

CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
CONNECTION
December 2012

A Message from the Interim Director

Over the past two months we have been in the middle of a major fundraising time for the operation of the Council. Letters have been sent to member congregations and individuals requesting their continued support of the Council's ministry. We have had our Fall Banquet and the annual Musical Celebration, both of which were great successes. But of course, the need continues as we move toward the end of one year and into the start of another. You should know that as of this writing we have dispersed the local share of this year's Crop Walk Funds, \$21,787, to 23 food pantries and 10 soup kitchens in Albany County. The Emergency Shelter is open and running every night and will continue to the end of April.

My task as Interim Director becomes clearer as the days go along: represent the Council at various meetings and events, be part of the ongoing ministry that is the CACC, and to observe, ask questions, and make comments when appropriate. "Interim", as we all know, means a period of transition; transition implies that something new is about to take place. May we start envisioning what that "New" may look like!

Our office staff members, Kitt Jackson and Aine Leader-Nagy, join me in wishing you a blessed Advent, Christmas, and New Year.

--Rev. Vernon A. Victorson

Pledge Reminder

The Council of Churches, like many nonprofits, is feeling the impact of the current economic downturn. If you made a pledge for 2012, please make every effort to complete it. Year-end gifts over and above your pledge are welcome. CACC relies on YOUR generosity to support our ministries. Checks may be made out to "CACC" and sent to us at 646 State St., Albany, NY 12203. Thank you!

World AIDS Day Events-Dec. 2-4

To mark World AIDS Day, several regional agencies are sponsoring a Healthy Living Expo at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center 12/4 (8am-8pm) and 12/5 (8am-4pm). Visit www.health.ny.gov/WAD.

MUSIC-MUSIC-MUSIC

Help for the Homeless Concert-Dec. 6 8pm, Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. An evening of folk songs & fan favorites from Judy Collins and Jimmy Webb. If you mention the CACC Emergency Homeless Shelter when you purchase tickets, we are able to receive some of the proceeds from the event.

Visit www.troymusichall.org or call our office. We have several \$25 tickets.

College of St. Rose Women's Chorale & Friends Dessert Cabaret-Dec. 8

7pm, First Lutheran Church, 646 State St., Albany, 12203. Traditional and inspirational Christmas music and delicious desserts. Cost: \$7 at the door.

Gloria!-Dec. 9 2:30pm, St. Pius X Church, 23 Crumitie Rd., Loudonville. Festival Celebration Ecumenical Choir Christmas Concert includes the Vivaldi "Gloria" and the Rutter "Gloria" with brass and organ accompaniment. Tickets: \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors and students.

Capital Region Theological Center

CRTC provides ecumenical theological education, support for clergy, training for ministry, and resourcing services for congregations. **Upcoming:** "Equipping Ourselves for Social Change" simulcast with Sr. Joan Chittister, rescheduled to **12/7** (7-8:30pm) & **12/8** (9am-4pm), First Reformed Church, Schenectady. Cost \$105. "Introduction to New Testament: Part II" with Dr. Peter Bedford. 7-9pm, Tuesdays, **1/8-3/12**, Grace Lutheran Church, Niskayuna. Cost: \$275. Register by 12/20. Gift certificates & group discounts available. Call 462-2470 or visit www.crtc.org for more information.

SAVE THE DATE: The CACC Annual Meeting/Winter Assembly will be held on Monday, **Feb. 4** (snow date Feb. 11) @ Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Loudonville. Clergy & lay delegates from member congregations and other interested persons are welcome to attend. Details next month.

Ecumenical Witnesses of Baptism

Established in 1995, this unique CACC program provides a visible way to celebrate Christian unity through witnessing baptisms in each other's churches. The program currently has 26 enthusiastic participants, who during the past year have witnessed 34 baptisms, representing seven denominations. Our 18th annual Gathering will be held at 2pm on Sunday, **January 13, 2013**. (location TBA) Want to learn more about the program? Would you like to have ecumenical witnesses present at your church's baptisms? Do you know someone who might like to serve as a witness? Come to the gathering or contact Dave and Jean Kaercher, program coordinators. Send an e-mail to parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org, or call Jean at work (465-7545) or at home (785-6333).

Upcoming in January

15: Martin Luther King, Jr., Interfaith Memorial Service, 7pm @ Metropolitan New Testament Mission Baptist Church, 105 Second St., Albany, 12210. Guest speaker: the Rev. J. Omarr Evans, a 1997 MLK Scholarship recipient. Free will offering for the MLK Scholarship fund.

18-25: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity A half-hour Prayer Service for Christian Unity sponsored by the Capital Region Ecumenical Organization (CREO) will begin at **noon** on

Wed., **Jan. 23** at the Roman Catholic Pastoral Center, 40 No. Main Ave., Albany. All are welcome to attend.

Congratulations to....

--the Rev. David Jones of the Greenbush Reformed Church, on the 25th anniversary of his ordination!

--the Rev. Robert Foltz-Morrison, interim pastor at Delmar Presbyterian Church, on the 30th anniversary of his ordination!

--the Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless, recognized by *The Business Review* as the 2012 Non-Profit of the Year!

--CACC Board member Nell Stokes-Holmes, recently appointed Executive Director of the African-American Cultural Center of the Capital Region!

Shelter News

The Emergency Overflow Homeless Shelter opened on Nov. 1 and has already been very busy. In addition to the many congregations and individuals who have contributed their time, meals, supplies, and monetary gifts, we are grateful to the following for their support:

--the Church of St. Clare in Colonie for a \$1,000 grant

--the Frederick McDonald Trust for a \$5,000 grant!

Thanks to all who supported the Community Shopping Day at the Ten Thousand Villages store on Nov. 18. A total of \$542 was raised for the Shelter by this event. Additional funds are always needed to support the Shelter. Checks should be made out to "CACC Shelter Account" and sent to 646 State St., Albany, NY 12203.

Plans are being made for a Memorial Service for Homeless Persons who have died during the past year. It has tentatively been scheduled for 6pm on **12/20 @** First Lutheran Church, 646 State St., Albany. Call 463-1326.

Don't forget the "**Bowling for Beds**" **Bowl-a-Thon**, scheduled for the afternoon of **Feb. 2, 2013**, at the Sunset Recreation Center. If your group would like to form a team, contact Rev. Sandy Damhof at UAlbany and she'll send you a pledge packet. Send an e-mail to sdamhof@uamail.albany.edu or call her @489-8573 x26. Space is limited so don't delay!

Items currently needed: New men's T-shirts, socks, underwear; winter hats, gloves, gently used jackets; iced tea mix, Kool-aid mix.

If you would like to donate items, please call the Shelter @426-1227 and leave a message for Pamela. Please do not drop things off without calling.

Want to be more involved with CACC?

The CACC Nominating Committee is seeking individuals to serve on CACC's Board of Directors and its various committees and commissions. In particular, we need folks with financial know-how to serve on the Finance and Development Committee. We are also looking for people to serve on the Albany CROP Hunger Walk Committee. They meet on the 2nd Wed., from 4:45-6pm to plan the Recruiters Rally in March and the May 5 Walk. Call our office @ 462-5450 for more information.

Nominations for Giles Pastoral Service Award

Each year the Council presents an award named for the late Rev. Joyce Steinkraus Giles, who was the CACC Executive Director from 1977-1986.

To be eligible, a pastor must actively participate in the Council or one of its programs; have done outstanding pastoral ministry; and exemplify racial, gender, and denominational inclusiveness. Recent recipients include the Revs. Robert Zittel, and Peggy Funderburke. To nominate a pastor, send a letter to our office by **January 8**, telling why you think this pastor deserves the award. Be sure to include the name and phone number of his/her church.

This and That

Albany Community Land Trust 25th anniversary reception will be from 5:30-7pm on **12/4** at the Homeownership Center, 255 Orange St., Albany. RSVP to Lmcneilly@ahphome.org or call 434-1730 ext.405....Storyteller Tim Coombs presents Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" in a live family event, 4-6:30pm on **12/8**, Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church, 2291 Western Ave., Guilderland. Call 456-5410...Albany Maritime Ministry has an open house at their Port of Albany Facility, 105 Smith Blvd., from 2-3:30pm on **12/9**.

Church World Service/CROP Walk News

Last year's Albany CROP Hunger Walk raised over \$87,150, placing us as #9 in the nation (out of nearly 2,000 local walks) in terms of the amount of money raised. Plan now to participate in the 2013 CROP Hunger Walk, which will be held on Sunday, May 5.

Church World Service and its partner agencies use CROP Walk funds to respond to natural disasters such as Hurricane Sandy; dig wells to provide clean drinking water in remote communities; and empower people (especially women) to feed their own families and improve their lives. Visit www.churchworldservice.org to find out what CWS is doing. You can also find information about how to get involved in hands-on support through the Blankets + Campaign; assembling Hygiene Kits, School Kits, Baby Care Kits, and Clean Up Buckets; and purchasing items from the Best Gift catalog. *"Life is the best gift.....the rest is extra."* (African proverb)

December, 2012

- 1 World AIDS Day
- 2 Guilderland Int. Council Advent Service, 4pm @ Christ the King
- *6 Help for the Homeless Concert, 8pm
- *9 Festival Celebration Choir Concert; Maritime Ministry Open House
- 10 Shelter Oversight Com., 4pm
- 12 Albany CROP Com., 4:45pm
- 13 BOARD of DIRECTORS, Noon
- 19 Action & Program Com., 4pm
- 24 Christmas Eve Day (office closed)
- 25 Christmas (office closed)
- 31 Watch Night/New Year's Eve

January, 2013

- 1 New Year's Day (office closed)
- 9 Albany CROP Com., 4:45pm
- 10 BOARD of DIRECTORS, Noon
- *13 **Ecumenical Witnesses of Baptism** gathering, 2pm
- 14 Shelter Oversight Com., 4pm
- 15 **MLK Interfaith Service, 7pm**
@ Metropolitan NTM Baptist Church
- 18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- 21 MLK Holiday (office closed)
- 23 CREO Board & Prayer Service for Christian Unity, Noon

Save the date: CACC Annual Meeting/Winter Assembly will be on Feb. 4

[*denotes more information to be found elsewhere in this issue]