

CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES CONNECTION

February/March 2012

From the Executive Director 🐘

“Worshiping Together”

The quest for Christian unity usually focuses on worshiping together (Faith and Order) and working together (Life and Works). CACC's main efforts at worshiping together have been our Ecumenical Witness of Baptism program, Good Friday Service, and our Thanksgiving Service; we also host an annual Interfaith Service in memory of Martin Luther King. In addition, most of our various committee meetings begin with a short devotion. I want to raise a concern that was brought to my attention a few times during the past year: if we want to worship well, we should respect differences without denying differences.

Personally, I have always been impressed by our efforts to worship in a way that invites more people of diverse worship traditions to participate. I also have become aware that some among our membership are more cautious than others in doing that. If we are going to promote unity and also respect differences, what must we keep in mind? I have asked our combined Faith and Learning / Prayer and Worship Commission to talk about this issue and make some suggestions. I am also asking our membership to share your thoughts with the members of this commission. Talking more about this will enable us to learn a lot from one another.

--George Brennan

Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarships

The offering at the Jan. 15th Interfaith Memorial Service amounted to \$3,472. Additional gifts have brought the total income for the MLK Scholarship Fund to well over \$6,000. 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 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**.

March Happenings

3/2: Church Women United World Day of Prayer. Theme: “Let Justice Prevail” written by the women of Malaysia. 11:30am registration @ Third Reformed Church, 16 Ten Eyck Ave., Albany. Bring a bag lunch. All women welcome.

3/12-14: NYS Labor-Religion Coalition 40 Hr. Fast This annual event calls on participants to fast for all or part of the 40 hour period (from Mon. until Wed..) 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. This year’s theme is “Bread and Roses”. Visit www.labor-religion.org for details about the fast and a list of local events.

3/22: Sidney & Beatrice Albert Interfaith Lecture 7:30pm, Hubbard Interfaith Sanctuary, College of St. Rose. Rabbi Burton Visotzky, Jewish Theological Seminary. Topic: "From Cairo to Qatar: Jewish-Muslim Relations from One Rabbi's Perspective". Call 454-5250.

3/24: CREDO Capital Region meeting, 1pm @ St. John's Lutheran Church, 160 Central Ave., Albany. (Use Bradford St. entrance). Followed by service of healing and anointing. Call 434-8861 or e-mail NatCathCh@aol.com.

Capital Region Theological Center

An ecumenical project offering training for laity and clergy. Upcoming courses: "The Church and Its Money", 9am-3pm on 3/3. Cost: \$85, register by 2/15. "Befriending Our Inner Teacher; Biblical Foundations & Practices of Discernment", 9am-4pm on 3/8 & 3/9. Cost: \$165 for both days, \$95 for one day. Register by 2/21. "Come Into the House of the Lord: The Worship Conference", 9am-4pm 3/22 & 3/23. Cost: \$165 for both days, \$95 for one day. Register by 3/6. Call 462-2470 or go to www.capitalrtc.org.

CACC Annual Meeting Report

More than 90 people gathered at New Covenant Presbyterian Church in Albany on February 7 for the CACC Annual Meeting and Winter Assembly. Following a delicious dinner served by the host church, elections of officers and directors were held, and a budget of \$163,003 (including operation of the Shelter) was adopted for 2012. Grateful farewells were said to retiring Board secretary Nancy Scholes and Board members Juanita Edwards, Joan Lipscomb, Julie Mader, Ed Mondore, Shawn Morris, and Stephen Winters.

Elected to office were: Deb Riitano, President; Rev. Robert J. Zittel, Vice President; Jane E. Schweikert, Secretary; and William Hedberg, Treasurer; Personnel Committee Chair, Rev. Konrad Raup; and as Board members-at-large, Michael Burgess, Margaret Danes, George Herrick, and Nancy Scholes. Rev. Mary Robinson White was re-elected to the Board and Deacon Walter Ayres and Mary Jane Brown were elected to the Nominating Committee. Several committee/commission appointments were made as well. A copy of the 2011 Annual Report will be sent to each member congregation; additional copies are available at the Council office.

Help us go green: Read the monthly newsletter on line instead of getting a copy in the mail. Let us know if you want to do that by sending an e-mail to CapAreaCC@aol.com. Ask us to send you a copy as an attachment or tell us you will read it at our web site: www.CapAreaCC.org.

Congratulations to.....

--the Rev. Peggy Funderburke of Bethany Reformed Church, this year's recipient of the CACC Joyce Steinkraus Giles Pastoral Service Award!

--the Rev. Stewart Pattison, Pastor, and Rev. MJ Pattison, Pastoral Associate, of Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church, who recently celebrated their 30th anniversaries of ordination!

--Congregation B'Nai Sholom in Albany on its 40th anniversary!

--St. Peter's Episcopal Church on its 300th anniversary!

CROP Hunger Walk Recruiter's Rally

4:30-6:30pm, Sunday March 25 (snow date, April 1)

First Lutheran Church, 646 State St. Albany 12203

Come celebrate with us as we honor the top groups and walkers from the 2011 Walk, enjoy a light vegetarian meal, and hear about the local and global impact of the funds raised. Last year's walk raised \$102,566; 25% of that amount came back to Albany County food pantries and soup kitchens.

Please call the CACC office (462-5450) by March 15 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 6, 2012 CROP Hunger Walk, please join us! If your congregation has not walked before, why not start now?

Help us end hunger, one step at a time!

From our members and affiliates

The Albany Friends Meeting, located at 727 Madison Ave., is offering a series of programs from 2-4pm Sunday afternoons for those who wish to explore Quaker spirituality. Childcare available, refreshments served. Topics include "Silent Worship", "Peacemakers", and "Continuing Revelation". Visit www.albanyquakers.org or call 436-8812.

Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church offers this idea for Lent: Help save the environment by eating one meatless meal a week. Raising meat (especially beef) takes 2.11 acres per unit of food, while raising vegetables takes only .5 acres. In the long run, this has a more positive effect on the environment than driving a hybrid car, according to the UN Food & Agricultural Organization.

Looking ahead

April 6: Ecumenical Good Friday worship, Noon, at the First Church in Albany (Reformed)

April 12: The King Lecture at Siena College featuring Bishop Howard Hubbard, 7pm in the Alumni Recreation Center. Call 782-6105.

April 13: Albany Church Women United Spring Forum

Transitions

Welcome to the Rev. Robert White, Interim Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches. We also welcome the Rev. Eric Bogerd to the Onesquethaw Reformed Church. Deacon Walter Ayres is the new Parish Life Director for Sacred Heart Church in North Albany.

Shelter News

Thanks to all who participated in “Bowling for Beds” on Feb. 4; over 100 bowlers of all ages from 15 different groups raised over \$6,200 for the Shelter. Special thanks to Rev. Sandy Damhof and the students from Cornerstone Campus Ministry at UAlbany who organized the Bowl-a-Thon.

The Shelter still needs adult volunteers to help from 6-9pm on weekday evenings to help serve dinner, do laundry, and interact with our guests.

Call Pam @426-1227 to volunteer; she’ll arrange for training and work out a schedule for you. Special thanks to those who helped make the holidays special for our guests. All of the new warm clothing items were much appreciated.

Church World Service News

Hundreds of people from many denominations will gather for **Ecumenical Advocacy Days** in Washington, DC, **March 23-26**. This year’s theme is “Is This the Fast I Seek? Economy, Livelihood, & Our National Priorities”. Visit www.AdvocacyDays.org for information or to register.

The **CWS Kit program** is a way to extend your congregation’s caring reach to refugees, displaced people, and victims of natural disasters. Hygiene Kits, School Kits, Cleanup Buckets, and Baby Care Kits were sent to many places during the past year. There is an urgent need to build up the supply again. Visit www.churchworldservice.org or call Amy at the Upstate CWS office @ (315)458-8535 for information about how to assemble and ship kits. There is a special need for a church in the Capital District to receive and store boxes of kits until the middle of April. Call us (462-5450) if you can help.

February, 2012

- 14 Shelter Oversight Com., 4pm
- 22 Ash Wednesday (Lent begins)
- 29 Action & Program Com., 4pm

March, 2012

- *2 CWU World Day of Prayer
- 8 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, Noon
- *12-14 Labor-Religion Coalition
40 Hour Fast
- 13 Shelter Oversight Com., 4pm
- 14 Special CREO Bd. Mtg., Noon;
Albany CROP Com., 4:45pm

March, 2012 (cont.)

- *22 Sidney & Beatrice Albert
Interfaith Lecture
- *25 **CROP Recruiters Rally, 4:30pm**
@ First Lutheran Church
- 28 Action & Program Com., 4pm
- *31 Deadline for MLK Scholarship apps.

April, 2012

- 1 Palm Sunday, snow date for CROP rally
- 6 CACC Good Friday service, Noon
@ First Reformed Church
- 8 Easter Sunday
- 11 Albany CROP Com., 4:45pm
- 12 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Don’t forget the CROP Walk on May 6th!

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