

Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council



JUNE 2017

SPONSORED BY COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

PRISON AND RE-ENTRY MINISTRY: RESPONDING TO THE HIDDEN NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

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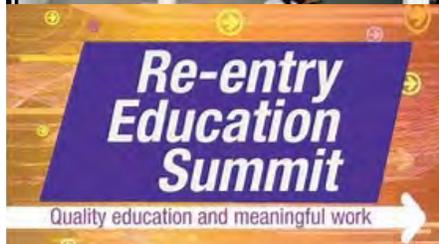
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“For the Lord hears the needy and does not despise his own people who are prisoners.”

Psalm 69:33

SECOND CHANCE 



UCICC FULL MEETING:
Prison & Re-entry Ministry
June 15th 6P—7:30P
See page 7



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 Coordinating 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
Townley Presbyterian Church
Union

Denise Fernandes
La Via al Exito

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

Elder Arthur “Skip” Winter
Cranford Presbyterian Church
Cranford

message

from the Chairperson Emeritus

"Prison and Re-entry Ministry: Responding to the Hidden Needs of the Community"

When we walk the corridors of history, we encounter the names of world changers. Names like Susan B. Anthony, Mohandas Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Jr., Liu Xiaobo, Rosa Parks and Muhammad Ali. These names are listed among those who are credited with forever changing the world for good. Each of their biographies extols and magnifies their great works. Each of them has a park, street, school, building, stamp, statue or memorial that bears their name. These names reflect men and women from various backgrounds with a myriad of motives for their work, yet all of them have this one thing in common: all of them have a prison record.



Yes, my brothers and sisters, when we look at the names of persons who made some of the greatest contributions to our modern world, we find the names of persons who were arrested and imprisoned. Their imprisonment didn't make them bad people, they weren't forgotten or expelled from society as a result, nor do we refer to them as "ex-cons," "ex-offenders," "ex-felons," or "former convicts." They are not referenced using disparaging terms, but rather as heroes, advocates, Nobel peace prize winners, activist, and leaders. Yet, when our loved ones and our community members return from their sentences, they are not extended the same courtesies.

Why? I surmise that it is because we have allowed society to tell us that some people should be praised for the laws they break, while others should be eternally condemned and banished from society. However, it is time that we, as a community of faith, wrestle with this reality: life is not black and white, nor is its absolute. This month I challenge us to look beyond records and reports, to look beyond faults, flaws, and failures and see *people – whole people*. People with hopes and dreams. People with feelings and needs. People who have worked and are working hard to keep their history from blocking their destiny. No one is beyond redemption, therefore no one is to be ignored.

Every hero has a past. Do not let the incarcerated or those returning from incarceration be forgotten. Let us lift them in our daily prayers, let us open wide the doors of our faith communities, let us choose words that affirm and not words that belittle. Let us respond with love and lead with courage so that the grace given us by God is the grace that we extend to all. Proverbs 11:27 says, *"Anyone can find the dirt in someone. Be the one that finds the gold."*

Prayer:

"O God, help me to see the gold in others, not the dirt. Help me to pray for their peace of mind, body, and spirit. For those who lost time, finances and family while they were incarcerated, restore to them all that was lost. Give them divine strength to face every unforeseen event and circumstance. Show them your favor, deliver them from the judgment of others, and restore to them a good name. Amen."

Rev. Dr. Erika D. Crawford

Editorial

*By Rev. Ronald C. Thomas,
Associate Minister; Prison and Re-entry Ministry Coordinator
Fountain Baptist Church ~ Summit, NJ*

Prison and Re-entry ministry are part of the faith communities' response to the hidden needs in our community that have resulted from the impact of mass incarceration, poverty, poor education, family disunification, gangs and drugs. This is the community mission field where we are called to respond to meet the needs of the least, the lost and the left out. Once we realize that serving the community includes those at risk, incarcerated, or coming home we should see that every aspect of our faith is called into action to respond.

When we look at our community as a whole, we are challenged to bring the resources of our church, synagogue or mosque out of the buildings and into the community. "Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." (Hebrews 13:3). It is up to us to get involved and volunteer our time to minister to those in prison. The good news is that the NJ state prisons do have religious services for the inmates. However, when a volunteer shows up, it makes a difference knowing that someone cares enough to take his/her time to visit them. By the way, you don't have to be a Minister to minister. A visit, a kind word, or a brief conversation can convey a message of hope that can make a positive difference in the life of an inmate.

Prison statistics can sound overwhelming and could be intimidating. There were 19,619 men and women current in New Jersey Department of Corrections institutions, serving a median term of six years. During 2015, approximately 9,359 inmates were committed to these institutions and approximately 10,448 inmates were released. As of January 2016, 59 percent of all NJDOC offenders were convicted of a violent offense, such as homicide, sexual assault, aggravated or simple assault, robbery, kidnapping and other person offenses (terroristic threats, coercion, larceny from a person, death by auto and negligent manslaughter). Sixteen percent of the inmate population was convicted of a drug-related offense. Virtually all drug offenses were for sale and distribution, rather than for possession.

"Re-entry" is a term commonly used to describe efforts to reduce the recidivism (or re-arrest) rates of former prisoners. Each year nearly the adult and juvenile offenders released from state correctional facilities return to cities and towns throughout New Jersey. Public safety considerations require that every effort be made to ensure that these returning offenders do not commit new crimes. However, without the involvement and engagement of the public, and specifically the faith community, the majority of those released from New Jersey's prisons will not go on to lead law-abiding, productive lives. In fact, nearly two-thirds (65%) of adult offenders will be rearrested within five years after being released from prison. Over one-third (37%) of the juveniles committed to the Juvenile Justice Commission are re-incarcerated in a juvenile or adult facility within two years of release.

Inmates released from state prisons primarily return to New Jersey's large cities. In fact, nearly one out of every five (19.9%) persons released from a state prison returned to either Newark (10.5%) or Camden (9.4%). Over four out of every ten (41.1%) inmates released from state prison in 2006 returned to either Newark, Camden, Jersey City (6.3%), Patterson (6.0%), Elizabeth (3.2%), Atlantic City (3.0%), or Trenton (3.3%). Plainfield receives on average one returning citizen every day of the week.

The growth in incarceration over the past two decades has significant implications for children and families. An estimated 1.7 million youth younger than 18 years old in the United States have at least one parent in prison, and millions more have a parent currently in jail. An estimated 30 percent of incarcerated teen males are fathers. Incarcerated young fathers have needs that, if not addressed while in custody, during the re-entry process, and after release, will negatively impact their ability to live productive, pro-social, crime-free lives in the community. Incarcerated parents and their children are a heterogeneous group but, research has shown that having an incarcerated parent can present individual and environmental risks for the child and increase the likelihood of negative outcomes.

We also must recognize the crisis that a family endures. Imprisonment creates a double crisis, not only is the individual arrested but so is the family, resulting in it being split apart resulting in hardships accompanied by the stigma of incarceration. To address the hardships and the stigma, the church must recognize that a previously incarcerated individual is someone that may be trapped in a cycle of sin, crime, addiction and self-centeredness, unless there is intervention. Successful re-entry fosters improved family relationships and helps stabilize communities. Research has demonstrated that carefully structured, well-run mentoring programs can positively affect social, behavioral and academic outcomes for at-risk young people. But we also have to remember that the families of the incarcerated are suffering too. You may not even realize that someone next to you during your worship service could have a relative in prison and is suffering in silence.

Continued on page 18

Member Spotlight

Reverend Susan Friedl
Calvin Presbyterian Church, Linden
Interim Pastor

The Reverend Susan Friedl, a native of the North Carolina Appalachian Mountains, grew up in the Southern Baptist Church. After graduating from East Carolina University, she taught preschool in a local Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation and her world was forever changed. Susan felt nurtured by the reformed theology that she encountered in the PCUSA and responded eagerly to opportunities in church leadership. Through the gentle wooing of the Spirit of God and with the encouragement of her faith community, Susan responded to the call to live dedicated to Jesus Christ in service and love through ordained ministry. She is an alumnus of Yale Divinity School.

More than thirty years later, Susan continues to serve the church by engaging individuals in a process of self-discovery grounded in vision, purpose, identity, and call. She asks questions as a teaching tool to promote clarification, reflection, and curiosity. She builds on strengths to help people determine their core values in the pursuit of reaching their goals. Susan models a strong sense of self-awareness coupled with knowledge of her limitations. She pursues a holistic integration of professional and personal responsibilities in her life and fosters an attitude of well-being.

Susan is committed to walking with people as they discover untapped potential, attain resiliency, and develop effectiveness in leadership. She works from the perspective of identifying and fostering strengths within the person and the environment. Her particular strengths include active listening skills, team building, an incisive ability to cut to the core of a dilemma and make it understandable, and a keen sense of humor. Susan is a dynamic leader that encourages personal and organizational transformation.

Susan honed these skills by working at all levels of the Presbyterian Church (USA). She has served in regional church executive as well as local church pastoral positions. Susan understands the demands of twenty-first century congregational ministry as a solo, associate, and interim pastor. She is presently serving Calvin Presbyterian Church in the Tremley Point Community of Linden and is active in the mission and ministry of the Linden Interfaith Council of Churches.

Susan actively engages in interfaith relationships. She has worked with Holocaust Survivors who tell their stories to youth through legacy programs. At the invitation of an Islamic group, Susan traveled to Turkey with people representing different world religions.

Susan is committed to social justice. She obtained a Master of Social Work from Fordham Graduate School of Social Service and is a Licensed Social Worker in the New Jersey. Susan's ministry to the community extends to child welfare and family systems. She has worked on behalf of foster children seeking family stability, reunification with their biological families or adoption.

Her work in social justice extends to working toward the development of national policy. For the National Council of Churches' Health Task Force, Susan supported the work of the coalition to equip member communions to participate fully in the local, regional and national debate on health care policy. Currently, Susan's social justice activism supports the work of Faith in New Jersey as a member of the Clergy Caucus, dedicated to standing in solidarity with our undocumented neighbors and friends and advocating for immigration reform.



June Spotlight on Faith: Lutheran

A religious perspective by: The Reverend Sara Lilia

I come to this work of ministry from my experience being raised by a single mom who suffered from depression after my clergy dad was killed by a drunk driver. I was 18 months old when the accident happened, I learned young how to ministry to those in need. This skill lead me to seminary and to a call to parish ministry. During my first call I helped to grow a congregation of largely moms who were working and raising families while living in low income housing in Camden Co. NJ. I learned about tenant rights, housing policy, and poverty in a way that I had not known growing up on a farm.

Wanting to grow in my pastoral skills I began a course of study in pastoral counseling and became a Fellow in the American Assoc. of Pastoral Counselors. This lead to a call serving as a pastoral counselor, my client population was largely women who had survived various types of trauma. As I sat with women, journeying along side of them as healing occurred, I began to realize that their stories sounded too familiar. Each woman was a blessed child of God, but their stories had common threads; eventually I named these threads as structural injustice. One antidote to structural injustice is sound public policy, so I made another career move.

I was called to serve as the Director of the Lutheran Office of Governmental Ministry in 2012 becoming the third Director of the state policy office for Lutherans in New Jersey. But in 2014 both Episcopalian Diocese wanted to join this effort, so we started from the ground up building a new more complex organization called Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministry of New Jersey (LEAMNJ). LEAMNJ is supported by 5 key partners, the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Diocese of New Jersey, the Diocese of Newark and the NJ Synod. This new venture has been a tremendous learning experience.

Our four areas of focus are: Economic Justice, Criminal Justice, Immigration Justice, and Community Violence. I have broadened my expertise in policy from my beginning in women's issues to now working on larger issues, but I feel the connection back to my roots.

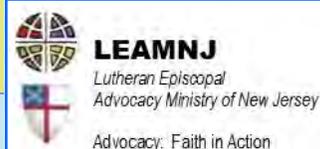
Since we launched this new organization LEAMNJ has worked in coalition to pass several key pieces of legislation; the elimination of monetary bail in NJ, the increase EITC and the common sense gun policy passed in cases of domestic violence to name a few. We are currently working to increase TANF assistance, get Racial Impact Legislation passed in the state, and support housing policy that makes safe affordable housing a possibility for all New Jersey residents.

If you would like to learn more about this ministry and get on our mailing lists please go to the website, www.learnj.org.

Sara's upbringing on a dairy farm in western PA has equipped her well to do many different tasks; it has instilled in her a deep commitment to community and a joy for service. Being ordained the year the ELCA began (1987), she moved to NJ to receive a call as a parish pastor, and has never left. Since that first call she has become a Fellow in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, founded a non-profit consulting business called The Dialogue Center, served as a Solo Pastor, a Pastor on staff, a Pastoral Associate, and as Interim Pastor (on 2 separate occasions). She also worked as a pastoral counselor with Samaritan Counseling Center in Southeastern PA serving and supporting survivors of domestic violence and women who suffer other trauma.

The Rev. Sara Lilja serves as Director of the Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministry of NJ Office. Since coming to this work she is building a faith-based advocacy organization from the ground up, and is the Chair of the Board of the Anti-Poverty Network. She has worked on issues as far ranging as Bail Reform, Justice for Immigrates, a TANF increase, and Gun Violence prevention.

Sara is the wife of the director of college library and mother of 2 teen-age daughters. She is a leader of a Girl Scout troop. She is an outdoor enthusiasts; she loves to paddle, hike and work in the garden.





Save the Date!
June 15, 2017

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

A brief time of Interfaith Prayer

Followed by a discussion on the topic:

**Prison & Re-entry Ministry:
Responding to the Hidden Needs of the Community**

Numbers, Needs and Nuances
Responses – Before, During and After

**Fountain Baptist Church
16 Glenside Avenue • Summit, NJ**

6:00P—7:30P

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

Program Facilitator:

Rev. Ron Thomas

**Associate Minister
Prison and Re-entry Ministry Coordinator**

~ PLUS ~

Representatives from active clergy, prison chaplains, service providers, DOC, parole, Law enforcement



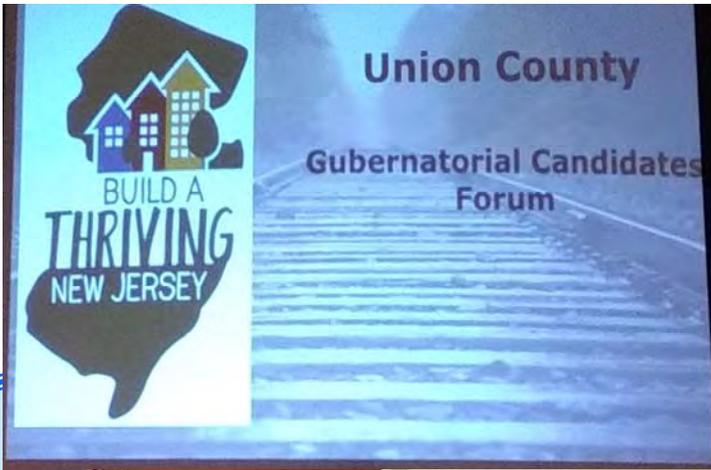
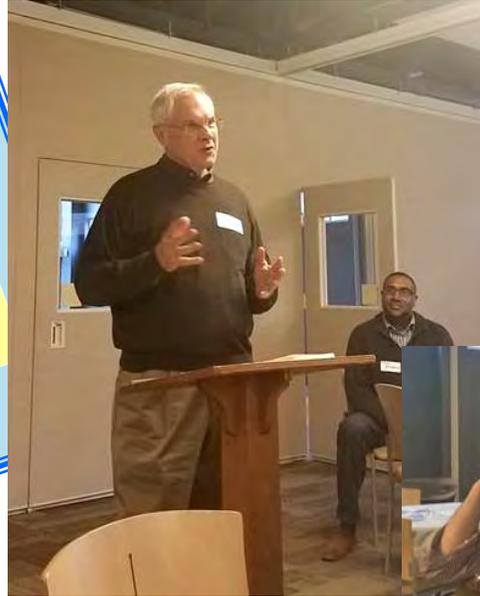
80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
(908) 354-3040

Please Reserve Now!

E-mail or phone your RSVP to:
UCInterfaith@caunj.org
(908) 354-3040 x4324

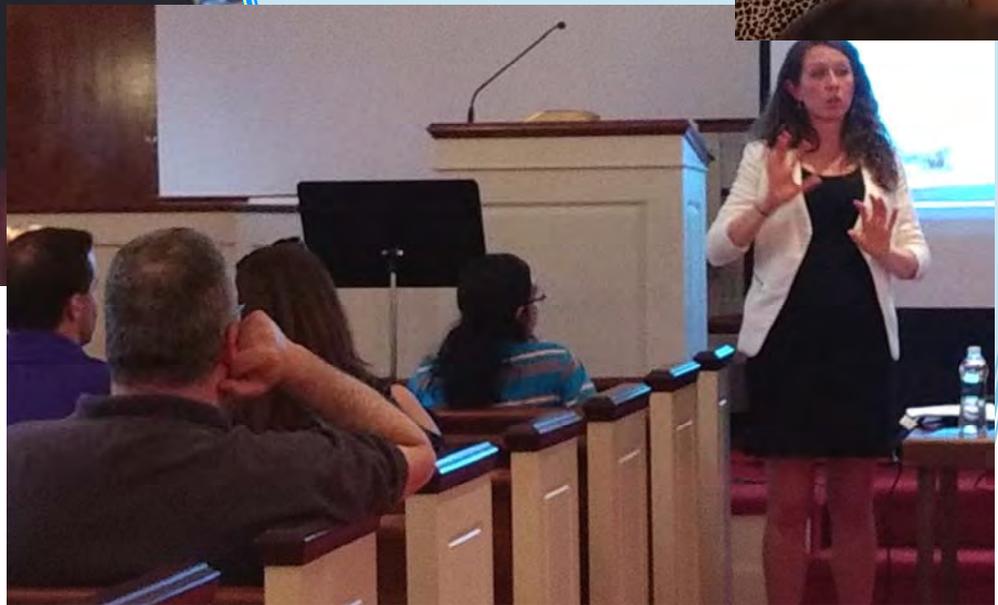
UCICC hosts :Spiritual Roots of Compassion and Justice” on April 6th at Temple Shalom in Scotch Plains.

FAITH IN ACTION



UCICC supports Candidate’s Night to discuss “Building a Thriving New Jersey” on April 25th at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Springfield.

UCICC hosts: "Church & State: The First Amendment & Religious Freedom" at First Presbyterian Church in Cranford on May 18th.



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

FAITH INTO ACTION EVENT

April 26th—Suburban Golf Club, Union, NJ

UCICC hosted its annual "Faith into Action" event at the Suburban Golf Club on April 26th, where over 160 people from local houses of worship and the community gathered to share information about spiritual needs and offerings.





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

Frequently asked questions during Interfaith Dialogues: The Islamic views of Jesus (peace be upon him)

Submitted by: Wail Rasheed, Islamic Center of Union County

1. Do Muslims believe Jesus (peace be upon him) was a Messenger of One God? **YES.** Belief in all of the Prophets and Messengers of God is a fundamental article of faith in Islam. Thus, believing in Prophets Adam, Jesus, Moses, and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them) is a requirement for anyone who calls him or herself a Muslim. A person claiming to be a Muslim who, for instance, denies the Messengership of Jesus, is not considered a Muslim.

The Quran says in reference to the status of Jesus as a Messenger: "The Messiah (Jesus), son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger before whom many Messengers have passed away; and his mother adhered wholly to truthfulness, and they both ate food (as other mortals do). See how We make Our signs clear to them; and see where they are turning away!" (Quran 5:75).

2. Do Muslims believe he was born of a Virgin Mother? **YES.** Like Christians, Muslims believe Mary, Maria in Spanish, or Maryam as she is called in Arabic, was a chaste, virgin woman, who miraculously gave birth to Jesus. "Relate in the Book the story of Mary, when she withdrew from her family, to a place in the East. She screened herself from them; then We sent to her Our spirit (angel Gabriel) and he appeared before her as a man in all respects. She said: I seek refuge from you in God Most Gracious (come not near) if you do fear God. He said: Nay, I am only a Messenger from your Lord, to announce to you the gift of a pure son. She said: How shall I have a son, when no man has ever touched me, and I am not unchaste? He said: So it will be, your Lord says: 'That is easy for Me; and We wish to appoint him as a sign unto men and a Mercy from Us': It was a matter so decreed." (Quran 19:16-21).

3. Do Muslims believe Jesus (peace be upon him) had a miraculous birth? **YES.** The Quran says: "She (Mary) said: 'O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me.' He (God) said: 'So (it will be) for God creates what He wills. When He has decreed something, He says to it only: 'Be!' - and it is" (3:47). It should also be noted about his birth that: "Verily, the likeness of Jesus in God's Sight is the likeness of Adam. He (God) created him from dust, then (He) said to him: 'Be!' - and he was." (Quran 3:59).

4. Do Muslims believe Jesus spoke in the cradle? **YES.** "Then she (Mary) pointed to him. They said: 'How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?' He (Jesus) said: 'Verily! I am a slave of God, He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet. " (19:29-30).

5. Do Muslims believe he performed miracles? **YES.** Muslims, like Christians believe Jesus performed miracles. But these were performed by the will and permission of God, Who has power and control over all things. "Then will God say: 'O Jesus the son of Mary! recount My favor to you and to your mother. Behold! I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit (the angel Gabriel) so that you did speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. Behold! I taught you the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel. And behold: you make out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My leave, and you breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by My leave, and you heal those born blind, and the lepers by My leave. And behold! you bring forth the dead by My leave. And behold! I did restrain the children of Israel from (violence to you) when you did show them the Clear Signs, and the unbelievers among them said: 'This is nothing but evident magic.' (5:110).

6. Do Muslims believe in the Trinity? **NO.** Muslims believe in the Absolute Oneness of God, Who is a Supreme Being free of human limitations, needs and wants. He has no partners in His Divinity. He is the Creator of everything and is completely separate from His creation. God says in the Quran regarding the Trinity:

"People of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, and attribute to God nothing except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only a Messenger of God, and His command that He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in God and in His Messengers, and do not say: 'God is a Trinity.' Give up this assertion; it would be better for you. God is indeed just One God. Far be it from His glory that He should have a son. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth. God is sufficient for a guardian". (Quran 4:171).

7. Do Muslims believe that Jesus (peace be upon him) was the son of God? **NO.** "Say: "God is Unique! God, the Source [of everything]. He has not fathered anyone nor was He fathered, and there is nothing comparable to Him!" (Quran 112:1-4). The Quran also states: "Such was Jesus, the son of Mary; it is a statement of truth, about which they vainly dispute. It is not befitting to the majesty of God, that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it, 'Be' and it is." (Quran 19:34-35).

8. Do Muslims believe Jesus was killed on the cross then resurrected? **NO.** "They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, but they thought they did." (Quran 4:156) "God lifted him up to His presence. God is Almighty, All-Wise." (Quran 4:157)

Happy
Father's
Day

*Father teaches you to walk
Father teaches you to talk
Father is the first firm hand you hold
Father is the first firm slap you get*

*Father is the fear of doing something wrong
Father is the assurance that makes you feel strong
Father is worst critic you have ever seen
Father is the biggest fan who ever lived*

*Father is the past you never had
Father is free experience that you always got
Father is the role model you always trust
But Father will always be your best friend first*

*By Gaurab Mukherjee
Processingthelife.com*



Ask the Clergy: Coffee & Clergy Jewish-Christian Dialog

with

**Pastor David Knecht (Holy
Cross Lutheran Church)**

and

**Rabbi Mark Mallach
(Temple Beth Ahm Yisrael)**

Join us for our 6th year in an informal & enriching series of discussions based on timely topics and **Biblical** texts.

Where: Barnes and Noble, Rt. 22, Springfield, NJ

When: Thursday evenings, from 8-9pm

2016: ~~October 13, December 8~~

2017: ~~February 23, April 6, June 8~~



NEXT MEETING JUNE 8TH!



Questions contact:
TBAY 973-376-0539
office@tbay.org

Or: Holy Cross
973-379-4525
office@holycrossnj.org

PROCEEDS BENEFIT LOCAL CHARITIES

Music with a Mission!

SALEM Roadhouse CAFE

2017 SHOW LINEUP



FEBRUARY 11 - MICHAELA McCLAIN BAND Original rock/pop tunes with a jazzy overtone, her music is hot, intelligent and extremely well crafted. Amazing musicianship on the part of each member of the band.

MARCH 11 - PIKTORS METAMORPHOSIS Fusion jazz/rock ala Weather Report & others, technically brilliant with a HUGE sound, these guys define fusion. To see it performed right in front of you is a treat!

APRIL 8 - RICH KUBICZ, DAMN THE TORPEDOES & FRIENDS Various rock performers in an energetic show that is always fun and exciting. Tom Petty tributes plus Rich's originals and covers of other classic rock tunes.

MAY 13 - JAMES DEAN'S WHISKEY CAFÉ JAZZ QUARTET Pure jazz quartet with big band sound, these are some very seasoned jazz musicians who come together to bring out some of the finest big jazz band sounds.

JUNE 10 - JOE LISA & QUARTET High quality modern jazz with some fusion overtones—more details coming!

JULY 8 - GEOFF GALLANTE & TRIO Geoff's fourth return to the Roadhouse, this young star mesmerizes audiences with his naturally talented trumpet playing accompanied by an all-star backup band.

AUGUST 12 - RIVA JEAN TRIO, the thinking mans trio, with opening by vocal sensation **SAM BRADY**. Riva Jean brings a big Broadway sound to the small stage with amazing composition and performance.

SEPTEMBER 9- RAY POWERS AND FRIENDS Original and covers, rock, pop and other styles, Ray and friends always deliver a fun, exciting and energetic show. This years show will have talented players from all around to liven up the stage,

OCTOBER 14 - MELANIE MITRANO Brazilian/Portuguese jazz that's cool, sassy and sexy. Melanie has captured the essence of the Brazilian Bossa Nova style, with a salsa overtone. Melanie says that she will have musicians from Brazil on hand to accompany her and the band.

NOVEMBER 11 - TBA We're working on something really big here, keep watching.

Shh! The Roadhouse may be the best-kept secret in Northern New Jersey — the area's best jazz, rock, and even the occasional folkie in an intimate coffeehouse venue. The Roadhouse only opens to the public on the second Saturday evening of the month. It's where the area's musicians go to hear other musicians, and you might find yourself sitting next to a famous jazz drummer or a vocalist from Australia. You never know.

Musicians love the audience that takes the time to find the Roadhouse, and when musicians love their audience, they play their hearts out. Why does it take time to find the Roadhouse? We've cleverly hidden it in a church basement, where audience and musicians are within touching distance of each other. The acoustics are great.

The Roadhouse serves real coffee and tea — it's a *coffeehouse*, not a bar, after all. Hot and cold snacks and desserts are included in the admission. There's art, too, because art and music go together. You can sip your coffee while perusing original works available for purchase at the Roadhouse Fine Arts Gallery. Works change with each opening. Show proceeds always benefit local charities. Union TV34 records the shows for broadcast — so check out past shows on cable. Ask around. You might be surprised to find who knows about the Roadhouse.



UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL SHOWS BEGIN AT 8:00 PM, DOORS OPEN AT 7:30 PM

SALEM Roadhouse CAFE @ Townley Presbyterian Church

829 Salem Road, Union, NJ 07083 Ph: 908-686-1028

E-mail: salemroadhouse@gmail.com Website: www.roadhousecafe.org

Facebook: facebook.com/salemroadhouse



Brothers and Sisters

Please join us on Sunday, July 16, 2017 for a New Jersey Interfaith Coalition Gathering and Celebration

WHERE: Colonial Park 156 Mettlers Road Somerset, NJ 07083

TIME: 5 PM to Dark

DINNER: Dinner Will Be Served at 6:30 PM. Please Bring Food to Share with Friends

RSVP: Please RSVP With The Number of People Attending in your Party To:

Skip Winter ahwinterir@aol.com

Ayaz Aslam ayazaslam786@yahoo.com

The New Jersey Interfaith Coalition is a non-partisan network of houses of worship, organizations and individuals with the following mission:

- a. Promote Houses of Worship, non-political organizations and individuals to work together to honor and enrich diverse faiths and ethical practices.**
- b. Oppose intolerance and hate.**
- c. Foster a Climate of positive mutual acceptance and appreciation for all, regardless of their faith , race or sexual orientation.**



Save the Date!
July 20, 2017

You are Invited to Join the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council for:
A Time of Interfaith Worship and Fellowship

First United Methodist Church
117 Ferris Place • Westfield, NJ

6:30P—7:30P

Light Refreshments following worship ~ Sign-in begins at 6:00P
Bring along a blanket to sit on! ~ Mingle with your interfaith neighbors!
(In the event of rain, we will move indoors)



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 x4324

The challenges facing returning citizens provide an opportunity to put Christian values in action. As people of faith, we are called to care for our communities and the previously incarcerated population. The five ministry mandates of the church are to Feed the Hungry, Shelter the Homeless, Clothe those in Need, Look after the Sick, Visit those in Prison. (Matthew 25:35, 36.) That means that our response must be one of compassion, forgiveness, redemption and reconciliation requiring us to see hospitalization ministry and prison ministry through the same lens.

Spiritual mentoring is a relationship with a teacher of life who is able to convey what was learned from the teacher's own faithful mentor, the Great Mentor. Spiritual mentoring is a life shared. A life that is shared that has the courage to say, Imitate me as I seek to imitate Jesus; follow me as I seek to faithfully follow Him.

Advocacy is the complementary response to mass incarceration that seeks to increase public awareness and to make structural changes to limit use of incarceration, address racial disparity, expand alternatives to incarceration for juveniles, address collateral consequences, and promote policies that restore the rights of returning citizens.

Prison and Re-entry Ministry is a response to God's Call To Community that presents an opportunity to join the churches, mosques and synagogues that are currently participating throughout the county. As sentences are reduced there will increasing numbers of men and women who will need the support, guidance and encouragement provided by the commitment of the faith-based community. To be effective, a continuum-of-care approach to this ministry involves partnerships with non-profit organizations, law enforcement, and social services begins with prevention programs to guard against committing the first offense; intervention at the police station for justice involved youth; visitation and preparation for those who end up in jail or prison; and family and community re-unification efforts after release. All these require that the faith community be educated, engaged and empowered to respond.

Faith Community and Hate Crimes: Taking Action

If your faith community becomes the recipient of hateful actions, including letters, e-mails or phone calls of concern, which may be considered a bias incident or hate crime:

1. Call local police
2. Call FBI 973 793 3000
3. Call OHSP's (Office of Homeland Security) Counter Terrorism Watch at 609- 963-6817 or John Paige at 973- 277-0651

If you receive overseas email from unknown sources, please use caution and wear gloves when opening up mail.

MAKE INTERFAITH WORK.

**PLEASE SHARE THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION
WITH FAITH GROUPS IN YOUR COMMUNITY.**

Are Those You Serve Faithfully Fit?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Our physical health is as vital as our spiritual health. Our body is a temple and not our own. God entrusted us with the responsibility to provide food and physical activity to nurture our bodies. NJ SNAP-Ed collaborates with faith-based organizations to help those in need to be active and eat well on a budget.

We Can Help Your Congregation Honor Their Body Temple By:

- **Cooking healthy meals with them, and delivering fun and useful lessons and physical activities!**
- **Training faith leaders to deliver lessons to youth and providing lesson materials!**

Interested?

Contact: Lisa Cheng, Program Supervisor
(E) lcheng@njaes.rutgers.edu (Ph) 848-932-9735

Or Contact: Dwayne Curry, Project Coordinator
(E) dwaynec@njaes.rutgers.edu (Ph) 848-932-9731



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP – and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless
118 Division Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07201
908-355-2060

www.theelizabethcoalition.org

**Do you have a social work or social science degree?
Do you have the heart to work with the homeless?**

We have two positions open:

Transitional House Coordinator

- 24/hr per week/PTO benefits
- Coordinate Transitional Housing program
- Case management
- Facilities management
- Must have experience with homeless and have working knowledge of Spanish

Send your resume to: coalition118@optonline.net

Operation Warm Heart Coordinator

- Manage Program Day-to-Day
- Recruit volunteers and maintain relationships with partner churches
- Case Management with program participants
- Full-time with benefits
- Must have management experience and working knowledge of Spanish

Send your resume to: coalition118@optonline.net



CLOSING THE GAP

Union County College is an open door to a better life for thousands of students each year. Once enrolled, students are guided to complete their degree in two years through the College's Operation Graduation campaign. Since the Operation Graduation initiative has begun, the College has more than tripled its graduation rates and in 2016, the largest class crossed the stage at Commencement.

The success of the Operation Graduation initiative also identified that African American young men were not meeting the two year completion goal. In 2015, the Union County College Foundation, along with a small group of dedicated community volunteers, established the Close the Gap Campaign to support the College's strategic initiative to help shrink the ever growing achievement gap that exists for African American young men and to provide financial assistance to help these students complete their degree on time. As a result of the funds raised during a cocktail reception in 2016, the necessary resources were able to be provided to the identified students and the graduation rates for African American males has now nearly doubled.

The funds raised during last year's reception were used to provide financial support for tuition, academic boot camps, books and supplies, emergency funding, employment or public transportation. To continue the momentum of success established last year, the Union County College Foundation will host its 2nd Annual Close the Gap Cocktail Reception on Wednesday, July 19, 2017, in the Victor M. Richel Student Commons at the College's Cranford campus. This year's special honorary guest will be New York Giants Linebacker Carl Banks. Since leaving football in 1995, Banks has become a successful businessman and is now president of his own clothing line, G-III Sports by Carl Banks. For more information on how you can support this campaign, please contact the Foundation office at (908) 709-7505 or email foundation@ucc.edu.



SAVE THE DATE!

Day of Prayer and Reflection: Unifying Our Community Through Prayer



Union County Day of Prayer

October 24, 2017

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM



The Parish Community of St. Helen
1600 Rahway Avenue, Westfield, NJ
07090



*Working to facilitate the building of bonds within the interfaith community,
promoting the respect, inclusion and welcoming of others.*

Sponsored by:
Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council
and Community Access Unlimited

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

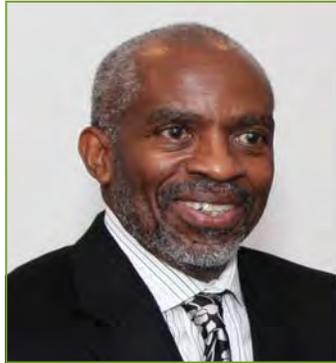
To make an appointment, please call an HR representative at (908) 354-3040 ext 203. If you are unable to attend the open house, please fax resume to (908) 354-0283 or email to rwright@caunj.org.



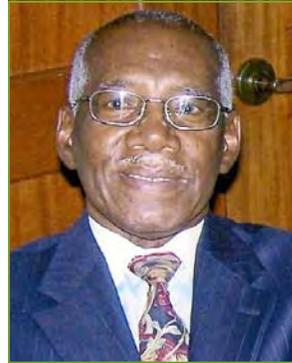
UCICC Outreach Coordinating Team



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



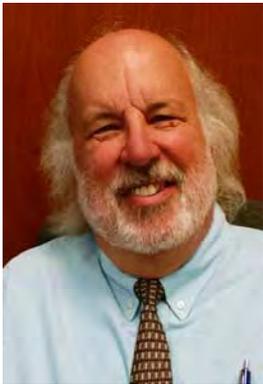
*Roderick (Rod) Spearman
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
rspearman@caunj.org*



*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*



*Cynthia Manno
UCICC Administrative Assistant
cmanno@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.

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
June 1, 2017 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

Full UCICC Event
Prison & Re-Entry Ministry:
Ministering to the Hidden Needs of the Community
June 15, 2017 - 6 -7:30 PM
Fountain Baptist Church
16 Glenside Avenue Summit ,NJ

UCICC Steering Committee
July 6, 2017 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

Full UCICC Event
Interfaith Prayer Service
July 20, 2017 - 6:30PM—7:30PM
First United Methodist Church
117 Ferris Place Westfield, NJ

UCICC Steering Committee
August 3, 2017 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

Full UCICC Event
Happy August!



Rod Spearman
Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council
c/o Community Access Unlimited
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Email: rspearman@caunj.org or UCInterfaith@caunj.org