

# CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES CONNECTION

February/March 2013

**From the Interim Executive Director** ☞

The Capital Area Council of Churches has had a busy few weeks as we began 2013. The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Service was a wonderful ecumenical and interfaith event for our community. The “Bowling for Beds” event sponsored by Cornerstone Campus Ministry raised over \$6,500 for our Overflow Shelter and many of our member churches participated. Our Winter Assembly and Annual Meeting at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Loudonville help set the course of the ministry of the CACC for the months ahead, and we honored Pastor John Knarvik with Giles award for Pastoral service on that same evening.

With our new Board now in place, we are ready to forge ahead maintaining the ministries that we have been a part of historically and seeking the vision of what we may yet be about in days to come. We will be in prayer and conversation together, for ours is a cooperative ministry working to be a servant of God in our community and in our world.

One of the benefits of having me in the interim position as Executive Director is that as a retired pastor of the ELCA, I have no regular Sunday morning responsibilities. From time to time I take various preaching assignments around our Lutheran conference, but there are a great many Sundays where I am free to visit other congregations. I want to make myself available to speak at other churches on Sundays concerning the work and ministry of the CACC. I would hope that member congregations would take advantage of this possibility to better inform their people of the wider ministries they are involved in through their participation in the Council. I would also welcome invitations from non-member congregations as a way of finding out more about what membership might mean for the ministry of their church. I hope in this way to expand the understanding and the awareness of what the Capital Area Council of Churches is doing in our area in Jesus name. Please call me and invite me to be a part of your Sunday morning community.

As the liturgical calendar evolves the season of Lent is now upon us for many of our member congregations. Lent is a time for reflection on who we are as people of God, a time for renewal as followers of Jesus Christ, and a time for reaffirming our faith in the love, promise, and hope God has revealed to us in Christ. I pray, then, that our Lenten journeys will be fruitful.

*--Vernon A. Victorson*

## **March Happenings**

**3/1:** Church Women United World Day of Prayer. Theme: “I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me” written by the women of France. 11:30am registration @ First Presbyterian Church, 362 State St. (corner of Willett), Albany. Bring a bag lunch. All women welcome.

**3/3:** Voices of Hope Concert 3 pm @ Delmar United Methodist Church, 428 Kenwood Ave., Delmar, to benefit Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless.

**3/5-7: NYS Labor-Religion Coalition 40 Hour Fast** This annual event calls on participants to fast for all or part of the 40 hour period (8pm Tues. -Noon Thu..) and use the time to reflect and act on ways to seek justice for low wage workers and increase the well being of all, especially the poor and the vulnerable. Visit [www.labor-religion.org](http://www.labor-religion.org) for details about the fast and information about local events.

**3/13: Communities of Faith Working Together to End Hunger** 6pm soup supper, 7-9pm Faith & Hunger Network Forum @ First Lutheran Church, 181 Western Ave. Albany. Suggested donation \$5. Call 443-0460 to register. Presentations/information about hunger at the local, state, and national level.

### **Transitions**

Welcome to the Rev. Dan Wheeler, Stated Supply Pastor at Bethany Presbyterian Church in Menands. Farewell and Godspeed to the Rev. William Hempel, who has retired from St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church (MS) in Albany.

### ***CROP Hunger Walk Recruiter's Rally***

**4:30-6:30pm, Sunday March 17** (snow date, 3/24)

First Lutheran Church, 646 State St. Albany 12203

Park in lot at the corner of Cortland Pl. and State St.

Come celebrate with us as we honor the top groups and walkers from the 2012 Walk, enjoy a light vegetarian meal, and hear about the local and global impact of the funds raised. Last year's walk raised \$87,154; 25% of that amount came back to Albany County food pantries and soup kitchens.

Please call the CACC office (462-5450) by March 12 to let us know you are coming. This event is primarily for recruiters, but if you want to find out how to be part of the May 5, 2013 CROP Hunger Walk, please join us! If your congregation has not walked before, why not start now?

### **Ecumenical Good Friday Worship-March 29**

Noon-First Lutheran Church, 181 Western Ave., Albany. All are welcome to join us as we journey to Calvary and stand at the foot of the cross. The service will include Scripture, music, time for silent reflection, and prayer, with participants from several area churches. A free will offering will be received to support the ministries of the Council.

### **Shelter News**

Thanks to all who participated in "Bowling for Beds" on Feb. 2; 125 bowlers of all ages from 15 different groups raised over \$6,500 for the Shelter. Special thanks to Rev. Sandy Damhof and the students from Cornerstone Campus Ministry at UAlbany who organized the Bowl-a-Thon.

**Urgent needs:** Stewart's gift cards, laundry detergent, cleaning supplies.

### **A Request from Church World Service**

The **CWS Kit program** is a way to extend your congregation's outreach to refugees and victims of natural disasters. Thousands of Hygiene Kits, School Kits, Cleanup Buckets, and Baby Care Kits were sent out last year, including to areas affected by Hurricane Sandy. There is an urgent need to build up the supply again. Visit [www.cwsglobal.org/kits](http://www.cwsglobal.org/kits) or call (315)458-8535.

### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarships**

The offering at the Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> MLK Interfaith Memorial Service amounted to \$4,721. Additional gifts have brought this year's income for the MLK Scholarship Fund to well over \$7,000. Additional donations are welcome. Checks made out to the "CACC MLK Fund" may be sent to the CACC office. Scholarship application forms are available at the CACC office and through high school guidance offices. Applicants must live, worship, or attend school in Albany County or southern Rensselaer County; be active in their school and faith community; understand and plan to apply the teachings of Dr. King; show evidence of academic potential and financial need; and be accepted at an accredited college/ university. Completed applications, along with all supporting documents, are due at the CACC office by **3/31**.

### **Capital Region Theological Center**

CRTC provides ecumenical theological education, support for clergy, training for ministry, and resourcing services for congregations. Upcoming courses: "*Coin & Kingdom: Would Jesus Toss Us Out Today?*" 9am-3pm on **3/3** @ FUMC, Schenectady. Cost: \$85, register by 2/14. "*Finding Your Calcutta*", 10am-4pm on **3/16**. Gregg Barrett leads this follow-up to last year's conference with Shane Claiborne. Cost: \$60 by 2/15, \$75 thereafter. Register by 2/28. "*Social Media for Churches: The Why & How*", led by Rev. Dr. Tim Coombs & Rev. Dr. Michelle Bogue-Trost. 9am-4pm on **4/13**. Cost: \$75 before 3/15, \$90 thereafter. Register by 3/27. "*Matthew Fox, Occupy Christianity: A New Reformation*". 7-8:30pm on 4/19 @ First Unitarian Society, Schenectady; 9am-3pm @ St. George's Episcopal Church, Schenectady Cost: \$105 by 3/22, \$125 thereafter. Register by 4/3. Call 462-2470 or go to [www.crtc.org](http://www.crtc.org) for more information.

### **Congratulations to.....**

--the Rev. John Knarvik of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, this year's recipient of the CACC Joyce Steinkraus Giles Pastoral Service Award!

--First Presbyterian Church in Albany, celebrating its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

### **CACC Annual Meeting Report**

More than 60 people gathered at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Loudonville on February 4 for the CACC Annual Meeting. Following a delicious dinner served by the host church, elections of officers and directors were held, and a budget of \$105,342 (excluding the Shelter) was adopted for 2013. Grateful farewells were said to retiring Board members Edward Falterman, Rev. Peggy Funderburke, Nell Stokes-Holmes, Evelyn Stone, Maurice Thornton, and Rev. Robert Zittel. A resolution was adopted naming Evelyn Stone as "Board Member Emerita" in recognition of her many years of service.

Elected to office were: Deb Riitano, President; George Herrick, Vice President; Jane E. Schweikert, Secretary; and William Hedberg, Treasurer; Alice Kolb & Alan Spencer, Assistant Treasurers; Action & Program Commission Chair, Peter Fish; Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship & Service Committee Chair, Joan Marie Lipscomb; and Worship & Education Commission Chair, Rev. Laurel Phillips; and as Board members-at-large, Rev. David Preisinger and Rev. Judith Johnson-Siebold. Deacon Walter Ayres and Michael Burgess were re-elected to the Nominating Committee. A copy of the 2012 Annual Report will be sent to each member congregation; additional copies are available at the Council office.

### **Wave Riders Spring Sessions to Begin Soon**

The Community Hospice offers a free six-week support group for grieving children and teens. The Albany County group begins **March 21** and will meet on Thursdays from 5:30-7:15pm @ Macedonia Baptist Church. Call Mary @724-0248 to register. Call 915-1914 for information about other sites/times or visit [www.HospiceWaveRiders.com](http://www.HospiceWaveRiders.com).

### **Ecumenical Advocacy Days-April 5-8**

People from many denominations will gather in Washington, DC to learn about hunger issues and meet with elected officials. This year's theme is "At God's Table: Food Justice for a Hungry World". Visit [www.AdvocacyDays.org](http://www.AdvocacyDays.org) for information or to register.

#### **February, 2013**

11 Shelter Oversight Com., 4pm  
12 Finance/Dev. Com., 4:30pm  
13 Ash Wednesday (Lent begins)  
18 Presidents' Day (office closed)  
27 Action & Program Com., 4pm

#### **March, 2013**

\* 1 CWU World Day of Prayer;  
HAC Sleep-a-thon in the Park  
\* 3 Voices of Hope Concert, 3pm  
\* 5-7 Labor-Religion 40 Hour Fast  
10 Daylight Savings Time begins  
11 Shelter Oversight Com., 4pm

#### **March, 2013 (cont.)**

\*13 Faith & Hunger Network Event  
14 BOARD of DIRECTORS, Noon  
\***17 CROP Rally & Awards Event**  
24 Purim; Palm Sunday (snow date  
for CROP Rally)  
27 Action & Program Com., 4pm  
\***29 CACC Good Friday worship,**  
**Noon at First Lutheran Church**  
31 Easter Sunday; deadline for  
MLK Scholarship applications

Note: The Albany CROP Hunger Walk will be on May 5<sup>th</sup>!

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