

Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council



DECEMBER 2017

SPONSORED BY COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

BEACON OF LIGHT:

TURNING OUR CELEBRATIONS OF FAITH INTO A CELEBRATION OF HOPE

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE:

About UCICC
page 2

Message from the
Chairperson
page 3

Editorials:
pages 4 & 5

Faith in Action!
pages 8-9

Special Feature:
"A Place to Call Home"
page 12

Homeless Sabbath & Vigil
Pages 14-16

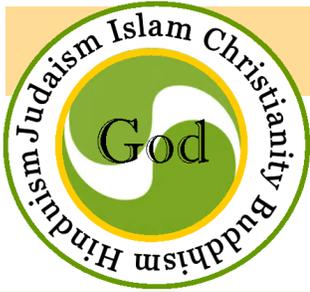


As people of faith we all called to serve the poor, the homeless, the sick, the hungry...

2nd Annual Homeless Sabbath & Homeless Persons' Vigil

Pray for the homeless December 15-17 and then join us for an Interfaith Service on December 21st at 7PM.
First Presbyterian Church
Cranford, NJ

(see pages 14-16)



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

Pastor E. Crawford—Chair Emeritus
Ebenezer AME
Rahway

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

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

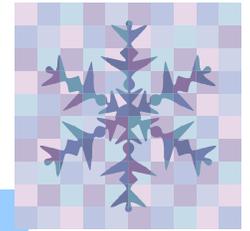
Father Michael Saporito
The Parish Community of St. Helen
Westfield

Roderick Spearman
CAU Consultant

Reverend Ronald C. Thomas
Fountain Baptist Church
Summit

Elder Arthur “Skip” Winter
Cranford Presbyterian Church
Cranford

message



from the chairperson Emeritus

A bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make the turn - Author unknown

There are times in life when we reach a fork in the road and we are gifted and challenged by an opportunity to choose which road to travel. However, there are other times when we reach a bend in the road and the only choice available is whether we make the turn and stay on the road or fail to turn and go our own way.



The bend in the road may be a loss of employment, the transition of a loved one, sickness in our bodies or the disappointment of life not going the way we planned. Bends in the road are inevitable, inescapable, imminent, and impending. Bends in the road are not promised to happen when we are most prepared for them or most able to deal with them. They happen during Holidays, happen during joyful occasions and happen at the height of success. So what do we do when we get to the unforeseen bends in life's roads?

Do we abandon our faith, miss the bend and go our own way because this is not what we expected? Do we fail to make the turn knowing that this will subject us to wilderness, pitfalls and hidden snares? Do we follow the bend in the road with faith not knowing where the road will lead but knowing that the God will be with us on the road?

As we journey towards the end of the year, making stops through Holy Days and Holidays reflecting on days ahead and days gone by, let us remain on the road encouraged by the promises of God and the testimonies of our faith. No matter how sharp the bend in the road maybe, no matter how many bends we find on our road, let us remember that every time we wake up we've been given the gift of life and the opportunity to follow God into our destiny. So in all that we celebrate this season, let us celebrate the gift of life and the love of a God that will be with us through every twist and turn of life.

Rev. Dr. Erika D. Crawford

Editorial

Building a Place to Call Home

Catherine Felegi

First Presbyterian Church, Cranford NJ
Operation Warm Heart Coordinator

On the night of January 24, 2017, 475 people, including 55 people without shelter, experienced homelessness in Union County, according to NJ Counts, the Point-In-Time Count.¹ With the average housing price and real estate tax going up by as much as 12.9% as of 2016 over the short time period of only four years² and expensive luxury apartment complexes becoming more the norm than the exception, it becomes increasingly evident that something must be done.

Unfortunately, the bigger question is *what* can be done? We have all witnessed the plague of homelessness on a first-hand basis, whether that is passing the misshapen bulk of blankets on the street concealing a figure who is napping against the wall of a business, a woman nursing a cup of coffee at a local business for over three hours or a man looking down sullenly at his Styrofoam cup, gingerly holding a rough cardboard sign with the words “God Bless” scrawled across in Sharpie. It brings a sense of hopelessness. To paraphrase Deuteronomy 15:11, the poor will always be here anyway. What can we do?

The answer is simple and yet complicated at the same time. The main driver of homelessness is that individuals cannot find housing that they can afford. Yes, other factors, like chronic illness, domestic violence, various addictions, and systemic inequalities do play their respective roles. But after the 2008 recession, foreclosure crisis and Superstorm Sandy, communities are still struggling to rebuild,³ and an ease of having housing that people can actually pay for will help solve most of the homeless crisis. This will allow for the individual to resolve their auxiliary issues that keep them in the cycle of homelessness, as their biggest need – shelter – is cared for.

The only way to achieve affordable housing is to keep talking about it. Sound like a broken record. Call your policy makers and motivate politicians at all levels of government that when they craft budgets, they should keep their neighbors without shelters in mind. Start the conversation at your house of worship and mention how with housing that people could afford, we could solve many of the ills associated with homelessness. Multiple non-profit agencies and interfaith organizations are joining the conversation on the first annual Homeless Sabbath Weekend Dec 15-17, speaking out and praying that homelessness will end in Union county and in the world. If we all keep joining together, we have the potential to go from a soft din to a loud rumble of thunder, demanding change and reform. Go to the Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day Vigil at the First Presbyterian Church of Cranford (11 Springfield Ave, Cranford) on Dec 21, 7PM to bear witness to those who passed due to lack of shelter. Show to those on the streets that they are more than the blankets they wrap around them to keep out the chill, more than the addictions that they nurse, more than the plights they endure. They are people, they are remembered, and they are loved.

In the meantime, while work is done to get affordable housing, individuals are still remaining on the street, which requires more short-term solutions to be set up while the larger issue is addressed. Though controversial, the rapid re-housing model, in which individuals are given short-term rental assistance and services, has proven to be effective as people use their time in stable conditions to become self-sufficient and stay housed. After all, to ask someone to remain homeless while also working on the issues that led them to be homeless in the first place is the equivalent to asking them to move a mountain with only a sand castle bucket and plastic shovel. The method, though less expensive than other interventions,⁴ is still viewed in distain since it appears to be an easy kick-back that the working man and woman will need to pay for. But the combination of rapid re-housing, rental assistance and case management can be the first step to reaching zero homelessness.

‘Building a Place to Call to Call Home’



Then there is the crisis response, increasing income and easing unemployment. Union county has agencies that help – Linden First, Operation Warm Heart, FISH Hospitality, Community Access Unlimited, soup kitchens, shelters – but the funding is limited, continually cut by the powers that be and increasing the burden on donations and the already stifled staff of these organizations. Build awareness for these organizations and do not be afraid to give. Donate your time, energy, money, items, whatever you can. If you work in the HR department or you know of a job posting, don't be afraid to reach out to a non-profit and ask if they have someone in need of work. All gifts are always appreciated, and you will be quite literally saving a life. Though these avenues are still temporary and short-term, they could build progress for the future of an individual who will rise from homelessness as a direct effect of your help.

Yes, it is true, the poor will always be here anyway. But remember the last part of that verse – “Therefore, I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.” So be openhanded, however that may appear. Whether through speaking up and rallying around the cause and demanding affordable housing or simply being present and assisting those on the streets, keep being openhanded and one day, we will see an end to homelessness.

References:

¹Monarch Housing Associates. “NJ Counts! Union County’s 2016 Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless”. Monarch Housing Associates. 24 Jan 2017. <https://monarchhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/njcounts17/2017PITReportUnion.pdf>. Accessed 15 Nov 2017.

²UCEDC. “Union County, NJ PROFILE 2017”. UCEDC. Jun 2017. <https://ucedc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2017-Union-County-Economic-and-Demographic-Profile-Added-back-page.pdf>. Accessed 15 Nov 2017.

³Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey. “Build a Thriving New Jersey”. Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey. <http://www.hcdnnj.org/buildathrivingnj>. Accessed 15 Nov 2017.

⁴National Alliance to End Homelessness. “Rapid Re-Housing”. National Alliance to End Homelessness. 2016. <https://endhomelessness.org/ending-homelessness/solutions/rapid-re-housing/>. Accessed 15 Nov 2017.

November Spotlight on Faith

Based in Highland Park, New Jersey, Estrella Sainburg is an Organizer with **GreenFaith**, an international, interfaith environmental organization. Originally from Los Angeles, California, Estrella graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a Bachelor's degree in International Development and Global Poverty. She is motivated by awe-inspiring landscapes, as well as her own experiences and exposure to degraded environments. As a Mexican-American, Christian, she seeks to live as God's tool creating spaces for the voices of the marginalized to be heard and for the environment to be treated with care. As GreenFaith Organizer, Estrella works with faith communities and leaders from a diversity of racial and religious backgrounds across the state to act collectively on their shared values for environmental stewardship and justice. Collectively, as GreenFaith Circles, local people of faith build public relationships, leadership skills, and power for environmental stewardship and justice. By working locally and connecting globally across lines of religion, race and culture, GreenFaith Circles are growing people of faith to lead in defense of our common home and in support of a sustainable future. With three GreenFaith Circles in existence since 2014, educating, advocating, and stewarding the environment, spiritual communities are taking the future of the environment into their own hands. In 2017 and 2018,



GreenFaith hopes to see five more GreenFaith Circles come into being in various locations. Learn more about GreenFaith at <http://www.greenfaith.org> or contact Estrella at estrella@greenfaith.org or 732-565-7740, ext. 306.



Inspiring, educating and mobilizing people of diverse religious backgrounds for environmental leadership.

GreenFaith's mission is to inspire, educate and mobilize people of diverse religious backgrounds for environmental leadership. Our work is based on beliefs shared by the world's great religions - we believe that protecting the earth is a religious value, and that environmental stewardship is a moral responsibility.

There are three core values that guide the work that we do, and define us as an organization

Spirit

We believe that religious traditions see the sacred in nature and that people grow spiritually through a strong relationship with the earth. Through environmentally-themed worship, religious education and spiritual practices, religious institutions have many opportunities to celebrate creation and strengthen their members' connection with the earth.

Stewardship

We believe that our consumption habits can help heal and restore the earth. From energy and transportation, to food, water, and other areas, religious institutions and their members use a lot of resources - and therefore have many opportunities to lessen their impact on the environment.

Justice

We believe that all people deserve a healthy environment, regardless of their race or income. The world's great religions share an ethic of social justice, and GreenFaith is committed to fighting environmental injustice and racism. Educating around the topic of environmental justice and advocating for change is a vital area of engagement for religious institutions.

Religious Services at Community Access Unlimited

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.



Sincerely,
Chaplain Erich Kussman

About Chaplain Erich Kussman

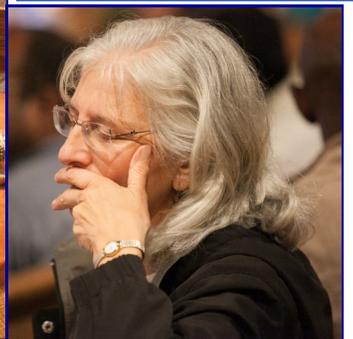
Chaplain Erich Kussman is a graduate of Pillar College and received a Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Studies. He is pursuing a Masters in Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary and is seeking candidacy in the ELCA. He is on the Steering committee of the UCICC. He is an author, activist, and public 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.



Faith Into Action



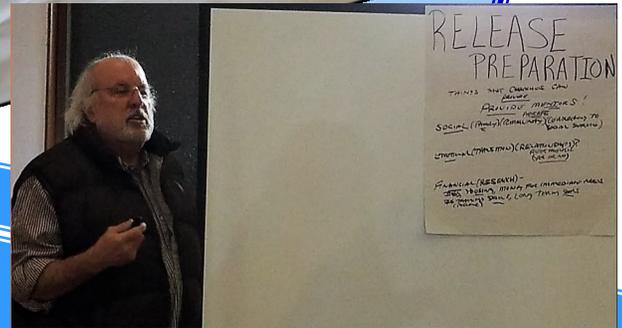
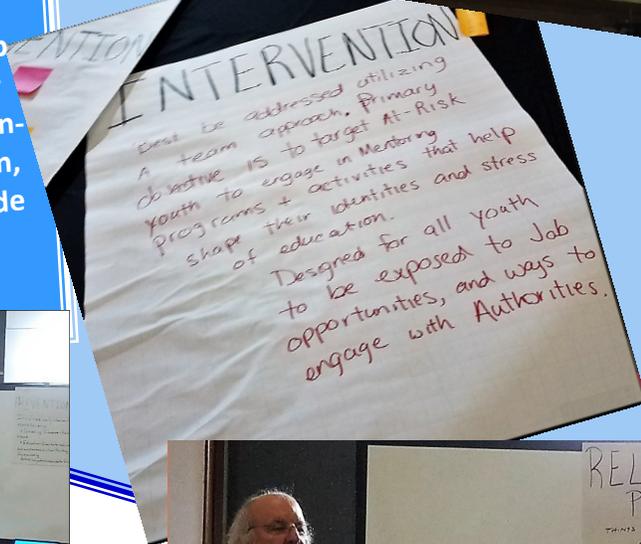
**4TH ANNUAL DAY
OF PRAYER**



A Continuum of Caring Think Tank: "Ministry in the Criminal Justice Context"

11/15/17
New Covenant Church
225 E 7th St, Plainfield, NJ 07060

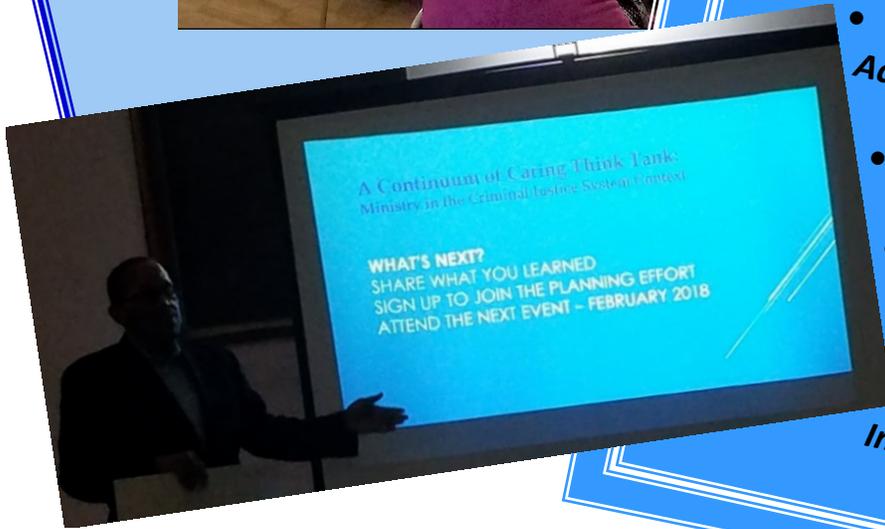
The Think Tank focused on how places of worship can support those going through or impacted by the 5 stages of the criminal justice system (Prevention, Intervention, Visitation, Release Preparation, and Re-entry) by taking proactive steps to provide the support needed.



Is your House of Faith:

- Advocating for Peace, Acceptance, Communication?
- Sharing your Faith?
- Supporting Social Initiatives?

Share it with the Interfaith Community!



Email your photos and a summary caption to UCInterfaith@caunj.org by the 11th of each month.



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.**



A Space for Women

Spotlight on Giving

A LOOK THROUGH THE LENSE OF JOSEPHINE'S PLACE

Who are the women that come to Josephine's Place?

They are women who come to grow....who come to learn...

They are women who desire to become a citizen.....

They are moms of children who are autistic. They are women who come to a support group for them.

They are women who come because they are in abusive situations.

They are women who are in this country alone and want to be part of a community of supporters.

They are women, who come to find their voice and rights, like Lourdes who was living in deplorable conditions. Lourdes spoke to me and I encouraged her to go to The Housing Department of the city. As a result, her rent was put into escrow until the owner fixed the hole in the wall, etc.

They are women who know they can receive help and come. like, Elena whose daughter was going to be deported. They left Argentina because the daughter was being abused. The mother was being charged with kidnapping her daughter. She came to Josephine's Place, was put in touch with Pro Bono lawyers and, after a bitter struggle received full custody of the daughter, who did not get deported.

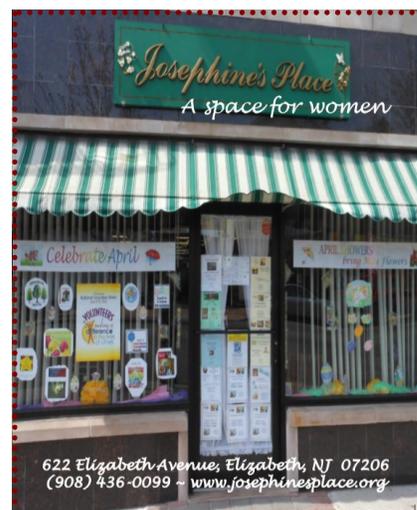
They are women, like Luana, who took eleven years to complete her college degree. She received it in August. She came to tell the Director, Sister Judy and told her that she wanted to give her a copy of the diploma since it was hers. "I would never have completed this degree if it wasn't for you encouraging me to continue on in the midst of my struggles."

This is, but, a glimpse of whom the women are who come to Josephine's Place.

Would your place of worship like to support the empowered women of Josephine's Place during this season of giving?

If so they would greatly appreciate:

- ◆ Monetary donations to grow Josephine's Place
- ◆ Educational Toys (such as puzzles, & toys to improve literacy and math skills)
- ◆ Batteries are always needed to power toys
- ◆ Copy paper ALL Colors for education and marketing tools
- ◆ Gift cards to Staples, Walmart, Target, and Michaels for activity supplies
- ◆ Your time to volunteer for a 1 time project or even ongoing support



622 Elizabeth Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07206
(908) 436-0099 ~ www.josephinesplace.org



The Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council is supporting Josephine's Place. Please help support this cause! Donations or volunteer opportunities

with Josephine's Place can be coordinated through Sister Judy Mertz at (908) 436-0099.

The goal of Josephine's Place is to provide women with a safe haven, a place in which they will be welcomed and where they can connect with one another and develop the skills they need to succeed. Development of these skills will empower the women to realize their gifts and their full potential, enabling them to create a better life for themselves and their families.

The mission is to provide space that will facilitate the empowerment of women. It is based on:

- ◆ Building a trust that promotes a freedom to be open and honest.
- ◆ Creating an environment in which women are to be respected.
- ◆ Providing a space that will be reflective of the needs of women as they themselves have expressed them.

The fulfillment of this mission will result in each woman having a sense of being respected, affirmed and supported.



Homeless Vigil Article Skip Winter First Presbyterian Church of Cranford

Everyone should have a place to call Home. That sounds like a simple concept that everyone should easily be able to wrap their head around, right! Everyone should have a safe, secure and sanitary home to live in, either alone or with family

and friends. Home means different things to different people. To some, it is a place to return to after a day of work; to others it is a place to find a sense of calm and peace, to escape the chaotic environment of everyday life; and to others it is shelter and security. Whatever it means to each individual in their own way, having a home should be a non-debatable fact of life.

Yet, as a nation and a world for that matter, we spend billions of dollars every year on programs that, at times, we do not even understand or are politically motivated programs. Yet when it comes to finding and supporting programs to assist those in need of housing and food, those programs are the ones in jeopardy of being cut and eliminated.

As Houses of Worship... How Can We Move Forward and Support Those in Need?

At First Presbyterian Church (FPC) of Cranford, we have been supporting programs such as transitional housing and emergency shelter and



preparing food for those in need for over 31 years. In 1986, FPC Cranford began work with the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) to supply transitional housing for several weeks per year. Over 27 years ago, the Cranford - Elmora Soup Kitchen was founded and to this day, it supplies dinner every Sunday afternoon to all who need a hot meal. Starting this month, FPC will be starting our 3rd year with Operation Warmheart, a program through the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless that brings homeless men and women to our church each week from December 1 thru March 31.

Organizations like FISH, Family Promise, Homefirst and the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless, are just a few that do what they can daily to assist those looking for shelter and a place to call home. These organizations are just a few of the agencies and organizations that support the homeless.

As people of faith, and Houses of Worship we continue to need to advocate, support and pray for our brothers and sisters in need.

JOIN OPERATION WARM HEART

The Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless

Interested in providing hospitality for the homeless
in your church/center on Sunday evenings?

December 1st - March 28th



In the winter of 2003-2004, the Elizabeth Coalition organized and coordinated a group of concerned churches to create OWH. They addressed the needs of the street homeless, particularly in harsh winter weather. Each cold winter night, a partner church provides a warm meal and a place to sleep for up to fourteen guests.

This winter, we are in need of a hospitality partner to host Sunday nights. The Coalition will provide staff supervision, transportation, and access to our other Project Gatekeeper advocacy services. Each winter, we serve over 100 individuals through OWH. Through our intensive case management, we aim to move guests from the streets to traditional shelter, with the goal of permanent housing and a support system.



ERICA RODRIGUEZ

OWH COORDINATOR

908-355-2060 EXT. 304

ERODRIGUEZ@THEELIZABETHCOALITION.ORG

*Second Annual Homeless Sabbath
December 15, 16, and 17, 2017 in
Your House of Worship*



"We are all called to serve the poor, the homeless, the sick, the hungry."

*Join us for a Sabbath Weekend in praying for the homeless and
discussing our call to effect change.*

Materials for your House of Worship are available.

Sponsored by:



For More Information:

Web: <https://monarchhousing.org/homeless-sabbath/>

Email: Sabbath2017@monarchhousing.org

Social Media Hashtag: [#HomelessSabbathNJ](https://twitter.com/HomelessSabbathNJ)

Or call Claire at: (908) 272-5363 x 234

Union County Homeless Services Resource Information

Prevention Services & Rapid Re-Housing (rent/mortgage/security/utility assistance):

- ❖ *Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark*- 505 South Ave East, Cranford, NJ 07016, (908)497-3900, M-F 9-4:30pm
- ❖ *Elizabeth Coalition*- 118 Division Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)353-4006, M/T/Th/F 9-12 and 1-5pm W 1-5pm
- ❖ *Plainfield Action Services*- 510 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)753-3519, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *PROCEED, Inc.* – 1126 Dickinson Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)351-7727, M-F 8:30-4:30pm
- ❖ *Salvation Army/Elizabeth*- 1018 E. Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)352-2886, Open 24 hours/7 days
- ❖ *Urban League of Union County*- 288 North Broad Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07208, (908)351-7200, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Family Promise*- 402 Union Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07208, (908)289-7300, M-F 9-5 pm

Emergency Shelters

- ❖ *Elizabeth Coalition*- 118 Division Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)353-4006, M/T/Th/F 9-12 and 1-5pm W 1-5pm
- ❖ *Family Promise*- 402 Union Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07208, (908)289-7300, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *FISH Hospitality Program, Inc.*- P.O. Box 5440, Plainfield, NJ 07061, (908)968-5857, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Plainfield Area YMCA*- 518 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)756-6060, Open 24 hours/7 days
- ❖ *YMCA of Eastern Union County*- 135 Madison Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)355-9622, Open 24 hours/ 7 days
- ❖ *YWCA of Eastern Union County*- 1131 East Jersey Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)355-1500, M-F 9-5 pm

Transitional Housing

- ❖ *Community Access Unlimited*- 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202, (908)354-3040, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Elizabeth Coalition*- 118 Division Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)353-4006, M/T/Th/F 9-12 and 1-5 W 1-5pm
- ❖ *Flynn Christian Fellowship of New Jersey*- 1089-1091 East Jersey Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)351-2265, M-F 6-6 pm
- ❖ *Homefirst, Inc.*- 905 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)753-4001, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *PROCEED, Inc.*- 1126 Dickinson Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)351-7727, M-F 8:30-4:30 pm
- ❖ *Raphael's Life House*- 231 Court Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07206, (908)354-4750, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *YMCA of Eastern Union County*- 135 Madison Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)355-9622, Open 24 hours/7 days

Permanent and Supportive Housing

- ❖ *Bridgeway, Inc.* – 265 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202, (908)289-7330, M-F 9-4:30 pm
- ❖ *Community Access Unlimited*- 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ, (908)354-3040, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Elizabeth Coalition*- 118 Division Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)353-4006, M/T/Th/F 9-12 and 1-5 W 1-5pm
- ❖ *Faith, Bricks, & Mortar, Inc.*- 164 East Front Street (Rear), Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)756-5774, M-F 8:30-4:30 pm
- ❖ *Greater Plainfield Habitat for Humanity*- 315 West 7th Street, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)769-5292, M-F 10-1
- ❖ *Homefirst, Inc.*- 905 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)753-4001, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Plainfield Area YMCA*- 518 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)756-6060, Open 24 hours/7 days
- ❖ *Volunteers of America*- 205 West Milton Avenue, Rahway, NJ, (732)827-2444, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *YMCA of Eastern Union County*- 135 Madison Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)355-9622, Open 24 hours/ 7 days
- ❖ *YWCA of Eastern Union County*- 1131 East Jersey Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)355-1500, M-F 9-5 pm

Food Assistance

- ❖ *American Red Cross*- 121 Elm Street, Westfield, NJ 07090, (908)232-7090, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark*- 505 South Ave East, Cranford, NJ 07016, (908)497-3900, M-F 9-4:30pm
- ❖ *El Centro Hispanoamericano*- 525 East Front Street, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (908)753-8730, T/Th 10-6 W 12-7 S 10-2
- ❖ *Elizabethport Presbyterian Center*- 200 Second Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07206, (908)659-2184, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Jefferson Park Ministries*- 477 Madison Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07201 (908)469-9508, M-Th 9-5 pm F 9-4 pm
- ❖ *First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth*-402 Union Ave, Elizabeth, NJ 07208,(908)352-0519, 2nd & 3rd Th 4-7pm 4th Th 10-1 pm
- ❖ *Liberty Baptist Church*- 515-517 Court Street, Elizabeth, NJ (908)354-3362, M 10-12 pm
- ❖ *Salvation Army/Elizabeth*- 1005 East Jersey Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201, (908)352-7057, M-F 9-5 pm
- ❖ *Saint Mary of the Assumption*- 155 Washington Ave, Elizabeth, NJ (enter church basement), (908)352-5154, Last Tuesdays of the month

We are all called to serve the poor, the homeless, the sick, the hungry...

Information/Documents Online at: <http://wp.me/PeqFK-8H0> * Social Media Hashtag: [#HomelessSabbathNJ](https://twitter.com/HomelessSabbathNJ)

Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Vigil



Building community, strengthening lives

Collecting contributions of new & unexpired packages of Pasta and Sauce, Cereal, Oatmeal, Canned Soup, and Paper Towels for the Holy Cross Food Ministry, which serves people of all backgrounds in the Springfield Area.

Thursday, December 21, 2017 7:00 pm
at The First Presbyterian Church

11 Springfield Avenue

Cranford, NJ



Homeless Persons' Vigil

Tragically, some of our most vulnerable neighbors die on the streets each year. On December 21, 2017, at The First Presbyterian Church, 11 Springfield Ave, Cranford, NJ at 7:00pm, a vigil will be held for those who have died in the last year.

We remember them on the day with the least amount of daylight and the longest night because it symbolizes the struggle of those who are homeless, and who often live out their lives on cold streets or in dangerous abandoned buildings.

As people of faith we are *all called to serve the poor, the homeless, the sick, the hungry....*

Remind us, O God, that we cannot rest full secure in our homes each night until all your children have a place to call home.



Save the Date!
January 18th, 2018

You are Invited to Join the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council for:

**A New Year's Resolution:
Making a Beloved Community**

An interfaith discussion on:

**“Uniting the Interfaith and Non-Profit
Community on areas of overlapping involvement.”**

Suburban Golf Club
1730 Morris Ave, Union, NJ 07083

6:00P—7:30P

Dinner will be provided ~ Sign-in begins at 5:30P

Facilitators:

**Senior Pastor Carlos Ceden, of Christ Fellowship Church—Elizabeth NJ
&
Senior Pastor William Ingram of Shiloh Baptist Church— Elizabeth NJ**

Synopsis:

We all have been working hard to make this world, nation, state, and community a better place for all. Yet, many of us are working on the same or similar issues independent of one another. Let's break bread together, discuss our common convictions, and see how we might support each other so that we may more effectively embody the Beloved Community.



80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
(908) 354-3040

Please Reserve Now!

E-mail or phone your RSVP to:
UCInterfaith@caunj.org
(908) 354-3040 x4371



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

The Cafeteria at 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202

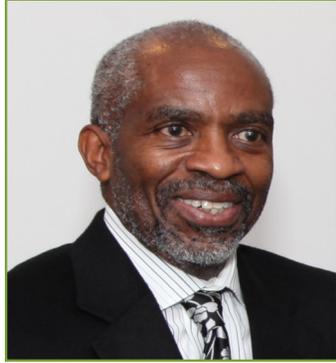
Don't forget your resume and come prepared to fill out an application

To make an appointment, please call an HR representative at (908) 354-3040 ext 203. If you are unable to attend the open house, please fax resume to (908) 354-0283 or email to rwright@caunj.org.

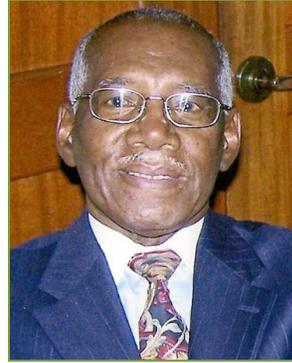
UCICC Outreach Coordinating Team



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



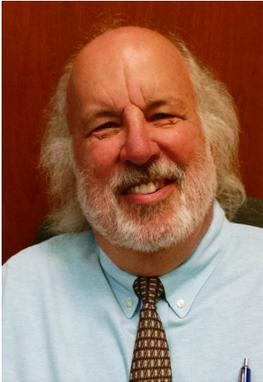
*Roderick (Rod) Spearman
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
rspearman@caunj.org*



*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
cmano@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 x4324

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



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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
December 7, 2017 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

Full UCICC Event
December 21, 2017—7 pm
"Homeless Vigil"
The First Presbyterian Church
11 Springfield Ave, Cranford, NJ 07016

UCICC Steering Committee
January 4, 2017 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

Full UCICC Event
January 18, 2018 6 pm
A New Year's Resolution:
Making a Beloved Community
Suburban Golf Club
1730 Morris Ave, Union, NJ 07083

UCICC Steering Committee
February 1, 2018 at 10:00am
See Right side
→

Full UCICC Event
Prison Re-Entry
February TBD 2018 at 6pm
Location Elizabeth NJ TBA



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