

Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council



MAY 2018

SPONSORED BY COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

MAKING A BELOVED COMMUNITY

“BUILDING A HEALTHY PLANET & HEALTHY YOU!”

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE:

2

About UCICC
page 2

3

Message from the
Chairperson
page 3

4

Know Your Neighbor
page 4

5

Member Spotlight
page 5

6

Interfaith Leadership
Meeting Recap
pages 6

7

Faith in Action!
pages 7

11

Greenfaith Interfaith
Partners for
the Environment
pages 11



SAVE THE DATE

Greenfaith Interfaith Partners for the Environment

“Healthy Planet Healthy You!”

May 15, 2018 5:30pm-8pm

See page 11



About the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council

Our Mission

The Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council works to facilitate regular interfaith meetings in order to make way for the building of bonds within the interfaith community.

We respect and encourage the inclusion and welcoming of others regardless of faith, race or disability. We strive to be proactive on social issues.

Our Goals

- To grow the network of faith-based organizations in Union County.
- To encourage representatives from all faiths to join the Interfaith Coordinated Council including those of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Islamic, and other faiths.
- To be engaged in:
 1. **Community Building** within faith-based organizations and the general Union County population.
 2. The advancement of **Social Justice**.
 3. The intentional **inclusion** of others regardless of gender, faith, race.
- To be active in activities that are inclusive and community building.

Our Objectives

- Sponsor regular engagement opportunities that facilitate the building of bonds within the Union County interfaith community and their congregations.
- Strengthen the Union County religious congregations through involvement, action and education in self-help.
- Build working relationships between Union County religious organizations and Community Access Unlimited that create opportunities for youth and people with disabilities and their support staff.

Potential Advantages to Joining the Interfaith Community

- Develop interfaith solidarity.
- Avail yourself of increased visibility within the interfaith community and build opportunities to share educational and community events with the group.
- Build religious membership.
- Gain exposure for you and fellow congregation members to educational opportunities regarding entitlements, housing, and other services, including but not limited to: programs for seniors, youth, people with physical and developmental disabilities, etc..
- Create full and part time employment opportunities for congregation members with CAU.

UNION COUNTY INTERFAITH COORDINATING COUNCIL Steering Committee Members

Deacon Tim Williams-Chair
First Baptist Church
Kenilworth

Sidney Blanchard
Executive Director of CAU

Rabbi Joel N. Abraham
Temple Shalom
Scotch Plains

Ayaz Aslam
Muslim Community Center of UC
Elizabeth

Pastor H. Bryant
Honorably Retired
Presbyterian Church USA

Denise Fernandes
Latino Outreach

Erich Han William Kussman, Jr
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Springfield

Pastor Mertz
First United Methodist Church
Westfield

Michelle Mobley
Director of Youth Service
Residential

Pastor Carmine Pernini
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Rahway

Father Michael Saporito
The Parish Community of St. Helen
Westfield

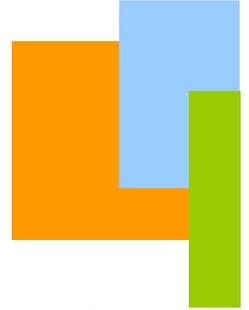
Roderick Spearman
CAU Consultant

Reverend Ronald C. Thomas
Fountain Baptist Church
Summit

Elder Arthur "Skip" Winter
Cranford Presbyterian Church
Cranford

message

from the Chairperson



“The earth is the Lords and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein.”

Psalms 24:1

As I think about that scripture I ask myself: are we good stewards with the Lords world and with those that dwell therein? Let’s look at the Earth and how we are taking care of Gods creation.



With undeniable global warming, changing weather patterns, shrinking polar ice caps and snow in April the Earth is crying out that something is wrong. Our current administration is rolling back environmental protection laws daily. We approve pipelines that leak and contaminate thousands of square miles of protected lands. We hunt endangered species into extinction, and we are still feeling the environmental effects of the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. If I had to give mankind a grade on our environmental stewardship it would easily be a resounding “F”! We must become better caretakers of this amazing planet we have been gifted with.

Now let’s look at the second part of that scripture. Not only does God want us to protect and take care of the Earth, but also those that dwell therein. So how well are we taking care ourselves? As a nation we are overweight and live sedentary life styles. Our healthcare system ranks 50th out of 55 industrialized nations. The number one killer of women is heart disease, not guns. And life expectancy for African American males is 70! It appears that we don’t take care of ourselves any better than we do the beautiful planet we inhabit.

The premise of Green Faith is that we have a healthy planet, healthy selves and healthy congregations. It spans all organized faiths and religions. It encourages us to live better healthier lives. Please strive to eat better, loose weight, clean your community, recycle, don’t litter. Tell your family members you love them. Encourage your fellow man to live a healthier, better life.

Grace & peace,

Deacon Jim.

Know Your Neighbor

Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council hosts **Know Your Neighbor Event** in Rahway

by Christopher Reardon

Recognizing the great divide that exists in the nation today, including fear of those who do not look like us, the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council recently held a Know Your Neighbor event to foster greater familiarity of and friendship with others within the community. The event was held at the Rahway Family Success Center at JFK Community Center in Rahway.



Eman El-Badawi speaks at the Know Your Neighbor event held recently in Rahway.

The Know Your Neighbor evening revolved around the theme of neighbors reaching out to others in their neighborhoods and getting to know one another over cups of tea or coffee. Attendees shared positive experiences of interactions with their neighbors, some of which helped overcome fears fueled by stereotypes.

Eman El-Badawi spoke of her journey from India to Egypt and finally to New Jersey and her adoption of America as her home. She is the daughter of an Indian father and Egyptian mother who met in Malaysia and sent her to the United States for her education. While here she met her husband and today they own a sheep farm.

"It hasn't always been easy but I've taken people on my journey," she said. "And that's why I'm here today, to make new friends. There is nothing like meeting new friends over tea."

The Know Your Neighbor event is a grass roots movement started by the Islamic Networks Group in 2015 with support of the Obama administration.

"We are a country filled with people of different ethnic backgrounds and we need to get to know each other to bring peace to the community," said Seham Adbala, director of the NJ Islamic Networks group. "You're always afraid of what you don't know. When you get to know one another those fears fall away."

Added Sid Blanchard, executive director of the nonprofit Community Access Unlimited (CAU), "This evening is about getting to know your neighbor and building communities. And it's even more important to respect your neighbor and be respected back by them."

The Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council comprises more than 40 Union County interfaith congregations and community-based nonprofits and was founded by CAU. Community Access Unlimited is a statewide Union County-based nonprofit providing support programs and services to adults with disabilities as well as at-risk youth to enable them to live independently in the community, providing supports in areas including housing, vocational skills and life-skills training, education, advocacy and recreation.

Member Spotlight



Fletcher Harper, an Episcopal priest, is Executive Director of GreenFaith, an international interfaith environmental organization. He has developed a range of innovative programs to make GreenFaith a global leader in the religious-environmental movement.

After growing up in New York City and attending college at Princeton University, Fletcher co-directed an independent journalism project interviewing centenarians – people over 100 years of age – a project which was featured on NPR and in a number of magazines and newspapers nationally. He then taught junior high school in East Harlem and worked at a storefront intake program for drug addicts before attending Union Theological Seminary in New York. After seminary, he began his ministry as a hospital chaplain, completing a CPE residency on the cancer wards of a Chicago hospital before returning east and serving as a parish priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Newark for ten years.

Sensing God's call in a new direction, and combining a love of the environment with a strong sense of social justice, Fletcher took on the role of directing GreenFaith's predecessor organization – Partners for Environmental Quality – in 2002. In addition to the organization's work helping congregations become more energy efficient, he launched GreenFaith's work offering environmental justice tours, conducting advocacy to reduce air pollution and increase automobile efficiency standards, securing financing for solar energy installations at faith-based institutions, and developing religious-environmental education curricula. Under his leadership GreenFaith launched its Fellowship Program, a unique education and training program for clergy and people of faith, followed by a comprehensive congregational environmental certification program.

Earlier this decade, realizing that governments were not moving nearly fast enough to address climate and environmental issues, Fletcher led GreenFaith into prominent roles in a number of high-impact campaigns. He coordinated the 2015 OurVoices campaign, which mobilized religious support globally for COP 21. He led organizing of faith communities for the People's Climate Marches in NYC and Washington DC, with the NYC march representing the largest-ever environmental mobilization of people of faith. He helped lead the faith-based fossil fuel divestment movement, which has led to divestment commitments by more than 150 faith groups globally. In 2017, he supported the launch of the global Interfaith Rainforest Initiative, and co-founded Shine, a faith-philanthropy-NGO campaign to end energy poverty with renewable energy by 2030. He helps lead GreenFaith's new local organizing initiative, creating multi-faith GreenFaith Circles in local communities globally.

In recognition of his leadership, Fletcher accepted GreenFaith's Many Faith's, one Earth Award from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in 2009 and was named an Ashoka Fellow in 2011. He is the author of *GreenFaith: Mobilizing God's People to Protect the Earth* (Abingdon Press, March 2015). He is the proud father of Max (21) and Lucy (14), and the partner of Dr. Lisa Dever.

The Rev. Fletcher Harper

Interfaith Leadership Meeting Recap

It was an honor to be asked to attend and report on the Interfaith Leadership meeting held at MCCUC on March 15, 2018.

The room was engaged in vibrant discussion that crossed generation's cultures and religions. Gentlemen of the 60's MLK walkouts were imploring the youth of 2018 to take the bull by the horns and protest vigorously against the gun violence plaguing the kids at schools. The spotlight was also put on the fact that many inner-city youth face gun violence on the way to and from school on a daily basis. There was a feeling of a time tunnel effect of inter-generational proximity, the 60's "enough is enough" energy being passed on to the youth in the room.

The youth really ruled the moment in this transgenerational meeting. Many young and older teens spoke up regarding the walkout and other problems they are facing today. Any concern of kids losing the power of communication due to the cell phone addiction was put to the like on this night, in this room. There definitely were a few future politicians and business leaders among this group of interfaith teens.

The meeting broke down into smaller groups to allow for more voices to be heard and other subjects to be discussed. My particular group focused on the importance of recognizing the signs of youths that may be isolated intentionally or unintentionally. This could be communicated via PFA meetings to get the information across to parents. In all the meetings the subject of bullying kept finding its way into the discussion. Why, in this day and age does bullying still exist at schools? It does not appear to have its proper place as part of the solution to the gun violence problem.

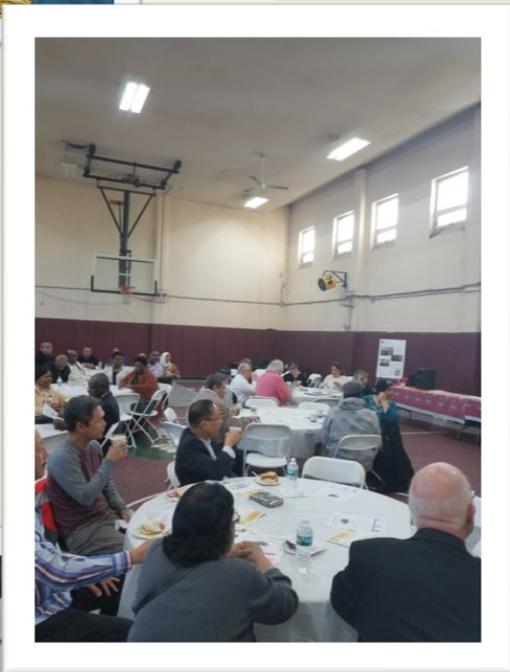
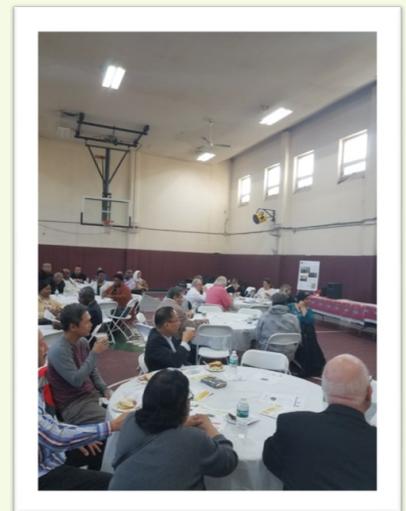
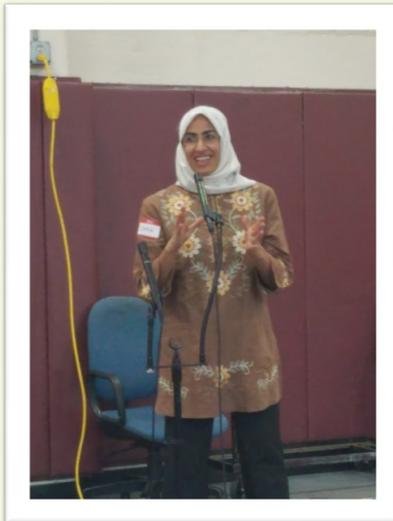
The youth break-out session developed some concrete steps to going forward. The set up a "What app" within the 20 minute meeting to allow the group members to keep up the interfaith communication going forward. This is apparently a type of group chat program. The youth also set their sights on attending the local Union County anti-gun violence rally on March 24th as an Inter-faith group. There is also a plan to hold a blood drive or other event the group to do together.

The Interfaith events I have intended in the past have been uplifting and educational. The rooms are electrified by the collective goodness and Godliness of those in attendance. This particular meeting, the youth really seemed to collectively elbow their way to the front of the room, controlling the conversation.

Anyone interested in watching walls coming down, bridges being built and God loving people all pulling in the same direction should find time to attend future events. You leave feeling energized and encouraged!

Larry Miller- non-believer

Faith In Action!



**UCICC hosted,
Know Your Neighbor Event
in Rahway**

Honor Your Guest – Honor the Stranger – Reflections on Ramadan

By Saffet A. Catovic, Imam and Muslim f Chaplain, Drew University, Madison and Member of the Statewide Clergy Council of Faith in New Jersey

In a few weeks, Muslims across New Jersey (along with their fellow Muslims across America and the globe) are anticipating a visit from an important guest who will come knocking at the doors of their homes. This is unlike the unanticipated knocks on doors that far too many residents of America, the Dreamers and the undocumented are receiving these days from agents of ICE. Knocks which often result in their being arrested and taken away from their families and friends only to be subsequently detained without the possibility of bail and ultimately deported, for many, from the only home they have ever known.

Muslims look forward to honoring the guest of *Ramadan* by following the directive of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) who said: “Whoever believes in *Allah* (God) and the Last Day, then let him/her honor the stranger, honor his/her guest”. The guest will come with sighting of the new crescent (*hilal*) moon (for the Islamic *Hijri*, calendar is a lunar calendar) and be received in Muslim homes and their Masjids (Mosques-Houses of Worship) and stay for a month. Will we properly care for, respect and honor this stranger, our guest, or not? Will during the course of our time together, this stranger, our guest, become our cherished friend, companion and confidant or not? Will we cherish the precious gift that this stranger, our guest has given us or not?

The gift of *Ramadan* is of course the Holy *Quran*, which Muslims hold to be the Divine uncreated word of *Allah* (God) which Muslims are encouraged to recite - *tilawat* (or listen to its recitation during the *Salahtul Taraweeh* – Special Night Prayers of *Ramadan*) in its entirety, all 114 *Surahs* (Chapters) and 6,236 *Ayat* (Signs-Verses). As *Allah*(God) reminds the believers in the *Quran*: “***Recite (tilawat) what is sent of the Book by inspiration to thee, and establish regular prayer, for prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; and the remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt. And Allah knows the (deeds) that you do***” (*Quran 29:45*). Allama Yusuf Ali in his exegesis (*tafseer*) of the Holy *Quran* explains that this “*Tilawat*” of the *Quran* implies (1) rehearsing or reciting it and publishing it abroad to the world; (2) reading it to ourselves; (3) studying it to understand it as it should be studied and understood; (4) meditating on it so as to accord our knowledge, life, and desires with it. When this “*Tilawat*” is done, it becomes real prayer and prayer purges believers of anything (act, plan, thought, motive, words) of which they would be ashamed or which would work injustice to others. Such prayer passes into our innermost life and being, realizing the presence of *Allah*, bringing to mind things as present to us which might otherwise be absent to us. It is subjective to us; it fills our consciousness with *Allah*: our omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent Lord.

Perhaps the greatest challenge in this month is to keep remembrance of God at the fore and in doing so, keep from becoming morally bankrupt. In this regard the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once asked his *Sahabah* (Companions): “Do you know who is bankrupt (*muflis*)?” They said: “O Messenger of *Allah* (God)! The bankrupt among us is the one who has no Dirham (money) nor property.” The Messenger of *Allah* (God) responded: “The bankrupt in my *Ummah* (faith community) is the one who comes with *Salat* (Ritual Prayers), *Siyam* (fasting) and *Zakat* (poor’s due) on the Day of Judgement, yet he/she also comes having abused this one (verbal, physical, emotional, and/or sexual harassment), falsely accusing that one (spreading lies and rumors, defaming character and honor, and demonizing entire religious, ra-

cial and ethnic groups), wrongfully consuming the wealth of this one (not just the street cons but also the white collar cons like derivatives and CDS, Credit Default Swaps, that caused the financial crisis and eliminated real wealth of the masses) spilling the blood of that one (like the shooting/killing of unarmed civilians), and beating this one (including domestic abuse). The person is then seated, and the wronged take his/her righteous deeds to recompense their being wronged. If his/her rewards are exhausted before the sins that he/she committed are required, then some of the sins of the wronged will be taken and cast upon him/her, then he/she will be cast into the Fire."

These types of Muslims are contrasted by the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) with those who are sincere and fully benefit from their interaction with the guest of *Ramadan* and the gift of the Holy *Quran*. Those who are continuously monitoring their behavior, actions and motivations behind those behaviors and actions when it comes to caring for their guest - *Ramadan* and truly appreciating and honoring its gift of the Holy *Quran*. For these truly faithful Muslims the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) said:

Whosoever fasts *Ramadan* with sincere faith – (*Iman*) and a sense of personal accountability (*Ihtisab*) will have all his/her significant past sins forgiven.

So this *Ramadan*, as we viscerally feel the pangs of hunger and thirst during our daily fasts from dawn to dusk, let us remember the many around our state, nation and world for whom hunger and food insecurity are daily realities and do more than just give *Sadaqah* (Charity). Whose lives and health, like our own, are negatively impacted because of the effects of human caused fossil fuel burning, This in turn releases green house gases including CO2 into the atmosphere, the driver of global warming and climate change. At the core of this existential problem is our wasteful consumption oriented lifestyles. Let us seek to make specific changes in our daily habits and lifestyles by adopting an ethic of conservation and restraint that will lessen our impact and carbon foot print on our common home – Mother Earth. For as Pope Francis stated in his *Laudatu Si* – Environmental Encyclical and as other faith communities including the Muslims in the Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change have also pointed out, there is an inextricable link between the cries of the earth and the cries of the poor. Both matters must be addressed in order to be truly resolved. So let us also advocate for a living wage for everyone, in particular for those who *Isa Ibn Maryam* (Jesus Christ Son of Mary – PBUH) called “the least of these”. Let us work to reduce the gender gap when it comes to earnings and put an end to harassment and sexual abuse at home, school and the workplace. Let us stand for justice against those who abuse their authority by killing unarmed civilians for in order for all lives to matter, black lives must matter. Let us stand together with our neighbors, co-workers, class mates and friends, who are as American as we are except that they are missing a piece of paper that says so. Let us work with our elected officials to ensure that there is comprehensive immigration reform and a clear path to citizenship for the Dreamers and so many others who rightfully call America their home. Let us work to ensure that our State and Nation is one which is inclusive of all peoples of ethnicities, races and faiths and so that the practionars of anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia, and islamophobia are no more.

Let us pray (and work) that all this may be so – *Ameen!*



Caged

By the New Jersey
Prison Cooperative

May 3 – 20

2017-2018 SEASON, MAINSTAGE

CAGED

by the New Jersey Prison Cooperative

May 3 - May 20, 2018

Tickets \$13 - \$38. Student, senior, and group discounts available.

Caged by the New Jersey Prison Cooperative, directed by Jerrell Henderson, will be performed from May 3 to May 20 at The Passage Theater in Trenton, New Jersey. The play was written by students in the New Jersey prison system taught by the Rev. Chris Hedges. Rev. Hedges, along with the Rev. Michael Granzen, runs the prison ministry at Second Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

The play revolves around one African-American family in Newark and their struggle to hold at bay the economic and social forces that seek to destroy them. It tells the story of the cages, visible and invisible, that keep poor people of color in bondage inside and outside of prison. It chronicles the struggle to resist this radical evil. It lifts up the voices of those we rarely hear in the wider society to celebrate the dignity and spiritual strength of the oppressed that is at the core of the Christian Gospel.

Since the play was written in 2013 inside the New Jersey prison system it has undergone several revisions. Public readings have been held. It has been workshopped by three times by professional actors in New York City. Rev. Hedges has worked closely during the last four years with several of his students, especially Boris Franklin, who have been released to refine and focus the play for the stage. Writers, the formerly incarcerated, academics, actors and directors, including the theater directors Jeff Wise, C. Ryanne Domingues and June Ballinger, the film director Marty Brest, actor Eunice Wong, the theologian James Cone and former Black Liberation Army member Ojore Lutalo, who spent 22 years in isolation in Trenton, have attended workshops and critiqued the play to give shape to its current form.

Caged is a passionate, moving and unequivocal cry for justice. It rips open the barbarity of our penal system. It makes us feel the human cost. It is a searing indictment of our society by men and women who the state has demonized, discarded and attempted to silence.

For more information on purchasing tickets hurry over to <http://passagetheatre.org/caged/>



HEALTHY PLANET,
HEALTHY YOU!

SAVE THE DATE

May 15, 2018 5:30pm-8pm
St John the Baptist Episcopal Church,
2018 Dewitt Terrace - Linden, NJ 07036



UU Meeting with Gov Phil Murray—NJ 100% Renewable Energy

Reported by Nancy Griffeth

UU Faith Action NJ and Beacon UU Congregation in Summit sponsored a panel on “NJ’s Transition to 100% Renewable Energy” on April 19 in Westfield, NJ. Co-sponsors were the League of Women Voters, the Westfield Green Team, and Westfield High School.

There were five panelists from various New Jersey environmental, business, and academic organizations: Jim Walsh of Food and Water Watch, Lyle Rawlings of the Mid-Atlantic Solar Energy Industry Association, Richard Lawton of the NJ Sustainable Business Council, Serpil Guran of the Rutgers EcoComplex, and Dan Fatton of the Work Environment Council and Jersey Renews. The panel was ably moderated by Dawn Clarke of the League of Women Voters.

Panelist Jim Walsh discussed the Food and Water Watch plan to transition the United States (not just New Jersey) to 100% renewable energy by 2035. The reason for this is to give us a 2/3 chance of avoiding a 1.5 degree Celsius increase in global temperatures. He pointed out that the current commitments to the Paris Accord limit us to 3 degrees Celsius. Also that decisions about energy use are frequently made at the state or even municipal level — for example, a municipality can choose to get its energy from renewable sources, going to 100% renewable energy, so he urged Westfield to transition locally to 100% renewable energy.

Panelist Lyle Rawlings mentioned that New Jersey initially led the country in solar, but more recently has slowed down. The solar industry was actually approaching a cliff when a bill to rescue the industry got caught up in the controversy over the nuclear subsidy bill. The cost concerns were so bad that chances for the bill were slim, but after some changes to reduce the costs, it finally passed quite quickly. The bill represented a commitment to accelerate the construction of solar energy, to 50% renewable energy by 2030, and to offshore wind, electric vehicles, and energy storage. He closed by emphasizing the importance of paying attention to what consumers are willing to pay as we transition to renewables.

Panelist Richard Lawton of NJ Sustainable Business Council polled the audience twice on the role of business. The polls related to two quotes on the purpose of a business:

Quote A, “There is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud.” — Milton Friedman

Quote B, “There is no more strategic issue for a company, or any organization, than its ultimate purpose. For those who think business exists to make a profit, I suggest they think again. Business makes a profit to exist. Surely it must exist for

some nobler, higher purpose than that.” — Ray Anderson

He asked the audience first how they think business behave. The audience chose A almost unanimously. He then asked the audience how they think businesses should behave. The audience chose B almost unanimously. Ray Anderson was the CEO of Interface Carpeting and a pioneer in Sustainable Business. He had a conversion experience after reading “The Ecology of Commerce” by Paul Hawken, after which he reengineered his company and started the Sustainable Business movement. A sustainable business considers everyone affected by the business — not just shareholders, but customers, employees, communities, and even the environment. While we have to change our physical infrastructure, we also have to change an invisible infrastructure too, which is our philosophy of how we do commerce. The Sustainable Business Council is a coalition of companies believe in a triple bottom line way of doing business, referring to People, Planet, and Profit.

Panelist Serpil Guran of the Rutgers EcoComplex pointed out that the electricity coming into the room used a lot of water. Fossil fuel and nuclear energy use a lot of water. Not only do we need to worry about carbon footprint, we need to think of the water footprint as well. Water takes a lot of energy to move. Food has both water and energy footprint to get to our tables, and we waste about 40%. Because of continually increasing population, food demand will increase. By 2040, New Jersey will be built out, reducing our food resources. Mitigating climate change, conserving water, and low carbon economy must be goals for the state. We must begin to recover all resources. For this, sustainable biomass is crucial. We must recycle carbons above ground before we take more out of the ground.

Panelist Dan Fatton of the Work Environment Council and Jersey Renews emphasized that the climate crisis is indeed a crisis and a health emergency. He discussed the series of twenty-one strategies that Jersey Renews recommends for addressing the problem. Jersey Renews represents labor unions, faith organizations, community organizations, and worker centers. The strategies fall into three buckets: increasing clean energy; reducing greenhouse gases; and creating and sustaining good jobs. He emphasized that the energy sector is only 16% of emissions, so we also need to talk about transportation. We need public charging infrastructure for electric vehicles around the state so that apartment dwellers can easily charge their vehicles. We should also have electric buses (more people take buses than trains) because the buses are spewing particulate matter throughout the state.

Religious Services at CAU

There has been some exciting things taking place at CAU!
We have started a new initiative for the members of the CAU community to experience religious worship.

This ministry is geared towards the DD community and also to the TOPS youth program. There has been approximately 40-50 members that attend, and it has been a blessing to be able to serve this beloved community.

I would like to extend an invitation for you to speak at our religious services. These services are held on Saturdays at 11:00am and at 1:00pm and are an hour long. This an interfaith endeavor is open to all faith traditions and houses of worship. If you can provide worship, a positive inspirational message, and most of all, and a heart to serve.

Our objectives are:

1. To provide a safe space for our members to worship God
2. To foster spiritual growth through the diverse understandings of God
3. To build up the community in faith, hope, and love

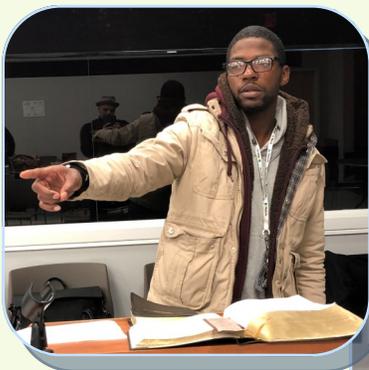
If you would like to volunteer in this amazing ministerial opportunity or find out more, please contact

Chaplain Erich Kussman at EKussman@caunj.org.



About Chaplain Erich Kussman

Chaplain Erich Kussman is a graduate of Pillar College and received a Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Studies. He is pursuing a Masters in Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary and is seeking candidacy in the ELCA. He is on the Steering committee of the UCICC. He is an author, activist, and public speaker. He grew up in Plainfield, New Jersey. He has articles published in magazines such as "First Things" and "Conspire!" He has years of experience in prison ministry. He desires to be the change he wishes to see in the world by doing God's will.



TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF SO YOU CAN TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOUR LOVED ONE!

If you are caring for a friend or family member 60-years of age or older and feel overwhelmed or isolated by all the challenges of doing so, act now to take advantage of this free, limited-time program. Our proven, effective approach, designed by Rosalynn Carter Institute on Caregiving and collaboratively enhanced by Catholic Charities, allows you to recharge, connect, and receive expert support.

CAREGIVER CONNECTIONS: A GROUP FOR LEARNING, SHARING AND SUPPORT

FREE PROGRAM
FOR UCICC MEMBERS
BEGINS IN MAY
THURSDAYS
AT 6:00 PM
(EXACT LOCATION AND DATES TO COME FROM UCICC)

Program Overview:

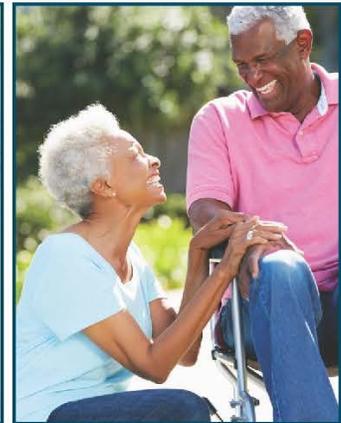
Program Overview: A **FREE** interactive learning experience designed to help you gain valuable skills and resources to support you in your role as a caregiver to a senior loved one:

- Sign up at your UCICC location
- Walk-Ins also welcome; new participants may join program at any time
- Program is open to New Jersey residents caring for a loved one 60-years of age or older.

Details may vary by location

Benefits include:

- Tips and strategies to help you manage caregiving stress and improve life balance
- Chance to meet others facing similar challenges and develop a support network
- Opportunity to discover tools, resources, even organizations that can help



Sessions are delivered by an experienced Licensed Social Worker (LSW) in a caring, respectful and supportive environment.

For more information about this **FREE** program, please call 908.497.4011 or email mmcgroary@ccannj.org.



UCICC –CAU COMMUNITY HELP LINE

**DO YOU NEED HELP WITH FOOD? HOME HEALTH OR PERSONAL CARE
HOME AND PROPERTY CARE
DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO DOES?**

Call CAU's Information and Referral Office at
908-354-3040 [X 4272] for answers and resources.

CAU's community service mission includes providing direct services to people in need as well as information on how to locate services provided by other agencies.

This month we highlight **three CAU services available to qualified recipients** in our Union County communities.

1] **Free home delivered meals** [6 week program; one meal per person per day] for Union County residents who are US citizens and their families who need food and who are:

*Age 59 or younger [head of household];

*Living in low income households;

* Unable to access adequate food for themselves and their families.

* Documents and interview are required to qualify.

Contact Gene Tavera X 4272.

2] **Homemaker-home health aide personal care assistance** in home for persons who require help to live independently at home. Services are provided at \$20/hour but may be free for those who are low income and age 60 or over, or any age with a disability. Services include light housekeeping, meal preparation, errands and personal care assistance.

Contact Bill Webb X 4206.

3] **Home and property care services** are offered at reasonable fees to assist home bound residents with yard and lawn care, leaf and snow removal, deep cleaning and clutter removal, home maintenance, handyman repairs and home improvements. There are no age or income requirements for these services and costs are based on which services and projects are selected. **Contact Bill Webb X 4206.**



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



You're The Star Tonight!

Prom Night for People with Special Needs (ages 14 – 21)

**St. Bartholomew Church &
The YMCA**

**cordially invite you
to be our guest at:**

**"You're The Star Tonight"
Prom Night**

St. Bartholomew Church



Saturday, May 5, 2018

7:00 - 9:30PM - Prom

9:30- 10:00 PM - Family Time

St. Bartholomew Church

2032 Westfield Avenue

Scotch Plains, NJ

To receive your RSVP packet,
please contact Francesca Garrard,
Program Director

(P) 908 464-8373 x 2020

(E) Francesca.Garrard@thesay.org

Once your RSVP packet is
completed and returned, you will
receive your entrance ticket.

Space is limited. Spots are first
come, first served.



JOIN OUR TEAM!

Community Access Unlimited welcomes those with a big heart! Due to our continuing expansion, there are a number of **full time** and **part time** openings for those interested in guiding people with disabilities and youth at risk who are on the road to independence.

For those looking for part-time positions, CAU offers available house on the weekends and overnights! Minimum requirements are:

- Valid driver's license
- Access to vehicle daily to use for work purpose
- Original High School Diploma/GED/College Degree

Experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities and/or youth at risk are a plus! Of course compassion for the work and a flexible schedule is also required when providing support to our members.

Working at CAU is not just a job but a career! We offer promotional opportunities for employees, competitive salaries and a comprehensive benefits package to full time employees!

Please take the time to visit our agency website www.caunj.org for more information and current openings. Community Access Unlimited is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

CAU Hosts a weekly Open House Mondays from 4 PM -6 PM

80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Don't forget your resume and come prepared to fill out an application

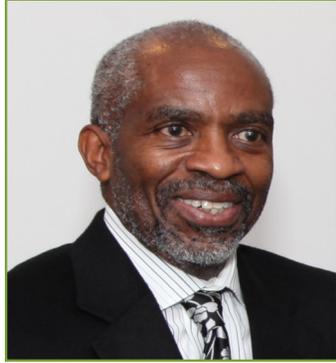
To make an appointment, please call an HR representative at (908) 354-3040 ext 4203. If you are unable to attend the open house, please fax resume to (908) 354-0283 or email to rwright@caunj.org.



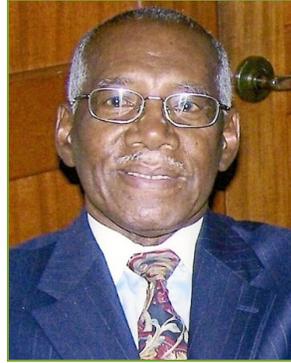
UCICC Outreach Coordinating Team



*Sidney Blanchard,
Executive Director
Community Access Unlimited
sblanchard@caunj.org*



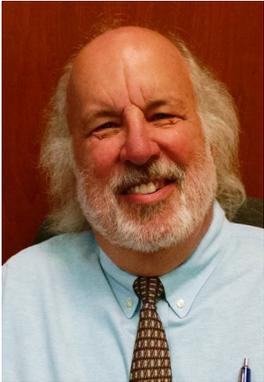
*Roderick (Rod) Spearman
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
rspearman@caunj.org*



*Pastor Howard A. Bryant,
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
hbryant@caunj.org*



*Pastor Carmine Pernini
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
cpernini@caunj.org*



*AH 'Skip' Winter
UCICC Steering
Committee Member*



*Michelle Mobley
CAU Director of Youth
Service Residential
mmobley@caunj.org*



*Charlene Walker
UCICC Administrative Assistant
cwalker@caunj.org*

Join & Be Active Today!

- Attend monthly meetings.
- Invite other community leaders to attend our meetings and events.
- Support or host fundraising programs to support the Record Expungement Grant Program.
- Sign up for our mailing list.
- Share useful information about your organization.

Contact Rod Spearman at
908-354-3040 x 4324
for more information on becoming
a member



Advertise in the UCICC Newsletter!

Have an exciting event or program happening?

Reach out and build bonds with members of the interfaith community in Union County by advertising in this newsletter!

Please send all print-ready ads to Rod Spearman at rspearman@caunj.org by the **13th** of every month to save a space!



Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council c/o Community Access Unlimited
80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: (908) 354-3040 x4324 • Email: UCInterfaith@caunj.org

www.facebook.com/UnionCountyInterfaithCoordinatingCouncil



NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
**U.S. POSTAGE
PAID**
PERMIT 225
Elizabeth, NJ

80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: 908-354-3040 TTY/TTD: 908-354-4629
Fax: 908-354-2665 www.caunj.org

Community Access Unlimited's Mission: *To provide community access through effective and comprehensive support services for people with disabilities and at-risk youth, giving them the opportunity to live independently and to lead normal and productive lives in the community.*

UCICC & STEERING COMMITTEE UPCOMING EVENTS

UCICC Steering Committee

May 3, 2018 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

→
See Right side

UCICC Steering Committee

June 7, 2018 at 10:00am
80 W. Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202

→
See Right side

UCICC Steering Committee

July 5, 2018 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

Full UCICC Event

Green Faith Meeting
Healthy Planet, Healthy You
May 15m 2018 at 5:30pm
St John the Baptist Episcopal Church
2018 Dewitt Terrace, Linden NJ 07036

Full UCICC Event No Meeting

Full UCICC Event
Praise and Worship
July 25, 2018 at 5:30pm
First United Methodist Church Westfield
1 E Broad St, Westfield NJ 07090



Rod Spearman
Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council
c/o Community Access Unlimited
80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: (908) 354-3040 x4324
Email: rspearman@caunj.org or UCInterfaith@caunj.org