



# The Connection

## The Capital Area Council of Churches

MAY 2015

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### A MESSAGE

#### FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Did you miss Easter? I don't mean "missing church" but that Easter came and went and nothing changed for you. Lots of folks miss Easter. Not just here in Albany or in the year 2015 but those who were living in Jerusalem during that life-changing and earth-shattering event. If you missed Easter—Spoiler Alert—the tomb was empty. But that isn't enough. It isn't enough to proclaim Christ is risen or that you believe in the resurrection. We have to move from the event of the resurrection to experiencing the resurrection.

The stories following Easter become the blueprint for all of us when we assemble for worship. We gather as disciples, we encounter God, listen as the scriptures are opened to us and experience a sacred meal together. We are charged to go out and be witnesses.

Even though the disciples don't believe -- or at least experience faith as a combination of joy and doubt and wonder -- they are still called to be witnesses. And if that's true for them, well, then, we're certainly not exempt.

Part of being "resurrection people," is that we are called to witness. Witnessing doesn't mean that we have to heap our beliefs on someone else who doesn't believe the way we do.

## **MESSAGE** (continued from Page 1)

It's simply sharing how God has worked in our lives through the simple things we have done.

As resurrected people, how will you choose to witness? Peace be with all of you.

## **SPRING ASSEMBLY...**

### **Don't Miss It!**

Our Spring Assembly will be held Monday, June 8 at East Greenbush Methodist Church. Dinner begins at 6:00. This Assembly is always a fun night. So much to do. We will be presenting the Martin Luther King scholarships to our deserving students. It is always so exciting to hear the stories of the winners and how they will continue the legacy of Dr. King as they enter college. It is also the night we present the Snow-Hogancamp Scholarship to a seminarian who is answering the call to ministry. This is an outstanding opportunity for the Council to walk with someone who is crafting such a unique journey.

We also will formally welcome St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church in Voorheesville as the newest member to the Council and we will get an update from Family Promise. Please join us. It will be a great night—a little something for everyone.

Call the Council at 462-5450 and let us know that you are coming. Offering is \$10.

## **GOOD FRIDAY was a GREAT FRIDAY!**

The Good Friday Service sponsored by the Council of Churches and hosted by St. Vincent DePaul Church on Madison Avenue was an overwhelming emotional experience. Bert Fay presented "In the Green Wood and the Dry: A Way of the Cross with Psalms." Music was led by Fran Pollazi Wittman.

Approximately 100 people took part in a holy hour that was a powerful experience for the head and the heart. Many commented that "this was the best Good Friday service they ever attended." We are extremely grateful to Bert Fay and Fran Wittman for leading us in a compelling service for the heart.

Thank you to the Worship and Education Committee, Rev. David Preisinger, Chair, Kathleen Duff, Phyllis Cardona, Rev. Sandy Damhof and Deb Riitano.





## EMERGENCY OVERFLOW SHELTER

April 13 was the closing dinner for the 2015 shelter season. What a year it has been. The harsh winter complete with non-stop snow, ice and freezing temperatures forced many shelters to move to Code Blue. The Emergency Overflow Shelter kept their doors open and welcomed many new faces and many returning guests.

More than eighty people joined our guests for dinner. We were warmed by several of the guests who went to the microphone and told their story and thanked the many volunteers, coordinated by Martha Iannacone.

The dinner sponsored by First Lutheran Church was delicious. They are catering at its best.

The Council is grateful to Shelter Committee, chair, Karl Gohlke, Secretary, Irene Harbison,

Treasurer Bill Hedberg and members Pastor Allie Leitzel, Tom McPheeters, Paul Hyde, Pam Bullock and Deb Riitano. We are forever grateful to Shelter Director, Pam Bullock. Pam's expertise, concern for the guests, warmth, compassion, knowledge of the shelter network and continuous out-of-the-box thinking surpasses all others.

We are grateful Pam and we love you!

## “SUMMER LUNCHBOX” IS COMING TO A CORNER NEAR YOU

The kick-off to the created “Summer Lunchbox” Project is scheduled for last week in June. Plans are being finalized to initiate a mobile lunch delivery to children in Arbor Hill who are unable to get to a congregate site. The “lunchbox” bus will head into the Arbor Hill area of Albany on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We also are finalizing plans to have a congregate site at First Lutheran Church in the parking lot.

Information will be distributed to our member churches and to the food pantries. If you have any questions or would like to donate your time, talent or treasure, please call the Council at 462-5450.

## GOOD-BYE CHELSEA...



This year the Council has been fortunate to have Chelsea Carson serve as our intern at the Council of Churches dedicated to the Seniors-on-the-Go program. She has simply been amazing.

Chelsea, who had no prior experience with senior citizens, still managed to hit the ground running. She helped set up the senior club by getting the paperwork in order, making flyers, and following up on details that start-up programs seem to bring with them. Chelsea has been a case manager for several seniors helping them navigate the maze of home care providers, vision and hearing experts, as well as nursing home and independent living possibilities. She also spent much time as a friendly visitor to those who are unable to get out due to physical barriers.

Thanks to Chelsea, Project Sunshine was inaugurated and seniors at Whitehall Court volunteered their time making “surgi-dolls.” These cloth dolls are sent to the national office of Project Sunshine and then distributed to hospitals for children who are facing surgery.

What a wonderful ministry.

The Council of Churches thanks Chelsea and we wish her well on her next internship at the Charlton School for Girls. We have every confidence that no matter what specialty field she chooses when she receives her MSW, Chelsea will be superb. Thank you Chelsea. Job well-done. We will miss and we love you! God be with you.

## PROJECT SUNSHINE

I am excited to share that Project Sunshine, an organization that some of our Seniors on the Go have been involved in, will be featuring our seniors on their website for the month of May!

These ladies have worked with our intern, Chelsea, to create over fifty Surgi Dolls for Project Sunshine. The dolls go to children facing medical challenges and are used by doctors to show the children how their procedure will work. We are so proud of their hard work! Look for them as the May Volunteer Spotlight on the website: <http://www.projectsunshine.org/volunteer/vol-spotlight.php>



## **SENIORS-ON-THE-GO**

Seniors-on-the-Go are heading down to Pollace's Resort on Wednesday, June 17 to the newly remodeled Mahayana Temple in Leeds. This Buddhist retreat houses more than 500 Buddha statues in one building. We will have a guide with us to explain Buddhism and its traditions. A newly remodeled full gift shop will be available as well. There are many new features at the Temple. Following our tour and the Temple, we will return to Pollace's where Charlie has promised us a full Italian buffet lunch followed by music and, if time permits, a few rounds of BINGO.

We love this trip! Charlie treats us like family. The cost of this fun and exciting day is \$55 for members and \$58 for non-members. Seating is limited. Make plans now to be with us.

## **RED LION INN**

On May 21 we are headed to Stockbridge for lunch at the Red Lion Inn. The Red Lion Inn has been welcoming travelers to the Berkshires for more than two centuries. The Inn offers 125 individually decorated guestrooms, elegant and casual dining, live entertainment nightly, a year-round heated outdoor pool & hot tub, and shopping at The Red Lion Gift Shop (featuring Berkshire-made items) and flagship Country Curtains Store.

Join us for elegant dining and some time in historic Stockbridge. We will depart Albany at 10:00 a.m. The cost for this trip is \$52 for members and \$55 for non-members.

## **SIGN UP NOW for MAC HAYDEN THEATER IN CHATHAM July 23**

Join us for this year's top show "West Side Story." This energetic musical filled with passion and excitement has many show-stopping tunes like "Tonight", "Somewhere," "Maria" and so many more songs by Leonard Bernstein.

Whether you're a Jet or a Shark, you will love the day we have planned. Prior to show we will have lunch at Whitestone Restaurant where we will enjoy a hot/cold buffet.

The cost for transportation, tickets and lunch is \$67 for SOTG members and \$69 for non-members. Tickets are limited as is space. Sign up early! Call 462-5450.

## **LUNCH & A MOVIE**

Join us on June 4 for a fairy tale afternoon as we have lunch and a movie. "Into the Woods" is an Oscar nominated musical film starring Meryl Streep, Johnny Depp and Anna Kendrick. Choice of lunch is chicken parmigiana or manicotti. Cost is \$10 for SOTG members \$12 for non-members. Call 462-5450 to make your reservation.



## FAITH AND HUNGER NETWORK OF NYS

The Faith and Hunger Network of NYS hosted an afternoon of a program of workshops “Working Together to End Hunger.” was hosted by the Sisters of St. Joseph at the Carondelet Hospitality Center on Saturday, April 11, 2015. Ellen Teller, Director of Government Affairs, Food Research and Action center in Washington DC was the keynote speaker.



## CONGRESSMAN PAUL TONKO With Seniors-on-the-Go.

Seniors—on-the-Go were treated to an afternoon listening session with Congressman Paul Tonko.



The Congressman spoke about the change and updates to both Social Security and Medicare. There were many questions posed to the Congressman from Social Security to observation status and how to avoid the problems that come with that determination in the hospital.

This program was sponsored by State Wide Senior Actin Council and co-sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches. A lot of good information was exchanged.



## CROP HUNGER WALK

The 35th annual Albany CROP Hunger Walk is Sunday, May 3, 2015. The Walk will begin and end at First Lutheran Church in Albany and will offer the option of a 1 mile or 3 mile loop.

Visit the CROP Walk web site:

[www.cropwalk.org](http://www.cropwalk.org) and follow the prompts to get the Albany NY walk page, then lace up your walking shoes to walk with the world. Call the CACC office at (518) 462-5450 for more information.

## HOUSEKEEPING

In case you haven't noticed The Council of Churches has a Facebook page. Check it out. Like us. We're less boring than you think! Our email is NEW. WE have stopped checking the old AOL account. You can reach us by email at [capareacc@gmail.com](mailto:capareacc@gmail.com) and always by phone at 462-5450.

## BREAKING NEWS !!!

We are thrilled to announce that our former intern **Gerald Griffin** has been selected to give the student address at the graduation of Bryant and Stratton. Gerald, a veteran of the Iraq War and the war in Afghanistan helped in setting up the new office with new technology. Go Gerald!!! May God Bless you in all your future endeavors!

Board member and Chair of the Emergency Overflow Shelter has been named Senior Citizen of the Year by Albany County.

**Karl Gohlke** is committed to a number of ministries including the shelter. His work on behalf of senior citizens is known throughout the County.

**Deb Riitano**, Executive Director, will be receiving the 2015 Distinguished Alumni Award from The College of Saint Rose. Deb received both her undergraduate degree '71 and Master's Degree '81 from the College. The Council has partnered with the college on several projects to advance the visibility of the Council and the shelter in the Capital Region.

"The Palestinian Rights Committee of Upper Hudson Peace Action has awarded the Grace B. White Peace & Justice Award to pastor **John Paarlberg** for his work in supporting peace and justice for all Israelis and Palestinians.

**Joan A. Lipscomb** will receive the Robert Lamar Humanitarian Award at the annual dinner of the Interfaith Alliance. Joan, a community activist, has been a member of the Jewish Catholic Dialogue, Ecumenical Commission of the Diocese and President and board member of the Capital Area Council of Churches for many years.



**Capital Area Council of Churches, Inc.**

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**May / June 2015**

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**CALENDAR of EVENTS**

**MAY:**

- 3. CROP Hunger Walk
- 7. National Day of Prayer
- 10. Mother's Day
- 21. **Seniors-on-the-Go**  
Red Lion Inn

**JUNE:**

- 4. **Seniors-on-the-Go**  
Dinner and a Movie
- 8. **CACC Spring Assembly**  
at East Greenbush Methodist Church  
Dinner begins at 6:00

**JUNE...**

- 17. **Seniors-on-the-Go**  
Pollace's Resort
- 29, 30 & July 1. **Serve Albany**  
Local Youth Mission Opportunity  
To volunteer contact:  
fwrosenau@wpcalbany.org

**JULY:**

- Lunchbox Program** scheduled to begin  
To volunteer contact:  
capareacc@ gmail.com
- 23. **Seniors-on-the-Go**  
Mac Hayden Theatre in Chatam