

# 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](http://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 2019/January 2020 Number 6

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

### Everyone Counts: Churches Can Play Important Role in 2020 Census



The Christmas story begins with a census, as Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem to take part in an imperial registration.

This spring, it's our turn to be counted, as the U.S. government embarks on its decennial census.

Churches can help ensure that the 2020 federal census will make a complete and accurate count of every person living in our

communities. An accurate census ensures that our region receives equitable representation in Congress and a fair allocation of federal funding.

As trusted voices in our neighborhoods, churches can share that participating in the census is safe, secure, and confidential. We can help to reach populations (such as immigrants, children, and people who are homeless) that have been historically under-counted.

The Census Bureau is looking to identify Census Hubs, local organizations that can help spread the word about the census and host events to encourage participation. To learn more, email [contact@becounted2020.org](mailto:contact@becounted2020.org), or attend an upcoming workshop at the **Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management** on **Tues., December 10 from 1 p.m.–4 p.m.** or **Thurs., January 16 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.** Visit [bayercenter.rmu.edu](http://bayercenter.rmu.edu) for more details and registration.

Christian Associates plans to host several census-related events in partnership with the Center for Loving Kindness at the Jewish Community Center in early 2020. To learn more, visit [www.casp.org/census](http://www.casp.org/census).

The census effort will employ thousands of people in flexible part-time jobs that pay well above minimum wage. Veterans, retirees, students, and others are strongly encouraged to apply by visiting [2020census.gov/jobs](http://2020census.gov/jobs).

### Sing to the Lord a New Song: Enter Christian Associates' Jubilee Hymn Contest

Quick: name a popular hymn about Christian unity!

Did you think of "*The Church's One Foundation*"? Or maybe "*In Christ There Is No East or West*"? What about "*They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love*"?

Now, name a popular hymn about Christian unity written in the past fifty years.

Any luck? Nope, us neither. That's why, for Christian Associates' 50th birthday, we're having a hymn contest!

Enter your original, unpublished hymn on the topic of Christian unity. The author of the winning hymn will receive a \$500

prize, and their hymn will be featured at Christian Associates' Jubilee Celebration in late spring 2020.

Entries should be suitable for congregational singing, and may consist either of original metrical words set to a classic hymn tune in the public domain, or of new words paired with new music.

The postmark deadline for entries is *Saturday, February 29, 2020*.

The contest is open to any U.S. resident over the age of 18, and entries will be judged anonymously by a panel from Christian Associates' Council of Bishops & Judicatory Executives.



Copyright for the winning hymn will be retained by the author; the author will agree to permit Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania to use the hymn in perpetuity.

For full contest rules and an entry form, visit [www.casp.org/hymncontest](http://www.casp.org/hymncontest).

# REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Dear friends,

There's a big birthday on the horizon. In 2020, Christian Associates turns 50! We'll be spending the coming year celebrating all the ways the Holy Spirit has empowered our unity since 1970: helping our region pray together at times of extraordinary joy or pain; incubating new ministries to people experiencing poverty, racism, and incarceration; and speaking as a united voice on the most pressing issues of these times.

But an anniversary isn't only about looking back. This milestone also helps us look forward as we launch our next half-century. We'll be making plans and setting goals, celebrating the next generation of ecumenists, even publishing the next great hymn on Christian unity (see page 1). We have so much still to do together.

Oddly enough, the simple fact that we're planning for the future is a sign of one of the most extraordinary things about Christian Associates: *we're still here.*

In the middle of the twentieth century, most large American cities had their own flourishing and well-funded ecumenical agencies. As the decades passed, however, many of these agencies closed. Others have changed their mission. Most are much diminished from their original scope.

**Our God, the God of incarnation and resurrection, God who has brought us this far on the way, is always ready to carry us into the future.**

And the remaining organizations? Well, conventional wisdom would have it that ecumenical institutions are irrelevant and outdated. They exist mostly out of habit. They're not engaged in any cutting-edge ministries. The real action is elsewhere; the world has moved on. In other words, ecumenical agencies are dinosaurs, just one good asteroid away from extinction.

But here's what I've learned about dinosaurs during my tenure at Christian Associates. If you have a healthy and happy dinosaur in your care – if you keep your dinosaur well fed and nourished – if you can keep your dinosaur thriving while the rest shuffle off to the Great Dinosaur Beyond, an amazing thing happens: your dinosaur is suddenly unique. Your boring old dinosaur suddenly seems like a one-of-a-kind magical dragon. *And who wouldn't want to ride a dragon into the future?*

There's another way to think about dinosaurs too. In October, I attended "A Day with Brian McLaren," an event organized by Beaver-Butler Presbytery, with participants from at least seven of our member judicatories. The Rev. Dr. McLaren, a pastor and author, recently spent time in the Galapagos Islands, where Charles Darwin was inspired to write *Origin of the Species*. Darwin's observations about evolution led McLaren to consider what will happen to the dinosaurs we see in today's church: our old-fashioned congregations, our legacy institutions. Like many dinosaurs, some will be ill-adapted to changing times, and their stories will come to an end.

But not all dinosaurs went extinct. Some changed. Little by little, generation after generation, some dinosaurs grew feathers. They developed hollow bones. Their reptilian snouts turned into beaks. Some dinosaurs learned how to fly.

Just as dinosaurs evolved into birds, so too do our church dinosaurs face the possibility of new and vibrant life before us, especially if we rise to the challenge of change. Our God, the God of incarnation and resurrection, God who has brought us this far on the way, is always ready to carry us into the future. We just need to flap our newly-evolved wings, use our holy gift of creativity, and join the Spirit in flight.

In 2020, as we look toward Christian Associates' next half-century, I hope we'll look up to see a flock of dragons taking to the sky, as our churches, our judicatories, and even this gray-haired ecumenical agency adapt and evolve, following the Spirit's leadings.

Your sister in Christ,

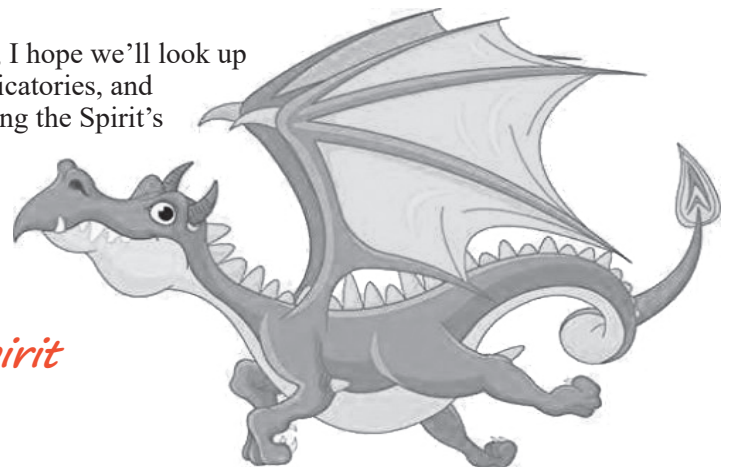


The Rev. Liddy Barlow  
Executive Minister  
Christian Associates of Southwest PA

*joining the Spirit  
in flight . . .*



photo by Jennifer McKinney







# ECUMENICAL EVENTS



## Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence

[www.b-pep.org](http://www.b-pep.org)

### Celebration of Life, Healing and Unity

Date & Time: Sun., Dec. 8, 2 p.m.

Locations: St. James AME Church, 444 Lincoln Ave., Pittsburgh 15206 and Trinity AME Church, 2720 Webster Ave., Pittsburgh 15219

Interfaith worship experiences to encourage healing after acts of violence, including preaching and testimonies, music, and a balloon release. The same program will be offered simultaneously at both churches.



## Jeron X. Grayson Community Center

1852 Enoch St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

### Remembering Newtown: Healing and Action, Seven Years Later

Date & Time: Weds., Dec. 11, 6:30-8 p.m.

Christian Associates joins *Moms Demand Action*, *CeaseFirePA*, *Squirrel Hill Stands Against Gun Violence* and a coalition of additional community partners for a healing Memorial to recognize lives lost by gun violence, both at Sandy Hook Elementary School and nearer to home. RSVP at <http://bit.ly/newtown2019>.



## International Association of Women Ministers, Pittsburgh Chapter

### Winter Retreat: A Woman of Substance

Date & Time: Thurs., Jan. 23, 1 p.m.—Fri., Jan. 24, 1:30 p.m.

Location: Crestfield Camp, 195 Taggart Rd., Slippery Rock, 15657

Cost: Early Bird, before Dec. 31: \$103 double, \$125 single; after Dec. 31: \$114 double, \$139 single.

This spiritual retreat encourages women leaders to discover serenity amid a world full of anxiety. For more information and to register, contact Rev. Ann Morris at [foxmorrison@verizon.net](mailto:foxmorrison@verizon.net)

## Pittsburgh Racial Justice Summit

412-444-8436

[www.pittsburghracialjusticesummit.org](http://www.pittsburghracialjusticesummit.org)

### 22nd Annual Summit: 1619-2020: Decolonize Our Histories to Reclaim Our Humanity

Location: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary,

616 N. Highland Ave., Pittsburgh 15206

Dates: Opening Ceremony Jan. 25; Full Day Summit Jan. 26

The summit (formerly known as the *Summit Against Racism*) seeks to bring together activists, organizers, and educators with a depth and breadth of experience working toward racial justice at local, national, or global levels. Workshops and panel discussions will critically investigate the centuries-long and global negative impact of white supremacy and colonization on communities of color and indigenous peoples in the United States and worldwide.



# SAMARITAN

**Counseling • Guidance • Consulting**

- Faith-based Counseling for Individuals, Children, Couples & Families
- For Clergy: Spiritual Direction/Coaching & Educational Programs

**412.741.7430**



Subscribe to our clergy e-newsletter at:

**[samaritancounseling.net](http://samaritancounseling.net)**

A great venue for your Christmas gatherings!



## Embrace the chill

**Let us host your group this winter!**

With over 450 beds in Mount Pleasant, PA, we offer diverse facilities perfect for groups of all ages and sizes. Book now for best pricing and availability!



Affordable  
Accommodations



Excellent  
Food Service



Flexible  
Meeting Spaces



Activities  
On & Off-site

**Laurelville**

Call Brenda at 724-423-2435 • [groupreservations@laurelville.org](mailto:groupreservations@laurelville.org) • [laurelville.org](http://laurelville.org)

## Join us in Holy Repair: Support the Ministries of Christian Associates

Pope Francis writes, “*It takes more strength to repair than to build, to start anew than to begin, to be reconciled than to get along. This is the strength that God gives us.*”

Christ’s church is in desperate need of repair. Though Jesus prayed “that they may all be one,” and though Paul proclaimed there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” today the church is shattered into pieces. Christians do not know one another, trust one another, or pray with or for one another. Our brokenness prevents us from offering a witness to Jesus’ undivided love, and from serving our neighbors in their need.

But Pope Francis’ words offer us courage. Repairing what is broken and reconciling what is separated is hard, but it is holy. God strengthens us for this work, God blesses us when we attempt it, and God will see us through until our work is done.

***You can be part of this ministry of repair and reconciliation through your gift***

***to Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania.***

Thanks to the gifts of donors like you, Christian Associates’ ministries are changing our region for the better.

For nearly fifty years, we’ve brought diverse Christians together to build relationships, to learn and collaborate, and to make the voice of the church heard in the public square. In the past year, among many other projects, we:

- ❖ Led the community in prayer after the attacks in Sri Lanka,
- ❖ Organized dozens of educational programs for clergy and lay leaders, and
- ❖ Took the lead in convening spiritual leaders for interfaith dialogue.

By supporting Christian Associates now, you help propel us into 2020, when we

will observe an important milestone: our 50th anniversary! We are planning a full suite of anniversary programs that will not only celebrate the best of our past, but will also look forward, accelerating toward a robust ecumenical future for Southwest Pennsylvania.

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](http://www.casp.org/donate). Your gift may qualify as a charitable deduction for federal income tax purposes.



### Special Ways to Give

**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](http://www.casp.org/circleofunity) and signing up for a monthly online gift.

**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.

**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.

#### 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](http://www.casp.org), online for a full year.
- **\$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 2019 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.

\* Indicates a member of the *Circle of Unity* monthly giving program

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

The Rev. Liddy and Mr. Gregory Barlow  
Fr. Christopher and Dr. Filitsa Bender  
The Rev. Joseph Borodach  
Mrs. Paul Grevstad  
The Rev. Diana Harbison, *in memory of Samuel Harbison*  
Bishop James Hobby  
\*Majors Raphael and Sandra Jackson  
The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Jones  
Bishop Kurt Kusserow  
Leadership Education at Duke Divinity  
Msgr. Ronald P. Lengwin  
The Rev. Richard "Skip" Noftzger, Jr.  
The Rev. Linda Theophilus and the Rev. Dennis Orsen  
Mr. Ronald Pedersen  
Rodef Shalom Congregation  
The Rev. Marion Silbert  
The Rev. Dr. Sheldon Sorge  
The Stevens Family Foundation  
Ms. Ginny Wellman  
Women of the ELCA, New Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Bishop David Zubik

### Sustainers \$100-249

The Rev. David Ackerman  
Dr. Helen Blier  
The Rev. Robert Coval (*in memoriam*)  
The Rev. Dr. James Davison  
Ms. Normandie Fulson  
The Rev. Dr. Donald Green  
The Rev. Kimberly Greway  
The Rev. Jean Henderson  
\* Ms. Mary Ann Hvizdos  
Rabbi Walter Jacob  
Bishop Edward Malesic  
Dr. Jeffrey and the Rev. Jennifer McCurry  
The Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz  
The Rev. Jana Quisenberry  
Ms. Joyce Rothermel and Mr. Michael Drohan  
The Rev. Joseph Scheib  
The Rev. John Titus  
The Very Rev. Fr. Gregory Wingenbach, *with prayers for the health of Metropolitan +Maximos and in memory of Presbyter Mary Ann*

### Supporters \$50-99

Anonymous  
Bielau, Tierney, Coon, and Co.  
Fr. Radu and Mrs. Loredana Bordeianu  
The Rev. Canon Dr. Catherine Brall  
Mr. Jon Delano  
The Rev. Richard and Mrs. Barbara Flock  
The Rev. Donald Gaffney  
The Rev. Lisa Lyon and the Rev. Gary Lyon  
Mr. Howard McIlvried  
The Rev. Matthew Morelli  
Ms. Michele Mullen  
Ms. Agnes Peebles  
The Rev. Paul and Mrs. Kristen Poerschke  
The Rev. Ryan Pusch  
The Rev. Robert Russell  
The Rev. Lola Turnbull  
Ms. M. Lucille Underwood  
Ms. Janet Wargo

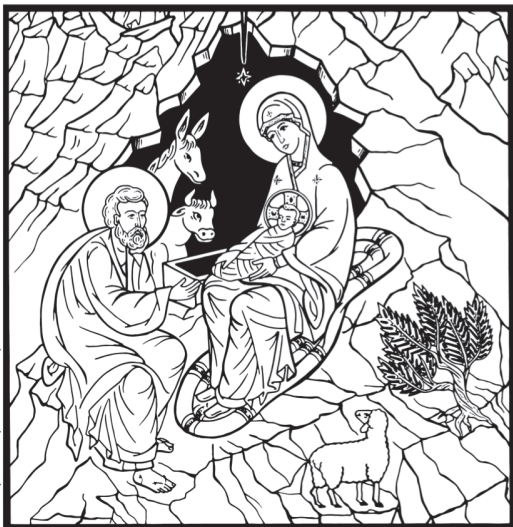
### Friends \$1-49

Anonymous (2)  
Bishop George and Mrs. Carolyn Bashore  
The Rev. Margaret Bowman  
Ms. Vivian Brice  
Glen Campbell Baptist Church  
Ms. Mary Harwick  
The Rev. Meredith Hutchison  
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin and Logan Jensen  
Sister Corinne Kirsch, CSJ  
Mr. George Libby  
The Rev. Gerald Myers  
Ms. Susan Orr  
The Rev. Floyd Palmer  
Father Robert Popichak  
Mrs. Susan Rosendahl  
Ms. Vivian Shaeffer, *to the Glory of God and in memory of my husband, Kenneth E. Shaeffer*  
Ms. Patricia Sherman  
The Rev. E. Philip Wilson

This list includes donations made between November 15, 2018 and November 15, 2019. 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 2019 judicatory sponsors in the February 2020 issue of *The Call*.



For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,  
but that the world through Him might be saved. ~John 3:17



Nativity icon reprinted with permission of Annunciation Press.

God is with us!  
Christ is born!

*"Merry Christmas from the staff of Antiochian Village!"*

[antiochianvillage.org](http://antiochianvillage.org) 724.238.3677

  
*Antiochian Village*  
Conference & Retreat Center

## GUIDING THE FAITHFUL IN COMPLEX TIMES

Enrich your ministry with these events:

**Preaching a Relevant Word to  
a Restless People**

Jan. 30, Feb. 27, March 26,  
and April 23, 2020

Donna Giver-Johnston, Pastor,  
Community PC of Ben Avon,  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

**Kelso Race and Faith  
Community Conversation**

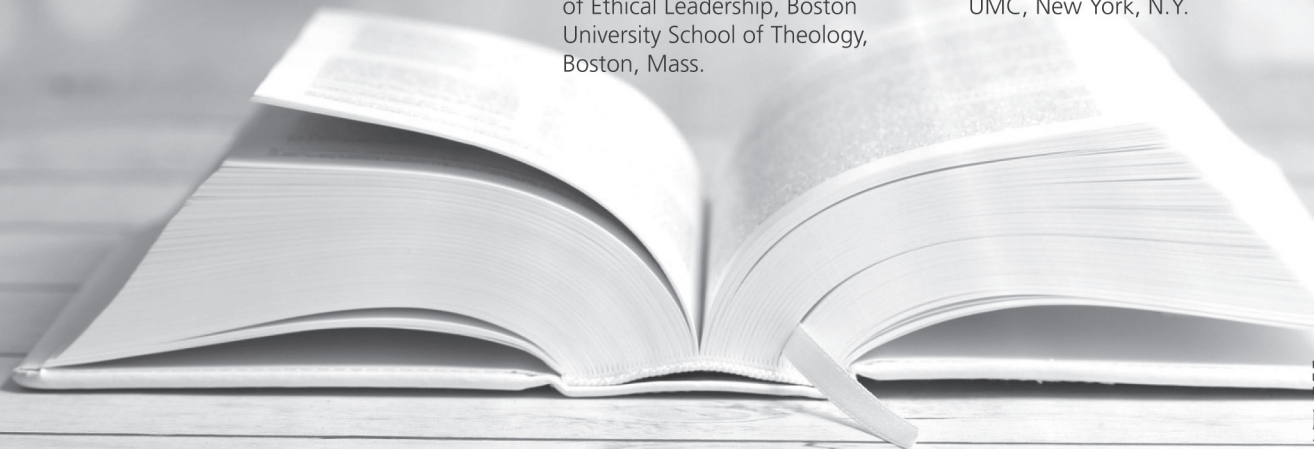
*The Howard Thurman Story*  
Feb. 7, 2020

Martin Doblmeier, Documentary  
Filmmaker, and Walter E. Fluker,  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor  
of Ethical Leadership, Boston  
University School of Theology,  
Boston, Mass.

**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, New York, N.Y.



PITTSBURGH  
THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY

[www.pts.edu/CE](http://www.pts.edu/CE) 412-924-1345 [ConEd@pts.edu](mailto:ConEd@pts.edu)



THOMAS C. ODEN  
PATRISTICS LECTURES

Dr. Hans Boersma presents:

*Digging Up  
the Treasure:  
Biblical Interpretation  
in the Early Church*



The Robert E. Webber Center  
for an Ancient Evangelical Future  
*Reclaiming the Christian Tradition for the Life of the Church Today*

**January 16-17, 2020**  
**Trinity School for Ministry**



Dr. Hans Boersma  
Nashotah House  
Theological Seminary

The Robert E. Webber Center at Trinity School for Ministry invites you to the inaugural session of the annual Thomas C. Oden Patristics Lectures. Named in honor of the late Thomas Oden, whose work was dedicated to the retrieval of the ancient Christian theological consensus, these lectures are presented by scholars and theologians who hold a similar interest in the church fathers.

Dr. Boersma's lectures at Trinity will focus on early Christian interpretation of Scripture, and its implications for how we read Scripture today.

---

## Event Schedule

### January 16

**7:00PM–Lecture 1: A Hidden Treasure**

### January 17

**10:00AM–Lecture 2: A Unique Treasure**

**1:30PM–Lecture 3: An Otherwordly Treasure**

**3:00PM–Panel Discussion with Trinity Faculty**

*To Register:*

*Visit*

<http://www.tsm.edu/oden-lectures/>

**Fee: \$50**

Trinity School for Ministry/311 Eleventh Street/Ambridge, PA 15003/ [www.webbercenter.tsm.edu](http://www.webbercenter.tsm.edu)

## Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

P.O. Box 5241

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15206

412-688-9070

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PITTSBURGH, PA

PERMIT NO. 1245

*Return Service Requested*



*Christ the Savior  
is Born*

*The Call . . . to be one in Christ is ordinarily published bimonthly by **Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, P.O. Box 5241, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.** Email: [newsletter@casp.org](mailto:newsletter@casp.org). (C) 2010. **No fax submissions are accepted.** Classified Advertisements may be placed at a PREPAID cost of \$10.00 for 40 words or less. The publication of ads/events does not indicate specific endorsement of an organization, ad or event, and is strictly of an informative nature. *The DEADLINE for all submissions is the 15th of the month prior to the issue the submission is to appear (January 15 for February issue).* Photographs, articles and other submissions about the local church are welcome.*

### Kindness Will be Focus of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



Joining their prayers with brothers and sisters across the globe, Christians celebrate the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* each year. The week begins on the Feast of the Confession St. Peter on January 18 and concludes on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on January 25.

The 2020 theme is "They Showed Us Unusual Kindness," inspired by Acts 28:2 and the story of Paul's shipwreck on Malta. Kindness and hospitality enable diverse Christians to realize the unity that is ours in Christ.

Reflections on the theme, suggested liturgies, and promotional materials are available from the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute, [www.geii.org](http://www.geii.org).

Christian Associates would be glad to participate in *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* services planned in our region and to promote Week of Prayer activities; please send details and we'll help spread the word.

### Harris Lecture Brings Diverse Clergy, Big Ideas to Rodef Shalom

For decades, Rodef Shalom Congregation has extended hospitality to Christian clergy at the annual Harris Interfaith Luncheon and Lecture.

This year's lecture, "*Why Is It Always the Jews?*" by Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin, addresses historic and contemporary antisemitism.

The lecture takes place **Friday, January 10 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Rodef Shalom Congregation, 4905 Fifth Avenue in Pittsburgh.**

Rabbi Salkin serves as Senior Rabbi at Temple Solel in Hollywood, Fla. In 2019-2020, he is a scholar-in-residence at Rodef Shalom, making five visits over the course of the year.

To reserve your place at the luncheon, visit [www.rodefshalom.org/rsvp](http://www.rodefshalom.org/rsvp). Please contact Melanie Solomon at [solomon@rodefshalom.org](mailto:solomon@rodefshalom.org) with any questions.



**Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin**