

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 2016/January 2017 - Number 6

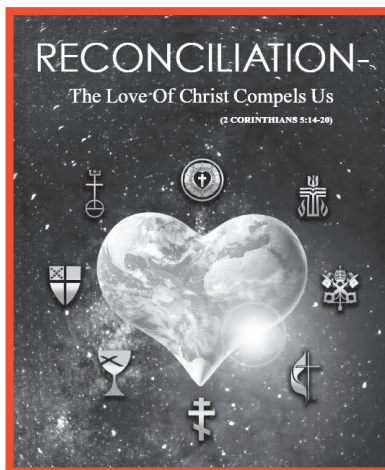
A Unifying Voice in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Mission of the Gospel and the Wholeness of Communities

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Urges Reconciliation

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 of St. Peter on January 18 and concludes on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on January 25.

The 2017 theme, determined by the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, is *"Reconciliation: The Love of Christ Compels Us,"* based on 2 Corinthians 5:14-20. Reflections on the theme, suggested liturgies, and promotional materials are available from the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute, www.geii.org.

On January 19 at Oak Grove Lutheran Church (434 Harkins Mill Road) in Zelienople, the Southwestern PA Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in



America will host an Ecumenical Eucharist, celebrating the ELCA's full communion partnerships with the Episcopal Church USA, the Moravian Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church, and

its agreement of partnership with the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Representatives from many of these partners will assist in leading worship.

Clergy and laity from all traditions are welcome to attend. A lunch follows the worship service at a nominal cost; please contact Sandy DeLorenze for more information and to RSVP: 412-367-8222 or sandy.delorenze@swpasynod.org.

Last year, local celebrations of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity took place in Mount Lebanon, Hampton, and Greensburg, among other communities.

Are you planning a 2017 celebration in your area? Christian Associates would be glad to promote Week of Prayer for Christian Unity activities in our region through our Web site and Facebook page; please send details and we'll help spread the word.

Christian Associates Stands Firm Against Partner Violence

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." This fall, as part of our continued efforts to promote peace, Christian Associates became a member of **Standing Firm: The Business Case to End Partner Violence**.

Standing Firm encourages employers to follow three action steps to address this problem:

- ❖ **RECOGNIZE** the ways that your workplace and your workforce are being affected by partner violence;
- ❖ **RESPOND** by taking appropriate action steps such as adopting policies and implementing training for employees, managers and human resource staff;

- ❖ **REFER** to existing community resources that specialize in helping victims or holding offenders accountable.

Membership in Standing Firm is open to any employer, including congregations and judicatories. Currently, the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh and Bidwell Presbyterian Church are members, as well as organizations such as East End Cooperative Ministry, Holy Family Institute, and Samaritan Counseling Center.

"I hope that more of our Christian Associates congregations and judicatories will join Standing Firm," said Rev. Liddy Barlow.



STANDING FIRM®
The Business Case to End Partner Violence

"Church employees are not immune from partner violence, and their employers can play an important role in keeping them safe from harm."

To learn more about Standing Firm, visit www.standingfirmswpa.org.



REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Dear friends,

To imagine the universe, picture a loaf of raisin bread in the oven. Each raisin stands for a galaxy, like our Milky Way: gravity holds them together, so they keep their shape. But as the loaf bakes, the dough around the raisins keeps rising, expanding, getting bigger. The universe itself is expanding. Even as you read this sentence, there are galaxies that are receding from ours faster than the speed of light. The world is getting more and more complicated and difficult to map.

And even on our own, less-cosmic, scale, the world gets more and more complex. Once, life just happened to us: today, we have kids and deadlines, aging parents, mortgages, and groceries. Once we could consider ourselves well-informed just by watching major-network news: now we pick from hundreds of media, selecting our own echo chambers and choosing our own reality. The world is harder and harder to understand.

Our unity means that underneath all the complexities of this world, we are all one body, the Body of Christ. A body cannot be divided. In Christ all things hold together.

And the church gets more and more complex, too. Sure, we were all united once, for about five minutes on the day of Pentecost, but ever since then, Christians have been spinning apart from one another. A common estimate says there are now approximately 40,000 Christian denominations in the world. Our own region has been the center of schism in the past decade, with denominational bodies splintering and congregations declaring, *"I have no need of you."* What's more, the same sinful divides that infect our culture – race, class, ethnicity, education – divide our churches, too. Perhaps your own congregation might feel mostly the same, like a raisin, but the dough around you is changing.

The letter to the Colossians also moves from simple to complicated. It begins in close-up as Paul greets his readers, but then zooms way, way out to take in a far wider view. Suddenly, instead of the little raisin of the church at Colossae, we are seeing the whole loaf, the whole universe in one glance. *"Christ is the image of the invisible God,"* Paul sings, *"the firstborn of creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together."*

What an astonishing promise: In Christ, all things hold together. When I tell people what we do at Christian Associates, I try not to say, *"Our mission is to unify the churches,"* or *"We build Christian unity."* Unity is not ours to create. It already exists. We confess it each week in the creed (*"I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church"*), and we trust in its mystic reality, even when it is very hard to see.

Our unity still exists when we disagree with one another, even about important things. Our unity still exists when we can hardly stand to be in the same room as one another. Our unity does not depend on our ability to get along. It's a truth that's far deeper than our human squabbles. It means that we are not complete without one another. Our unity means that underneath all the complexities of this world, we are all one body, the Body of Christ. A body cannot be divided. In Christ all things hold together.

And so our task, then, is not to create Christian unity, but to reveal it: **to make visible in the real world the truth that there is only one church, only one Body of Christ.** In this Advent season, as the Word again takes flesh and dwells among us, let us recommit ourselves to helping the unity of the church take flesh in our region through our life together.

We may look at our messy churches and families and the political world and mutter, *"Pull yourselves together."* But in truth, there is one who has already pulled us together. There is one who already comprehends the whole universe, from the raisin to the dough to the kitchen walls, there is one who already holds together Republicans and Democrats, white people and people of color; there is one who already holds together the church in all its diversity. He himself is before all things and in him all things hold together. Thanks be to God for the one who holds us: for *Jesus Christ*.

Wishing you a blessed Advent and merry Christmas,

Liddy

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



There is one who already comprehends the whole universe, from the raisin to the dough . . .





Kearns Spirituality Center Sisters of Divine Providence

9000 Babcock Blvd
Allison Park, PA 15101
412-931-5241
www.cdpsisters.org

North Hills Chorale Concert

Dates: Saturday, December 10 7:00pm.
Sunday, December 11 3:00pm

The North Hills Chorale is a well-known interfaith choral group in the area that combines sacred and secular renditions fused with holiday spirit. Come join us in the Kearns Visitation Chapel to get into the true Advent/Christmas spirit as you support and enjoy one of the best choral groups in the Northern area of Pittsburgh.



First Lutheran Church

615 Grant St
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-471-8125
www.flcpittsburgh.org

German Christmas Service

Date: Sunday, December 18
Time: 4:00pm

The service will be conducted entirely in German. Featuring Gloria Dei Ringers, tenor soloist and Andre Bierman, and the Posaunenchor (trombone choir)



Heinz Memorial Chapel

4200 Fifth Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412-624-7529

Heinz Chapel Choir Holiday Concert

Dates: December 3, 4, 9, 11
Cost: \$10-\$15

Dr. Susan Rice leads the Heinz Chapel Choir in an inspiring a cappella celebration of the holidays.

Call 412-624-7529 or visit music.pitt.edu/tickets.



Shadyside Presbyterian Church

5121 Westminster Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15232
412-682-4300

Music in a Great Space Concert Series: Sure on this Shining Night, Pittsburgh Camerata

Date: Sunday, December 18, 2016
Time: 3:00pm; Cost: \$20.00

Pittsburgh's premier professional chamber choir presents music for the season that evokes wonder and mystery, including Josef Rheinberger's "Evening Song," Palestrina's "Creator of the Stars of Night," Ēriks Ešņvalds's "Star," and "Sure on This Shining Night," by Morten Lauridsen.

To Purchase Tickets: <http://www.pittsburghcamerata.org/>



Trinity School for Ministry

311 11th St
Ambridge, PA 15003
724-266-3838

Writing Songs for Today's Church

Date: January 9-11, 2017; Fee: \$150

A practical writer's workshop with Andy Piercy and guests: Bruce Benedict of Cardiphonia, artist/producer Latifah Phillips, and singer-songwriter Wen Reagan.

Registration and more information:
www.tsm.edu/writingsong

The Evangelistic Legacy of C.S. Lewis

Presenter: Dr. John Bowen
Date: January 9-13
Fee: Non-credit option \$180
Registration and More Information:
www.tsm.edu/intensives



Crestfield Camp and Conference Center

195 Taggart Rd.
Slippery Rock, PA 1657
724-794-4022

International Association of Women Ministers Retreat: Finding Faith in Space

Date: Thurs January 26-Fri. January 27
Fee: Early Bird, before 12/15
\$125 Double, \$145 Single:
After 12/15, \$135 Double, \$160 Single

Where you are impacts how you are, according to a multitude of surveys on the best places to live, the happiest small cities, the healthiest states, and more. Through creativity and conversation, retreat leader the Rev. Rachel Hackenberg, author of "Writing to God" and "Sacred Pause," will invite us to ponder the connection between faith and space -- including our daily surroundings, the significant spaces of our faith formation, and the images of place in scripture.

For more information and registration form, contact Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz at lm811@zoominternet.net.



Macedonia Church of Pittsburgh

2225 Bedford Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-281-8437

Anthony Brown and Group Therapy in Concert

Date: Thursday, December 29, 2016
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Carnegie Music Hall

This concert features Anthony Brown and Group Therapy, winners of 10 Stellar Awards and artists behind the Grammy-nominated song, "Worth". One of the opening acts will be Macedonia Church's very own GOT FIRE? Teen Choir.

To Purchase Tickets: <http://mcopevents.bpt.me/>



House of Prayer at Mount St. Macrina

500 West Main Street
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-438-8644

Christmas Prayer Morning

Date: Saturday, December 10
Time: 9:15am-1:00pm, including lunch
Presenter: Reverend Jason Charron

Christmas Prayer Afternoon

Date: Sunday, December 11
Time: 1:15pm-5:00pm, including dinner
Presenter: Reverend Edward Mazich, OSB

Fee: \$35
Registration deadline December 6th

Make Unity Visible: Join Us In Mission Today Through Your Gift

At a moment in our nation's history when our differences threaten to divide us from our neighbors, the work of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania is more important than ever.

We bring diverse Christians together to build real relationships, grounded in trust and common values. Then, we help a united church to make its voice heard in the public square, where we work and advocate for our shared Gospel values: loving our neighbors, welcoming strangers, feeding the hungry, caring for prisoners.

In 2016, we have pursued our mission with energy and skill.

- ❖ We worked with community partners to publish preaching guides on childhood hunger and gun violence.
- ❖ We convened clergy and lay leaders to share ideas on combating racism and serving refugees.
- ❖ We launched a re-designed web site and continued an active Facebook presence.

- ❖ We played an active role in community partnerships, including Bread for the World, the Greater Pittsburgh Interfaith Coalition, and Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster.

Join us in continuing our work in the coming year.

- ❖ We will be offering educational opportunities for clergy interested in helping neighborhoods create a climate of welcome immigrants and refugees.
- ❖ We'll renew our SPARK Conversations series to connect faith leaders who share similar interests and ministries.
- ❖ We will re-establish our role as a resource for local ecumenical expressions throughout our region.

There is a lot of exciting work ahead!

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 the partnership of people like you and congregations like yours.

Join us in our mission by giving generously to Christian Associates.

Please 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. All donations are tax-deductible.



Thank You to Our 2016 Supporters!

Christian Associates is deeply grateful to these individuals, congregations, and other entities 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.

Special thanks are due to the founding members of the John 17 Society, which recognizes our donors who give \$250 or more in a giving year.

Members of the John 17 Society will be our honored guests at a special reception in spring 2017. Join the Society today to demonstrate your commitment to Christian unity.

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

The Rev. Liddy Barlow and Dr. Gregory Barlow
Mrs. Paul Grevstad
Ms. Donna Hansen
The Rev. Diana Drew Harbison and Mr. Samuel Harbison
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and Dona Hotopp
The Rev. Rosalyn Kummer
Bishop Kurt Kusserow
The Rev. Skip Noftzger
Ms. Susan Orr
The Rev. Dr. Nathaniel C. Roe
The Rev. Robert Russell
The Rev. Marion Silbert
The Rev. Brian and Ms. Michelle Snyder
The Rev. Dr. Sheldon Sorge
Zion Lutheran Church, Penn Hills

"Christian Associates is a unique institution in this country. For a long time, it has provided a platform for the public engagement of church bodies to address together the many needs of our society. I chose to join the John 17 Society because the unity of Christians is too important to lose momentum due to the dwindling resources of church bodies."

— Dr. Sheldon Sorge, President of the Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives and Member of the John 17 Society



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

Psalm 133:1

Sustainers

\$100-\$249

The Rev. David Ackerman
Bull Creek United Presbyterian Church
Women's Association
The Rev. Joseph J. Borodach
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas and Barbara Greway
The Rev. William Hower
The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Jones
Fr. Ron Lengwin
Ms. Frances M. Morrow
Ms. Alacyn Y. Pegher
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the Rev. Linda Theophilus
Fr. Robert Pipta
Mr. George Porter
The Rev. Joseph C. Scheib, JCL
The Rev. E. Philip Wilson
Ms. Elizabeth Wolfskill

This list includes donations made between November 15, 2015 and November 15, 2016. 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 corrections in the next issue of The Call.



Meet a Critical Need: Donate Diapers Today

The Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank, based at New Life Temple Baptist Church in Pittsburgh's Hill District, has issued an urgent request on behalf of babies of local families in need.



Due to an unprecedented number of requests for assistance from 30 partner social service agencies, the Diaper Bank's diaper supply is critically low. WPDB distributes diapers free to families in need throughout the region.

Huggies has challenged each diaper bank to a match of 250,000 diapers if they collect the same amount by Dec. 31. WPDB is a little more than halfway to that goal. The need is great and growing, particularly with colder weather and the holidays approaching, so this match is critical.

Anyone can organize a diaper drive. Visit www.westernpennsylvaniadiaperbank.com for a checklist and templates for promotional materials or to donate online. The Diaper Bank will pick up diapers collected. Contact Diane Wuycheck, 412-310-4151, for additional assistance.



Spring 2017 Byzantine Online

Credit courses (Jan. 16-May 5, 2017)

Theology of the Divine Praises (Fr. David Petras, SEOD)

This course will survey the theological, spiritual and historical elements of the daily official prayer of the Eastern Catholic churches. (2 credits)

Patristics II (Kyle Washut, STL, STM)

This course will introduce the history, theology, and spirituality of the patristic period from St. Athanasius of Alexandria to St. Symeon the New Theologian. The rich ethnic and cultural diversity of early Christian thought will be highlighted through study of primary sources. (2 credits; *Patristics I* not a prerequisite).

Certificate courses (Jan. 16-March 17, 2017)

The Bible for Eastern Catholics (Deacon Daniel Dozier)

The course will introduce students to the unique ways in which Eastern Catholic liturgy and tradition is steeped in the appropriation of Scripture.

Plainchant of the Byzantine Catholic Church (Jeff Mierzejewski, Metropolitan Cantor Institute)

In this course, we will examine the *prostopinije*, or plainchant, of the Byzantine (Ruthenian) Catholic Church. Students from other churches or disciplines will be provided with a living example of a complete system of liturgical chant, and learn how it has been used in the past, and is used today.

More information and registration available at: online.bcs.edu.

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Empower your church to be a leader in the national ecumenical effort to end child sexual abuse. Samaritan Counseling Center is your certified SafeChurch instructor in Western PA. Enroll in SafeChurch today.



SafeChurch training begins JANUARY 21, 2017. To sign up, call **412.741.7430**.

To learn more, visit samaritancounseling.net
Click the Programs tab, select SafeChurch.

"SafeChurch was such a blessing! It enabled us to talk through the realities of childhood sexual abuse... and to change our church's culture to an ongoing place of safety for children."

— Lori Bass-Riley, Cross Roads Presbyterian Church



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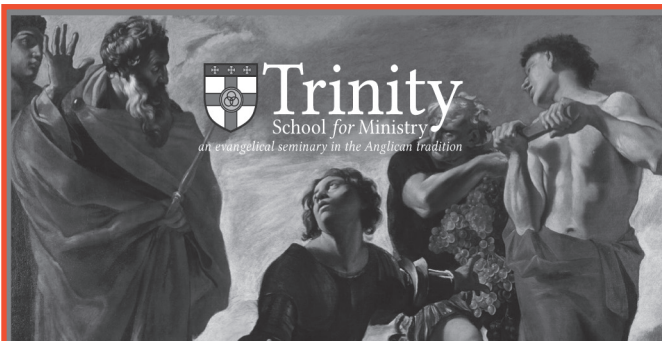
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Dr. Erika Moore

Discovering the Old Testament, part of the *Foundations of Christian Ministry* series, is designed to delve into a history of salvation and life with God as expressed in the Old Testament and intended to help us in a lifetime of listening to God speak through his written Word and apply that Word to our lives.

Visit www.tsm.edu/discoveringtheot

For more information contact Dawn Bates,
Manager of Interterms, dbates@tsm.edu or 800-874-8754.



and



present

Sabbath as Resistance: An Ethic of Faithful Defiance

An Event for Pastors and Mental Health Providers
at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

January 27, 2017, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

MICHELLE SNYDER and AYANA TEETER

More information:
www.ppicounseling.org/Sabbath-ethics

For PPI Counseling Services call
412-661-1239x216



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UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENTS

at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Rhythm of Justice
*Third Annual Lecture and Community
Conversation on Race and Faith*
Jan. 14, 2017
Erika Gault

**Planning and Organizing a Successful
Vacation Bible School**
Christian Education NETworking Webinar
Jan. 19, 2017
Lisa Brown

**Sabbath as Resistance:
An Ethic of Faithful Defiance**
Jan. 27, 2017
Michelle Snyder and Ayana Teter

Hospitality and Ecumenism
*Coffee and Conversation Series on Extending
Hospitality*
Feb. 15, 2017
Liddy Barlow

The Art of Transitional Ministry, Week 1
March 6-10, 2017
Paul Rhebergen and Janet Nolting Carter

Deep Abiding Connection:
Foundational Wesleyan Practices
Albright-Deering Lecture in Methodist Studies
March 23, 2017
Paul W. Chilcote

Forming Faithful Places
Schaff Lectures
May 3, 2017
Willie J. Jennings

Leadership, Conflict, and Creativity
Henderson Summer Leadership Conference
June 8-10, 2017
Miroslav Volf, Leanna Fuller, and David
Jones



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

Healing Communities Project Seeks Partner Congregations

The Southwest Pennsylvania Healing Communities Collaborative will sponsor a training on **January 7 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.**



Healing Communities is a program for faith groups to build relationships of healing, redemption and reconciliation in families and communities impacted by crime and mass incarceration. The program challenges congregations to walk alongside individuals and their family members from the point of arrest through successful

reintegration as a productive citizen. To learn more, visit www.healingcommunitiesusa.com.

Sandy Strauss, Director of Public Advocacy for the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, will facilitate the January training. The training will equip and empower congregations with resources, information and support, while each congregation decides on its own action plan and approach to this work, based on its own culture, beliefs, and demographics.

For more information and to register, contact Scilla Wahrhaftig at scillahw@gmail.com or 412-361-1581.

Remember and Make Change at Newtown Vigil



Four years ago, twenty first graders and their teachers were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Each year since, our community has gathered to mourn for them and for all victims of gun violence.

Join Christian Associates and many other organizations at this year's "Remembering Newtown" on the anniversary of the tragedy: **Wednesday, December 14 at 7 p.m.**, sponsored by CeaseFire PA. Listen to reflections from those who have lost family members to gun violence, and hear from elected officials working on legislation to prevent such tragedies from happening again. Light a candle and join in prayer for those who have lost their lives.

The event takes place at the **Jeron X. Grayson Community Center, 1852 Enoch Street, in Pittsburgh's Hill District.** The Center is named in honor of the son of the Rev. Glenn Grayson of Wesley Center AME Zion Church; Jeron Grayson was shot and killed in October 2010.

For more information, please contact Rob Conroy at CeaseFire PA, Rob.Conroy@ceasefirepa.org.