



APRIL 2016

# Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council

SPONSORED BY COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

## Alternative To Violence

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Non-violence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our being.

Mahatma Gandhi

Justice for All

Resolve Conflict

My Story

Growth

Wisdom

Truth

Acceptance

Prayer

Patience

Understanding



## UNION COUNTY INTERFAITH COORDINATING COUNCIL Steering Committee Members

**Pastor E. Crawford**—Chair  
Ebenezer AME  
Rahway

**Sidney Blanchard**  
Executive Director of CAU

**Rabbi Joel N. Abraham**  
Temple Sholom  
Scotch Plains

**Ayaz Aslam**  
Muslim Community Center of UC  
Elizabeth

**Pastor H. Bryant**  
Townley Presbyterian Church  
Union

**Pat Inlarp**  
Dhammakaya Meditations Ctr  
of Fanwood

**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

**Fr Michael Saporito**  
The Parish Community of St. Helen  
Westfield

**Roderick Spearman**  
CAU Consultant

**Deacon Tim Williams**  
First Baptist Church  
Kenilworth

**Elder Arthur "Skip" Winter**  
Cranford Presbyterian Church  
Cranford

**Pastor Barry E. Wise II**  
Greater Mt. Moriah Baptist Church  
Linden

## 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 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
- 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.
- 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
- Become active with increased publicity
- Build religious membership
- Build support to fundraising events with paid participants
- Create full and part time employment opportunities for congregation members
- Provide educational opportunities regarding entitlements, housing, and other services, to congregation members
- Assist individuals within the congregation to obtain services; for example,
- people with disabilities, youth, people with physical disabilities, or senior citizens.

# message

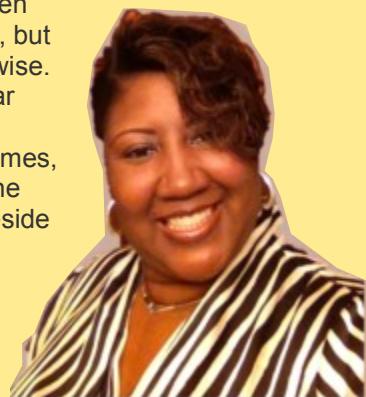
## from the chairperson

### “Alternatives to Violence”

*If only you knew . . . the things that lead to peace.* Jesus of Nazareth (Luke 19:42)  
There are many causes I would die for. There is not a single cause I would kill for. Mahatma Gandhi

As people of faith, we are living in a dichotomy of “best of times and the worst of times.” We have access to greater resources and greater knowledge than we’ve ever had before, yet we are living and dying in the midst of greater violence and tragedy than ever before; more frequently and randomly than ever before. There was a time when violence, tragedy, conflict and despair was shocking, even heartbreakingly so. A time when violence was the extreme and not the norm, but picking up any newspaper or listening to any news broadcast now proves otherwise. Violence and tragedy once seemed to always happen in another place, a land far away, to a people we did not know and never saw the faces of, but times have changed. Times have changed and now we see the faces, we recognize the names, we’ve visited those countries. Yet, perhaps more heart wrenching than any of the aforementioned realities is that those foreign places are now places where we reside and those faces are the faces that once sat at our tables and played in our back yards.

Our reality is that we can no longer turn a blind eye or deaf ear on to what we see or hear. Violence has trespassed in our houses of worship, in our schools,



our shopping centers, entertainment complexes and now even our political gatherings. We, as the children of God and leaders in our communities, must pursue the love of God and reconciliation in the world. Why? Because our pain is only made greater by our silence.

As the rising tide of violence in the world threatens to engulf communities, nations, and world civilizations, it is time for us to become proactive in resolving conflict nonviolently and developing alternatives to violence. As we continue to bow in prayer, let us work to:

- ◆ Resolve conflicts by identifying and reaching common ground.
- ◆ Listen and respect those around us. Understanding that everyone has a story and no one comes into our lives with blank canvas.
- ◆ Base our position on truth –the truth, not our truth.
- ◆ Be wise enough to know that there may be room for us to grow.
- ◆ Trust our inner sense of when to act and when to pray.
- ◆ Patiently and persistently continue the search for justice.

Build an integrated ‘community’ based on honesty, respect and unconditional love.

*Rev. Dr. Erika D. Crawford*

# Editorial

## **Alternatives to Violence Project**

Violence comes in many forms—physical, verbal and emotional, from put-downs and disrespect to the taking of human life. The Alternatives to Violence Project is a grassroots volunteer program dedicated to reducing violence and promoting healthy relationships in our schools, our prisons, and our communities. We invite you to join us in this positive transformation.

**History of AVP:** The Alternatives to Violence Project was born in 1975, A group of inmates at Green Haven Prison in upstate New York wanted to make the institution safer and help young offenders learn how to avoid violence. Knowing of Quakers' reputation for peace work, they asked Quakers who led a worship group at the prison to help them find a way to communicate this message.

The Group's 3-day nonviolence workshops were so successful that request began pouring in from other prisons as well as community groups. Today, hundreds of workshops are conducted every year in the U.S. and around the world.

AVP's global network of community-and prison-based volunteers lead workshops in conflict resolution, responses to violence, and personal growth. AVP also helps build peace in countries plagued by violence.

**How AVP works:** AVP training workshops are held wherever violence is found—in our prisons, schools, communities and workplaces. At the present time, volunteers go into Garden State Correctional Facility in Yardville, NJ and Edna Mahan Correctional Facility, Clinton, NJ. As well as various communities to help run the workshops.

Applying the same techniques pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., AVP empowers people to lead nonviolent lives through communication skills, affirmation, respect, cooperation, community building, and trust.

**Volunteer:** AVP-NJ welcomes people of all ages, racial and ethnic backgrounds, walks of life, sexual orientation, and physical abilities to join our facilitator teams. No conflict resolution experience needed, only the commitment to nonviolence.

**For more information Contact: Anita Bowser 908-322-4408**



# APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month ... but you can act to support families and protect children all year round!

The future prosperity of any community depends on its ability to foster the health and well-being of the next generation. When a community invests wisely in children and families, the next generation will pay that back through a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship. Yet, when not all children have equal opportunity for healthy growth and development — due to experiences of child abuse and neglect — we put our future at risk.

While April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, you can make a big difference year-round through small acts that help protect children, strengthen families, promote traits that help protect families — and, ultimately, prevent the abuse and neglect of children. Here is a list of simple tips that can have a positive effect on the well-being and healthy development of children.

**Encourage single mothers you know, whenever possible, to support the involvement of children's fathers in their lives.** When non-custodial dads work to be involved in the lives of their children, they need the positive support of the child's other parent or caretaker to encourage the development of that relationship.

- **Build community trust and togetherness by inviting friends to participate in a meaningful cultural event in your life.** Helping people learn about your culture may help them understand that despite some differences, we have a lot in common — especially the need for support now and then.
- **Be a resource and “sounding board” for a dad who is separated from his children.** Dads provide qualities and benefits for their children no one else can.
- **Do volunteer work for a youth- or family-serving organization in your community.** Some families just need a little help from time to time, and community organizations are designed to do just that.
- **Take action on legislative issues that affect children and families.** Call your elected representatives, join demonstrations and be sure always to vote to show that you support services to help families raise healthy children.
- **Introduce yourself to your neighbors.** Caring and connected neighborhoods can be powerful in reducing neighborhood violence and supporting struggling parents.
- **Create a “Safe Children Zone” in your neighborhood.** Host a community meeting with your neighbors to talk about what each of you can do to help create a sense of safety for the children in your neighborhood.
- **Ask yours or another faith-based organization in your community about donations — even small ones — that can be made to support families in need.** Some families need help providing for their children's basic needs.
- **Contact your local child welfare and family-serving agencies and ask about volunteer opportunities.** Each of us has a role to play in creating safe and healthy communities for children.
- **If you have reason to believe a child may be at risk of harm in their home, call your local child abuse hotline.** Anyone who is worried about the well-being of a child can call to report their concerns.

## ***Member Spotlight***

### **Rev. Elizabeth Alexander (Liz) First Presbyterian Church of Cranford, NJ**



Liz describes herself as a pastor, teacher, advocate, and community builder. After almost thirty years of teaching Early Childhood Education and Special Education, she became an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church USA where she actively served as a pastor for fifteen years within the Presbytery of New York before retiring in 2010. Recently, she has been serving as Temporary Associate Pastor at The First Presbyterian Church of Cranford.

She has a BA in Early Childhood Education from Trenton State College (The College of New Jersey), an MA in Special Education from Jersey City State, and Master of Divinity Degree from Union Theological Seminary in NYC.

Her experiences as Associate Pastor, Director of Children and Family Ministries at The Riverside Church (NYC) and as the pastor of The Church of Gethsemane in Brooklyn were in multicultural congregations that were involved in interfaith and advocacy concerns. The Church of Gethsemane was founded by formerly incarcerated persons and their families, and seeks to find alternatives and changes to our present criminal justice system.

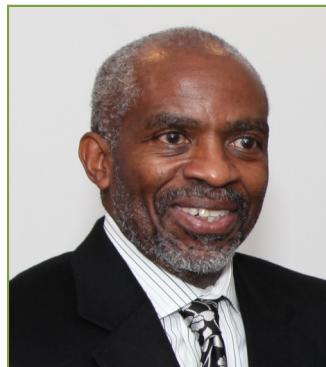
Liz has a life time of experience in education, community organizing, advocacy and peace building. She has served on the board of Justice Works Community, a non profit organization that advocated for women in the criminal justice system and their children, was a member of the Prison/ Re-Entry Task Force of the Presbytery of NY, was a staff person for the National Peace Academy, and participated in an Interfaith group founded after 911 called Brooklyn Bridges. She was also a founding board member for Presbyterian Welcome, a group advocating for equity and full inclusion of all LGBT persons.

She is a parent and step parent and a grandmother to 5 grandchildren. Her hobbies include water color painting, nature study, traveling, and canoeing.

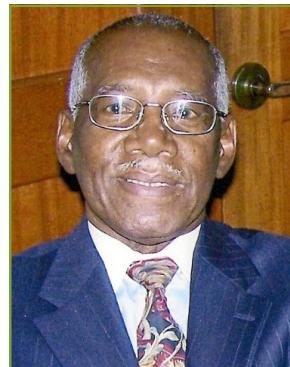
# ***UCICC Outreach Coordinating Team***



*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*



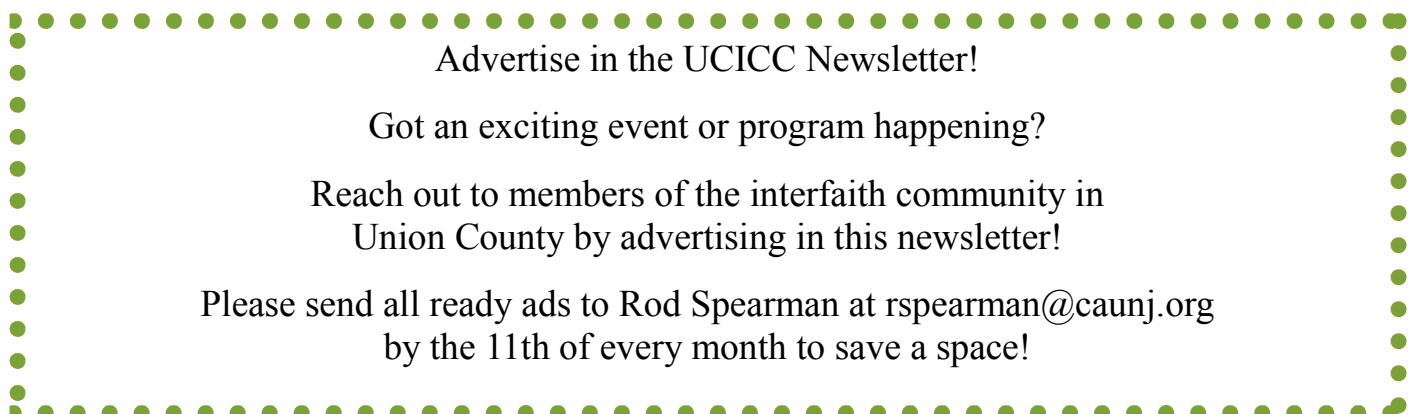
*Pastor Carmine Pernini  
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator  
cpernini@caunj.org*

## ***Join & Be Active Today!***

How can I join this viable group of supporters?

- Attend quarterly meetings.
- Invite other community leaders to attend our quarterly meetings.
- Support or host fundraising programs to support the Record Expungement Grant Program.
- Add your contact information to our mailing list.
- Share useful information about your organization.

Contact Rod Spearman at 908-354-3040 x 324  
for more information on becoming a member



Advertise in the UCICC Newsletter!

Got an exciting event or program happening?

Reach out to members of the interfaith community in  
Union County by advertising in this newsletter!

Please send all ready ads to Rod Spearman at [rspearman@caunj.org](mailto:rspearman@caunj.org)  
by the 11th of every month to save a space!



[www.facebook.com/UnionCountyInterfaithCoordinatingCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/UnionCountyInterfaithCoordinatingCouncil)



# SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFE

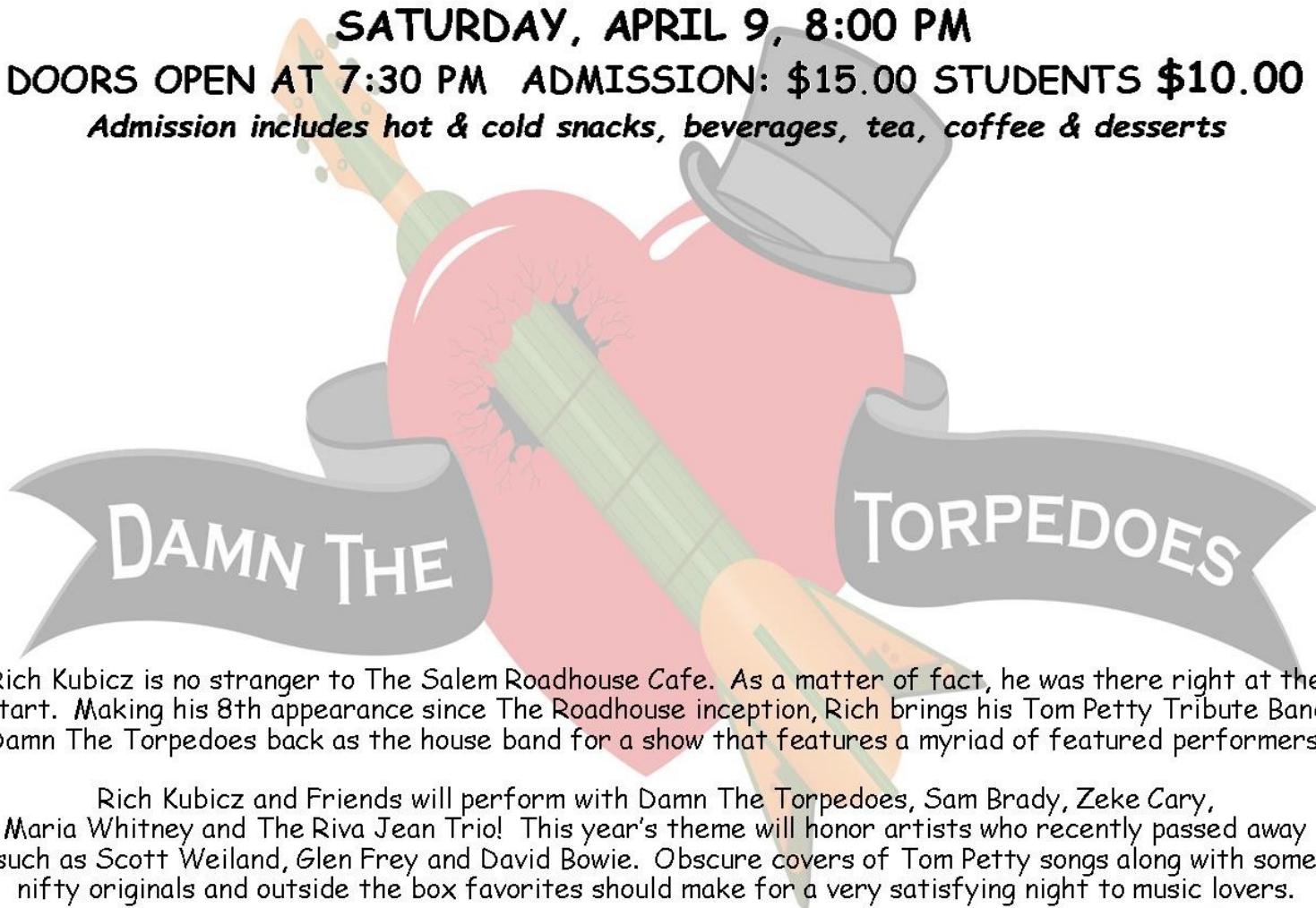
at TOWNLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 829 SALEM ROAD, UNION, NJ 07083  
PROUDLY PRESENTS

## RICH KUBICZ WITH DAMN THE TORPEDOES & FRIENDS

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 8:00 PM

DOORS OPEN AT 7:30 PM ADMISSION: \$15.00 STUDENTS \$10.00

*Admission includes hot & cold snacks, beverages, tea, coffee & desserts*



Rich Kubicz is no stranger to The Salem Roadhouse Cafe. As a matter of fact, he was there right at the start. Making his 8th appearance since The Roadhouse inception, Rich brings his Tom Petty Tribute Band Damn The Torpedoes back as the house band for a show that features a myriad of featured performers.

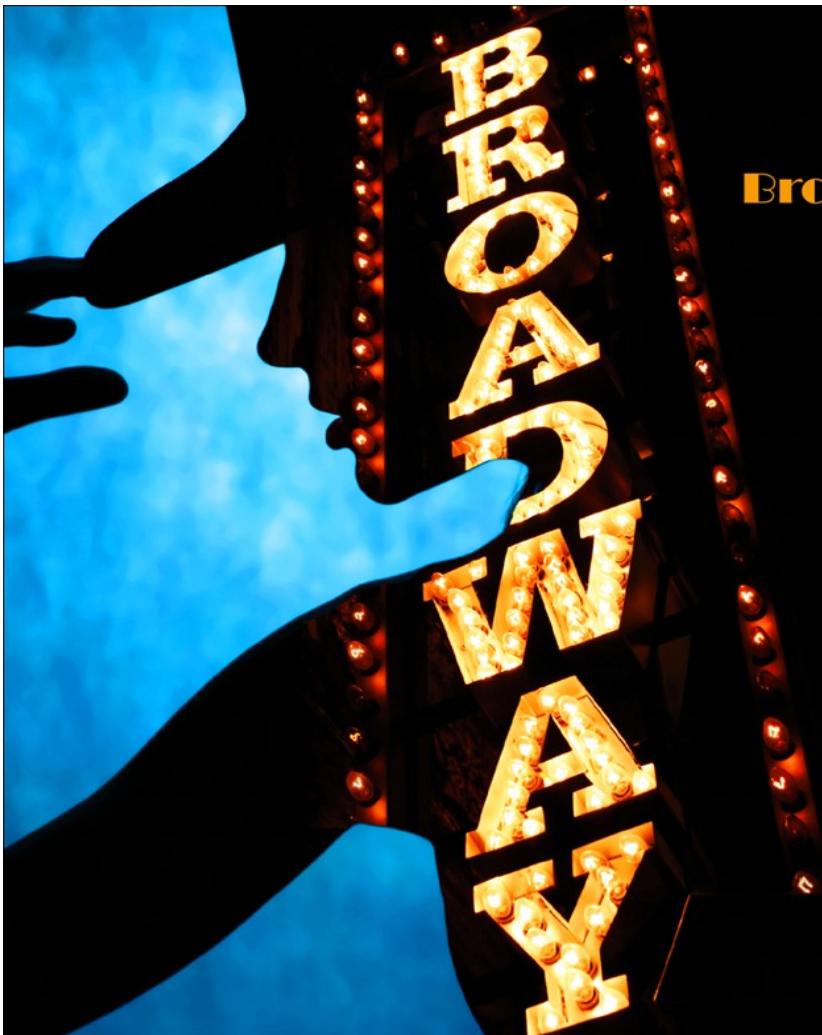
Rich Kubicz and Friends will perform with Damn The Torpedoes, Sam Brady, Zeke Cary, Maria Whitney and The Riva Jean Trio! This year's theme will honor artists who recently passed away such as Scott Weiland, Glen Frey and David Bowie. Obscure covers of Tom Petty songs along with some nifty originals and outside the box favorites should make for a very satisfying night to music lovers.

Original photographic art by **JOHN MITRANO** will be on display at the **ROADHOUSE GALLERY OF FINE ARTS**

Show proceeds benefit the **CHILDRENS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC**  
The show will be recorded by UNION TV34 for their "UNION AFTER DARK" nightly music series  
Plenty of free parking in our two lots and on the street

**SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ 829 SALEM ROAD UNION NJ 07083**

PHONE: 908-686-1028 (leave message) E-MAIL: [salemroadhouse@gmail.com](mailto:salemroadhouse@gmail.com)  
WEBSITE: [www.roadhousecafe.org](http://www.roadhousecafe.org) FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/salemroadhouse](https://www.facebook.com/salemroadhouse)



First Presbyterian Church  
of Cranford presents

## Broadway Returns to Bates Cabaret Night Fundraiser

Saturday, April 9, 2016

7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Doors open at 7:00 pm

\$30 (includes refreshments)

Bates Hall, First Presbyterian Church  
11 Springfield Ave, Cranford  
BYO wine/beer

Proceeds from this event will be used to support  
the ministries of Cranford First Presbyterian Church

Tickets for sale at the Church office  
Call 908-276-8440 for more information  
Visit us online: [www.firstprescranford.org](http://www.firstprescranford.org)



*Thousands of teenagers and young adults need mentoring  
and opportunities to discover and develop their talents.*

**Through the Youth Employment  
Program sponsored by the UCICC, grants  
will be available for youth ages 16-21  
participating in summer employment!**

# Coming in the Summer of 2016



*Funds should be used to further the  
youth's learning in academic, social and  
personal development skills.*

*Stay tuned for more information  
regarding applications, requirements,  
and more.*



**The Union County Interfaith  
Coordinating Council will be hosting a social service  
job fair on May 21, 2016 from 6-9 pm.**

**Come and share information with the  
Interfaith Community**



**SAVE THE DATE**  
First United Methodist Church  
1171 Terrill Road  
Scotch Plains, NJ





Muslim Community  
Center of Union County

*Cordially  
Invites You  
to Attend*



## **Interconnected forms of Violence**

*Presented by:*

**Union County Interfaith Council**



**Tuesday**

**April 19, 2016 at 6:00 pm**

**964-984 Magie Avenue Elizabeth, NJ 07208**

# TRANSITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

The Transitional Opportunities Program (TOP) provides a variety of support services to youth aged 13 - 21. Youth living in any county of New Jersey are eligible to enter the program through a referral by CSOC, DCP&P, or by a self-referral. While living in Elizabeth, youth receive a variety of independent living training and transitional living support services until they achieve the life skills needed to live independently.

At Community Access Unlimited, TOP hosts several events/workshops available to the youth in the community.

- DCP&P Open House – April 27, 2016  
Come out to CAU and learn about our programs and services. Don't forget to take a tour of our facilities. Learn about our Continuum of Care; especially our Group Homes that houses male and females ages 13 -17 in Elizabeth. Our group homes provide 24-hour staff supervision, individual counseling, group counseling, member advocacy support groups, life skills training, daily recreational opportunities, as well as, access to resources in the community. Contact the Intake Coordinator at (908) 354-3040 at ext 394 for more information.
- Independent City – July, 16, 2016  
Youth are able to experience real life scenarios of being Independent, managing money, and the challenge of making choices.
- Youth Conference – August 17, 2016  
A 1-day event full of information and fun. Includes keynote speakers, workshops, food, entertainment, and door prizes. (complimentary for youth whose interfaith organization is a member of UCICC)
- Who Wants To Be Independent? November 19, 2016  
A workshop developed from the idea of the popular game show: *Who wants to be a Millionaire?*  
The workshop delivers a clever way of introducing that "Rules" still apply when one becomes independent.

Please keep your eyes open for upcoming announcements about the above events in the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council (UCICC) newsletter.

## ***The Runaway & Homeless Youth (RHY) Shelter***

The Runaway & Homeless Youth Shelter provides 24-hour assistance for youth ages 13 -17. Youth supported in the Runaway & Homeless Youth Shelter are often in need of programs that will enable youth to move forward to a safer, healthier, and more productive lifestyle within the community. RHY shelter can also be used as a respite for families.

If you know of someone in need, contact us:

908-354-5420 (shelter)  
800 -354-3096 (toll free)  
908-413-4261 (24-hour access)

## ***Respite Services***

TOP also provides respite services for the Division of Children's System of Care (DCSOC). Respite services include overnight, afterschool care, weekend recreational, etc. Please contact Tanya Johnson for more information: Tanya Johnson (908)354-3040 ext. 251.

## ***Would you like to help support our Youth?***

As youth grow as young adults, they become ready to take the next step to being independent citizens in the community. As they prepare to move into their own apartments CAU will provide them with a **Hope Chest** that includes the essentials that will allow the youth to set up their own household. Such items include: pots & pans, cooking utensils, towels, bedding, microwave, etc. Another stepping stone to helping our youth achieve independence through **Vehicle Donations**. Having a vehicle extends their access to jobs and to other community resources. If you would like to make a donation to the program, please contact: Information & Referral Department at (08) 354-3040 ext. 272.



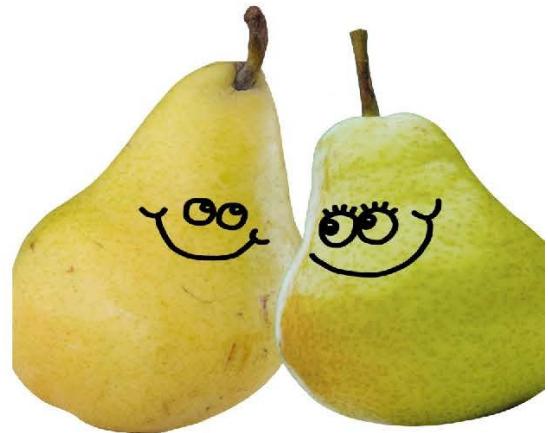
FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# COME TOGETHER

FOR A BETTER YOU,  
COMMUNITY, US!

Join us Friday, April 15, 2016

6:00–8:00 PM — Light refreshments  
and community engagement



## TOGETHERHOOD VOLUNTEERS TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES

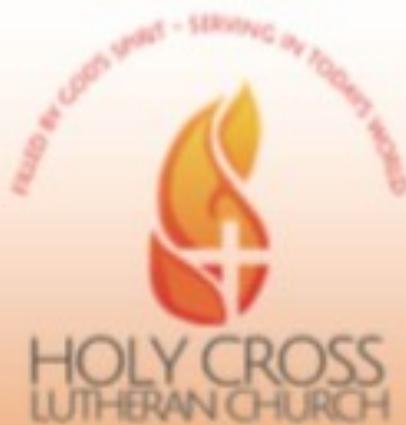
**Meet and get to know Community Organizations and learn  
how you can get involved.....**

Township of Union Community Garden, Community Access Unlimited, Union County Interfaith Council, Backpack for Life, Gateway Pregnancy, Operation Rebound, Mental Health Association of NJ .....

**TOGETHERHOOD IS A YMCA PROGRAM FOR OUR  
MEMBERS TO VOLUNTEER AND CONTRIBUTE FOR A  
STRONGER INCLUSIVE SOCIETY.**

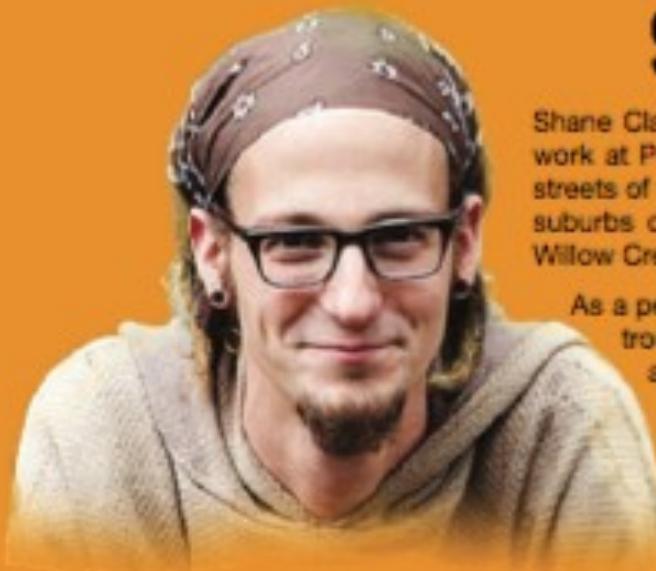
**WELLNESS CENTER BRANCH**, 1000 Galloping Hill Rd., Union NJ  
908.349.9622 For more information contact Alane McCahey [amccahey@tgfymca.org](mailto:amccahey@tgfymca.org) or Paul Mickiewicz [pmickiewicz@tgfymca.org](mailto:pmickiewicz@tgfymca.org) or speak to one of our many Togetherhood Volunteers.

**THE GATEWAY FAMILY YMCA**  
**Strengthening the Foundations of Community**



# INVITES ONE AND ALL TO JOIN US FOR GUEST SPEAKER

## Shane Claiborne



Shane Claiborne graduated from Eastern University and did graduate work at Princeton Seminary. His adventures have taken him from the streets of Calcutta where he worked with Mother Teresa to the wealthy suburbs of Chicago where he served at the influential mega-church Willow Creek.

As a peacemaker, his journeys have taken him to some of the most troubled regions of the world - from Rwanda to the West Bank - and he's been on peace delegations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Shane is a founder and board member of The Simple Way, a faith community in inner city Philadelphia. Shane writes and travels extensively, speaking about peacemaking, social justice, and Jesus. Shane's books include Jesus for President, Red Letter Revolution, and his classic The Irresistible Revolution.

Saturday  
**May 21**  
@ 7:00 PM

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH  
639 Mountain Ave. • Springfield, NJ 07081

The people of Holy Cross Lutheran Church trust in the living hope of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We passionately worship God, follow Jesus, and live in the Spirit in a way that brings the Bible to life today while honoring our classic Lutheran heritage.

[/holycrossnj](#) [/holycrossnj](#) [holycrossnj.org](#)

# ANNUAL IRA GELLER WALK-a-THON



Community Access Unlimited

## SAVE THE DATE

September 17th, 2016

Oak Ridge Park  
Clark, NJ



Ira Geller was a CAU member who tirelessly worked to raise funds for the annual walk-a-thon, always facing the adversity of fundraising with a positive approach. His devotion to fundraising and his commitment to people with special needs lives on through the Annual Ira Geller Walk-a-Thon.



### FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES!

Start fundraising now by joining an existing team or individually on our CrowdRise Event Page!  
Go to [www.crowdrise.com/2016IraGellerWalkathon](http://www.crowdrise.com/2016IraGellerWalkathon) to get started!

### Sponsorships Are Available!

For more information contact Alyssa Mistretta, Fundraising Coordinator 908.354.3040 x205  
or at [amistretta@caunj.org](mailto:amistretta@caunj.org)



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](http://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**  
April 7, 2016 at 10:00am  
80 W Grand St  
Elizabeth NJ 07202

**Full UCICC Meeting**  
**Topic: Interconnected Forms of Violence**  
April 21, 2016 at 6:00 PM  
Muslim Community Center  
964-984 Magie Ave, Elizabeth, NJ 07208

**UCICC Steering Committee**  
May 5, 2016 at 10:00am  
80 W Grand St  
Elizabeth NJ 07202

**Full UCICC Meeting**  
**Topic: Social Service Community Fair**  
May 19, 2016 at 6:00 PM  
First United Methodist Church  
1171 Terrill Road Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

**UCICC Steering Committee**  
June 2, 2016 at 10:00am  
80 W Grand St  
Elizabeth NJ 07202

**Full UCICC Meeting**  
**Topic: Social Inclusion**  
June 16, 2016 at 6:00 PM  
Location TBD



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