a facility located in Pennsylvania that is owned or operated by a nonprofit organization. This might include safety trainings for the congregation or staff members; installation of metal detectors, security cameras, or lighting; security

assessments and planning; and upgrades to existing buildings.

Grant amounts will be between \$5,000 and \$150,000 per organization. Organizations requesting more than \$25,000 must provide matching funds from other funding sources.

A video with tips for completing grant applications is available at <https://jewishpgh.org/act-83-security-grant-info-session/>. For a tip sheet summarizing the workshop, visit www.casp.org/securitygranttips.

REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Dear friends,

No matter what their role, spiritual leaders in Southwest Pennsylvania work in contexts affected by trauma.

Some serve in neighborhoods afflicted by violence, intergenerational poverty, and other manifestations of systemic racism.

Others came face to face with hate-fueled terror during the 10.27.18 synagogue shooting.

Some work with vulnerable populations every day, serving as chaplains to people who are incarcerated, or facing addiction, or living with mental illness. Others work in congregations, shepherding their people through grief, crisis, and pain.



photo by Jennifer McKinney



Rev. Darnell Drewery, Community Engagement Specialist at the Center for Victims, leads a discussion on wellness and resilience at the Healing Rivers Project.

Communities of faith are not the only ones to take note of the prevalence of trauma in our neighborhoods. In recent months, it seems as if every sector is moving toward “trauma-informed” practices. To help prepare Southwest Pennsylvania to address this challenge, the Center for Victims opened the *Healing Rivers Project* in April 2019. *Healing Rivers* offers a museum-quality learning experience about the impact of trauma on physical and mental health, and ways to move toward healing and resilience.

After visiting the Center for Victims last summer, Rabbi Ron Symons called me with excitement in his voice. Maybe, he suggested, there might be good that could come from the wrenching experience of trauma. Maybe learning together about trauma and resilience could help us better understand one another, and equip us to serve our communities more effectively.

And so, this winter, Christian Associates and the Center for Loving Kindness at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh have invited small, intentionally diverse groups of spiritual leaders to visit the Healing Rivers Project. Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and Baha’i believers have discovered common ground in our ministries and our humanity.. We’ve shared deeply about our experiences and our struggles. In our speaking, our silence, and our learning, the conference table at the Center for Victims has become sacred space.

We begin each session with text study, diving into stories from our traditions that elucidate themes of trauma survival and pastoral response.

Reading these stories in a diverse group, where some know these texts by heart and others are meeting them for the first time, yields startling new insights. The richness of the scriptures comes alive as we explore these inexhaustibly meaningful stories.

Then, we enter the exhibit, learning about the connections between our brains and our bodies. We discover the effect that trauma has on our nervous system, on our physical and mental health, and even on our DNA. Then, we consider the protective factors that reduce trauma’s devastating impact. We can never eliminate trauma from our lives, just as we can never stop the rain. But just as we can learn to carry an umbrella, we can build habits and relationships that nurture our wholeness and wellbeing.

Across all our diverse contexts, trauma shapes our lives and our ministries. But trauma does not get the final word. As disciples of the Great Physician, we believe Christ transforms trauma into healed and resurrected life. In the new relationships and deeper learning I’ve experienced so far in our shared work at the Healing Rivers Project, I’ve seen that new life right before my eyes.

Your sister in Christ,

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

A few spaces remain in our last few interfaith sessions of the **Healing Rivers Project** in March; if you’d like to participate, email me at lbarlow@casp.org. I’d also be glad to help connect you with the Center for Victims to arrange a training for your local ministerium or other group.

Essays Invited from the Next Generation of Ecumenists

Students in middle and high school, college, graduate school, and seminary will share their ideas about Christian unity in Christian Associates' Jubilee Essay Contest.

"As part of our fiftieth anniversary celebrations, we want to look forward and encourage a new generation of ecumenical thinkers," said Rev. Liddy Barlow, CASP's Executive Minister. "We're excited to read what young leaders are thinking about the unity of the church."

First and second place winners will be named in each of three categories: middle/high school, undergraduate, and graduate school/seminary. First-place winners will receive \$250, and runners-up will receive \$100.

Authors of the winning essays will be recognized at Christian Associates' Jubilee Celebration on May 28, and their pieces will also be published in the anniversary edition of *The Word in Our Voices*, coming in September.

Each age group has a different question to address in their essays:

Students in grades 6-12 should prepare up to 500 words in response to the prompt, "In John 17:21, Jesus prayed 'that [Christians] may all be one.' When his prayer is fulfilled, what do you imagine that our unity will look like?"

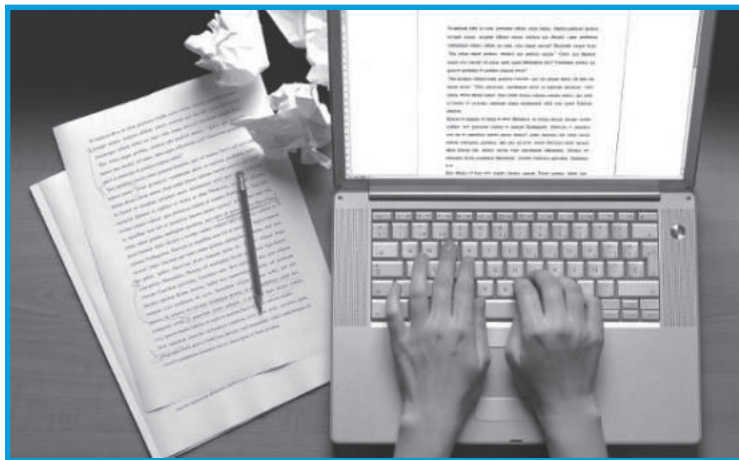
Undergraduate college and university students will write up to 1,000 words on the topic: "Why does Christian unity matter in the 21st century?"

Seminarians and graduate students are invited to respond in up to 2,000 words to the question, "What opportunities and obstacles do you anticipate in the next fifty years of the ecumenical movement?"

Each contest is open to students enrolled in schools located in Southwest Pennsylvania, as well as to students attending school elsewhere who have home addresses in our region.

Entries must be postmarked or emailed by April 15, 2020.

More information and an entry form is available at www.casp.org/essaycontest.



Special Thanks to Our Judicatory Supporters

Christian Associates is deeply grateful to all our member judicatories, but we wish to offer particular recognition to the church bodies who contributed to our financial needs in 2019:

Allegheny Union Baptist Association
American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware
Anglican Diocese of Pittsburgh
Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania,
Orthodox Church in America
Bruderhof Communities of Southwest Pennsylvania
Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Pennsylvania
Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh
Kiskiminetas Presbytery, Presbyterian Church (USA)
Metropolis of Pittsburgh, Greek Orthodox Church
Mid-Northeast Mission District, North American
Lutheran Church

Penn West Conference, United Church of Christ
Pittsburgh Presbytery, Presbyterian Church (USA)
Redstone Presbytery, Presbyterian Church (USA)
Roman Catholic Diocese of Greensburg
Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh
Southwestern PA Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America
Third Episcopal District, African Methodist Episcopal Church
Washington Presbytery, Presbyterian Church (USA)
Western Pennsylvania Conference, United Methodist Church
Western Pennsylvania Division, Salvation Army

If you see your judicatory's name on the list above, please express your appreciation to your bishop or judicatory executive. We invite each of you to give as well. You can mail a check to **Christian Associates, PO Box 5241, Pittsburgh PA 15206**, or give online at www.casp.org/donate.

Thank you for helping our ministries to thrive, so that we may be a witness of unity to the world!

Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh

610 Wood Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
412-227-4802
www.ulpg.org

Urban League Sunday

Date: Sun., Feb. 9
Time: 4:00-6:00 p.m.
Location: Mount Ararat Baptist Church,
271 Paulson Ave., Pittsburgh 15206

Each year, the Urban League celebrates with its religious partners in recognition of the common goals that are shared in providing spiritual, economic, and socially responsive leadership to the community. This year's guest homilist will be the Rev. Dr. Jesse T. Williams from Convent Avenue Baptist Church in Harlem, New York, with music by The Rev. Trini L. Massie and choir.



Interfaith Power and Light

210 W. Hamilton Ave., #295
State College PA 16801
814-208-8465
www.paip.us

Annual Conference: The Long Journey: From Extracting the Past to Cultivating the Future

Date & Time: Sun., Feb. 9, 1-5 p.m.
Location: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary,
616 N. Highland Ave., Pittsburgh 15206
Cost: \$15 pre-registration, \$20 at the door,
financial assistance available

This multi-site conference for people of faith and all who are concerned about climate change as a moral issue features keynote speaker Colette Pichon Battle of the Gulf Coast Center for Law and Policy, followed by workshops designed to help your congregation and community engage in action to respond to the climate crisis.



Blessed Be Educators

412-807-1611
http://baidos.net/blessed-be-educators

Winter 2020 Educator Forum: Slay Like David Conquering Goliath (A Counseling Approach to Bullying Intervention)

Location: AJ Palumbo Hall of Science & Technology, Carlow University, corner of Fifth & Craft Avenues, Pittsburgh, 15213
Date & Time: Sat., Feb. 22, 9-11:30 a.m.
Cost: \$5

Blessed Be Educators

(continued)

Long term bullying is associated with a variety of adverse consequences including depression, anxiety, and diminished academic achievement. This workshop will discuss the importance of prevention, research based intervention techniques to address bullying, and the importance of providing trauma informed care as both a prevention and responsive measure. Children welcome to be with parents in the auditorium. To register contact Mary Ann Hvizdos, mahvzdos@verizon.net.



Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden

1020 W. State St
Baden, PA 15005
www.stjoseph-baden.org
724-869-2151

Introduction to Christian Meditation

Presenter: Sister Cynthia Comiskey, LCSW
Dates and Time: Mondays March 2, 9, 16, 23
and April 6; 6:30-8:00 pm
Cost: \$120

This six-week introductory course provides an opportunity for those interested in exploring Christian meditation, experiencing the practice in a small group, learning about its origins, and discovering its relevance as a form of prayer for the contemporary world.



Epiphany Academy of Formative Spirituality

820 Crane Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15216
http://www.epiphanyassociation.com
412-344-7494

Lenten Meditations with Poetry and Art

Dates: Mondays, March 9, 16, 23, 30
Time: 6-8 p.m.
Cost: \$10 per class, \$30 for series

These four sessions will be devoted to our meditations on the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ as told through poetry and art. Join us each week for these slowed-down reflections that will help us to behold the Paschal Mystery with new eyes. No art or poetry experience necessary!

Fiction and Formation

Dates: Saturdays, March 21, April 18, May 9
Time: 10-11:30 a.m.
Cost: \$10 per class, \$30 for series

Epiphany Academy

(continued)

Our fiction and formation group features fictional selections with a spiritual twist. Participants are notified of selections in advance, and all are invited to these Saturday morning discussion groups to enjoy faith sharing and fellowship.



Steel City Theology

www.steelcitytheology.com

Beyond a Bloodthirsty God

Dates: Mondays, March 2, 9, 16, 23
Time: 7-8:30 p.m.
Location: Baldwin Community United
Methodist Church, 5001 Baptist Rd,
Pittsburgh, PA 15236

The story at the heart of Christianity is one of an angry God sentencing his son to die a cruel and gruesome death to somehow appease his wrath against all humanity. Or at least that's one way it's been told. This course will introduce you to a broad array of ways that Christians throughout the centuries have understood the meaning of Jesus' death. We'll explore these ideas carefully and fearlessly so that you can develop an understanding of the cross that coheres with your sense of justice and nourishes your spirituality.



CLASSIFIED AD

Jail Chaplain's Office Seeking Part-time Administrative Assistant

The Chaplain's Office in the Allegheny County Jail is recruiting an organized, resourceful, efficient part-time Executive Administrative Assistant for approximately 25 hours per week. Reporting directly to the Chief Operating Officer (COO)/Director of Chaplaincy, the Executive Administrative Assistant will be a resourceful team-player who enjoys the administrative challenges of supporting a growing nonprofit. Excellent written and verbal communication skills, ability to learn quickly, and attention to detail are equally important. This highly motivated individual will be comfortable working inside a jail and with inmates and volunteers. Benefits include generous vacation and paid time off, pension, and parking, but do not include medical. Check out the full job description at www.foundationofhope.org/about/careers/exexec-admin/

Sing a New Song: Hymn Contest Still Open for Entries



There's still time to enter Christian Associates' Jubilee Hymn Contest.

We are inviting submissions of original hymns on the topic of Christian unity. You might write new words to pair with an old favorite tune, or you might compose new music as well.

The author of the winning hymn receives a \$500 prize, and their hymn will debut at our Jubilee Celebration on May 28 at Shadyside Presbyterian Church.

All entries must be postmarked by February 29. For complete contest rules, and an entry form, visit www.casp.org/hymncontest.

Sharpen your pencil, warm up your voice, and celebrate our unity by singing a new song unto the Lord!



INSTITUTE FOR MINISTRY FORMATION
AT SAINT VINCENT SEMINARY

• 300 Fraser Purchase Road • Latrobe • PA • 15650
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Spiritual Direction I: Art of Accompaniment

May 18-22, 2020

Spiritual Direction II: Advanced Topics in Spiritual Direction

June 22-26, 2020



The need for spiritual direction—or the accompaniment of a spiritual guide—is becoming more prominent in a world where so many are suffering from deep wounds. Through reading, lectures, and discussions, participants will learn the foundational dynamics of spiritual direction with Benedictine Fathers Thomas Acklin and Boniface Hicks. To learn more or to register for this weeklong retreat, please visit IMF.SAINTVINCENTSEMINARY.EDU.

ENTER MORE DEEPLY INTO THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT Spiritual Formation Classes and Retreats

The Four Women Doctors:
Teresa of Ávila, Catherine
of Siena, Thérèse of Lisieux,
and Hildegard de Bingen
March 29-April 1 2020
Sister Kathleen Flood, OP,
Co-founder, Stillpoint Inc.

**Immersion: Invitation to a
Deeper Spiritual Life**
May 4-June 13, 2020
Online and In-Person
Mary Lynn Callahan, Spiritual
Life Ministries Director, East
Liberty PC; and BJ Woodworth,
Lead Pastor, Open Door

**Contemplative Practice of
Motherhood**
*Retreat at Villa Maria
Education and Spirituality
Center*
May 15-17, 2020
Lauren Burdette, Spiritual
Director and Author; and
Renée Prymus, Lecturer in
Composition, University of
Pittsburgh

**All for the Glory of God:
An Ignatian Retreat**
June 14-17, 2020
Jeff Eddings, Coaching Associate,
1001 New Worshipping Communities,
PC(USA)

**Walking in the Footsteps of
Henri Nouwen**
Retreat at Abbey of the Genesee
July 19-22, 2020
BJ Woodworth, Lead Pastor, Open
Door



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GUIDING THE FAITHFUL IN COMPLEX TIMES

People Before Issues: Pastoral Engagement with LGBTQ Members of Your Community
March 5-6, 2020
Justin Lee, Author, Speaker, and LGBTQ+ Christian Activist; and Ray Low, Assistant Pastor, Morningside UMC

The Art of Transitional Ministry, Part 1
March 16-20, 2020
Paul Rhebergen and Jan Nolting
Carter, Transitional Pastors, PC(USA)

When the Well Runs Dry: Compassion Fatigue and the Work of Professional Caregiving
March 27, 2020
Donna M. Posluszny, Professor, University of Pittsburgh; Leanna Fuller, Associate Professor, PTS; and Joanne Spence, Certified Yoga Therapist

Register Now for These Online Classes

Collective Decision Making: Beyond Robert's Rules Online Class
March 9-April 3, 2020
Barbara Blodgett, Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Assessment, PTS

A Brief Theology of Christian Prayer Online and Retreat
March 16-April 18, 2020
Ron Cole-Turner, H. Parker Sharp Professor of Theology and Ethics, PTS



www.pts.edu/CE

412-924-1345

ConEd@pts.edu



ENGAGING THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

June 4 & 5, 2020



Speakers include: Jonathan Wilson, Edith Humphrey, Paul Blowers, Sandra Richter, and Chris Armstrong

The Christian doctrine of Creation is one of the most contested doctrines of the modern era. But arguments with the natural sciences can distract us from the Bible's narrative of God's creation and redemption of the world, and disconnect that narrative from the life of the Church. This Conference will explore the biblical narrative of creation, its significance for the historic Church, and its implications for the worship and mission of the Church today.

TO REGISTER VISIT: WEBBERCENTER.TSM.EDU/AEF-CONFERENCE/AEFC-2020

PRESENTED BY:



Trinity and
School for Ministry



The Robert E. Webber Center
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Upcoming Events – Save These Dates!

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania is a co-sponsor of these upcoming opportunities for learning and connection. Mark your calendars and plan to join us!



All About Census 2020

Monday, February 10, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center in Squirrel Hill – an evening open to the wider public to learn more about how all of us can help make sure everyone in our region gets counted to help our communities.

We Have To Talk ... About Census 2020

Thursday, February 20, 9:30-11 a.m. at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary – the next in our series of gatherings especially for interfaith spiritual leaders: this time, let's consider the Census from a spiritual perspective. Register at www.casp.org/census.

Bread for the World Hunger Advocacy Workshop

Sunday, April 19, 2-4 p.m. at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, featuring keynote speaker John Carr, Bread for the World's board president, who is founder and director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University. Register at bread2020.eventbrite.com.

Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference

Friday, May 1, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at Christ Church at Grove Farm. This year's anniversary conference is titled "A Joyful 20th Celebration of Pastoral Care," with an array of speakers and workshops. Register at www.pghpc.org.

And of course: **Christian Associates Jubilee Celebration**

Thursday, May 28, 7:30 p.m. at Shadyside Presbyterian Church: come celebrate 50 years of unity! Tickets available now at www.casp.org/jubilee.