

Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council

AUGUST 2019

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WORKING TO AFFIRM THE DIGNITY AND EQUALITY OF ALL “FAITH GUIDING US BEYOND THE HEADLINES”

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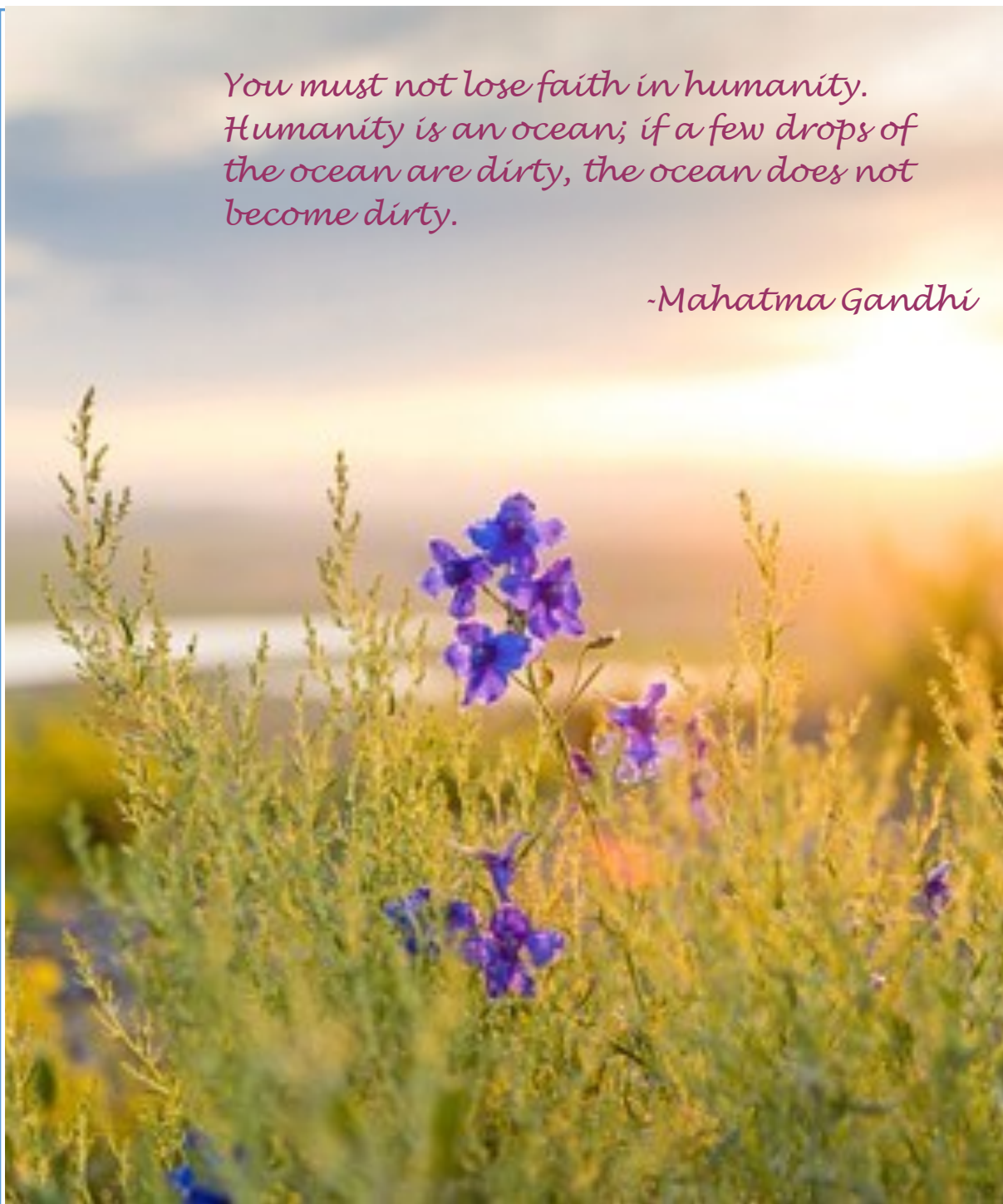
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*You must not lose faith in humanity.
Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of
the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not
become dirty.*

-Mahatma Gandhi





UNION COUNTY INTERFAITH COORDINATING COUNCIL Steering Committee Members

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First Baptist Church
Kenilworth

Sidney Blanchard
Associate Executive Director of Community
Relations— CAU

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CAU Religious Services

Michelle Mobley
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Residential

Pastor Carmine Pernini
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Rahway

Father Michael Saporito
The Parish Community of St. Helen
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Roderick Spearman
CAU Consultant

Reverend Ronald C. Thomas
Fountain Baptist Church
Summit

Elder Arthur "Skip" Winter
Cranford Presbyterian Church
Cranford

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.

UCICC statement:

By: Reverend Carmine Pernini
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rahway

As people of faith, concern, and empathy, the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council condemns the senseless violence that has been perpetrated on the El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio communities. Diversity and inclusion are not simply words from our mission statement, but a way that we as an interfaith community have sought to exist with one another in the County of Union. Disregard for any life breaks the societal bonds that hold communities together. The UCICC not only condemns the horrific violence but also the attempt to blame the cause of such wanton disregard for human life on “mental illness,” “video games,” and “entertainment.” Until we face up to our rampant gun violence problem and emboldened captives to White Supremacist/Nationalistic/Identitarian ideologies we will get nowhere in this cycle of death, confusion, “thoughts and prayers,” and finally cultural amnesia. Professor of Ethics at Yale Divinity School, Miroslav Volf, said, “There is something deeply hypocritical about praying for a problem you are unwilling to resolve.” We at the UCICC find prayer and meditation to be central aspects of our unity, yet prayer alone is not enough to combat the rising tide of hate sweeping the US and globe nor to foster the political will to propose policy solutions to this public epidemic. We condemn White Supremacy along with rhetoric which borrows themes from Supremacists which denigrate non-whites, inclusivity, diversity, and global interconnectedness. We condemn opponents of gun control reform and those who sow confusion by laying blame for gun violence on the mentally ill, gamers, and the entertainment industry. We encourage you all to call and meet with elected officials to demand that the Senate vote on the House Bill called the “Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019” as well as ask for Congressional Hearings on the threat of White Supremacy to our communities.

Join us and people of faith across the United States for a Week of Action from August 11-18 where we and hundreds of others will be preaching about peace, praying for those affected by gun violence, and action where you are invited to contact your US Senators advocating for funding and policies to address this Public Health Issue.

UNION COUNTY INTERFAITH COORDINATING COUNCIL

ucinterfaith@caunj.org - 908-354-3040 ext. 4324



Faith in Action

PICTURED

- Lights for Liberty: A Vigil to End Human Concentration Camps was held in over 600 locations across the country. People of faith and good conscience showed up in large numbers to express their concerns with immigration detention asking for policy changes.



Faith in Action



Above: Belinda Malave from the New American Movement for People with Disabilities speaking at the vigil held outside the detention center in Elizabeth, NJ.

"Somebody is hurting my people and I can't be silent. I have different abilities just like many of those migrating to the US. I need someone to support me in my daily life. I rely on doctors and medications every day. If I lived in another country, I might not be able to have my basic needs met to just live. I might be facing constant abuse and neglect in that country. Guess what? I would leave that country by whatever means I could. If I was a child my family would decide to leave. Well my brothers and sisters are doing just that. They are leaving by any means that they can. They are being abused and threatened with violence on the way here. They are being left to die on their travels. If they are so lucky to make it through this journey they are not being treated with any humanity. They might not have any accessible bathrooms. Even though the law calls for accommodations they are being denied and placed in solitary confinement. If they are a child, they are being separated from their families placed in cages and medicated. Where is our humanity. We have fought long and hard in this country to be seen as people yet here we are again being treated as less than human. Our country is even threatening those with different abilities to be returned to their home countries if they get the care they need because they think they are a public charge and won't contribute. We are part of what makes America Great! We won't stand for this! I demand our legislators to NOT give another penny to immigration detention. Let disability rights organizations into every facility so my brothers and sisters get the care they deserve; it is the law! We need our immigration system fixed, so lawmakers get to work, or we will vote you out!"

WORKING TO AFFIRM THE
DIGNITY AND EQUALITY OF ALL

UNION COUNTY INTERFAITH CAMP

Join youth of multiple faiths ages 8-12 for
a 1 day camp filled with fun activities
rooted in the LOVE every faith calls us to
have for each other.

Date: August 14, 2019

Third Westminster Presbyterian Church

780 Salem Ave, Elizabeth, NJ 07208

Time: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm * Drop Off begins at 8:30 am

Free Event with Lunch Provided

Register at: <https://ucinterfaithcamp.eventbrite.com>
For More Information E-mail Ucinterfaith@caunj.org
or call Charlene Walker at (908) 354-3040 ext 4371

UNION COUNTY
INTERFAITH
COORDINATING COUNCIL





PAUL SANNER



PANDIT
RAMDULAR SINGH



PASTOR
JEREMY JINKINS



MEET SOME OF OUR PARTICIPANTS FOR THE:

6th Annual Union County Day of Prayer



Striving to Make a Beloved Community

Coming September 24, 2019



PASTOR
RAUL BURGOS



REVEREND
ALEYAH LACEY



RABBI
AVI FRIEDMAN

Pastor Raul Burgos is a pastor, public speaker, business consultant and international leadership trainer for John Maxwell. Born and raised in the Dominican Republic he now currently resides in Elizabeth NJ where he serves as one of the pastors for Comunidad Cristiana. Comunidad Cristiana is a Spanish speaking church that was founded in 1998 by pastors Raul and Kareem Burgos.

Comunidad Cristiana's Vision:

To grow a community full of Love and Joy

As the name indicates, the church is for the community where God has planted pastors Raul and Kareem Burgos. As such they intentionally are always looking out and looking forward. With the belief we are called to be Salt and Light to our surrounding community. Comunidad Cristiana strives to serve everyone regardless of their faith journey.

**PASTOR
RAUL BURGOS**

Avi Friedman has been the Rabbi at Congregation Ohr Shalom since 2005. A native of Detroit, he did his undergraduate work at the University of Michigan, received a Master of Hebrew Letters from the University of Judaism, Los Angeles California, and was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York. Prior to moving to Summit, Rabbi Friedman served as Assistant Rabbi at the Ahavath Achim Congregation in Atlanta, Georgia, and as Senior Rabbi at the Tree of Life Congregation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is a past president of the Summit Interfaith Council and a recipient of the Martin Luther King Jr. Keeper of the Dream Award in Summit. He and his wife Jodi are the proud parents of Gabi, Jonah, Jessica and Ilana.

**RABBI
AVI FRIEDMAN**

Jeremy Jinkins is the Senior Pastor of The Presbyterian Church in Westfield (PCW). He joined PCW in February of 2019. Prior to coming to Westfield he served churches in Virginia and Georgia. He is married to Caroline, also a pastor, who he met when they were students at Princeton Theological Seminary.

**PASTOR
JEREMY JINKINS**

Reverend Aleyah Lacey has assisted Community Access Unlimited (CAU) with helping the people with different abilities and at risk youth, find their spiritual path for over 30 yrs. She held a role as CAU's Information and Referral Coordinator where she was able to use her passion to help others. In that role she was able to assist homeless persons, the abused and/or neglected, and those whom are often marginalized, navigate through the systems of community supports. Reverend Lacey also was the Coordinator of Community Bridge Building organizing programs such as "Understand Religious Differences" to educate about different religions. Although she is retired she holds weekly interfaith religious services with the members of CAU and greater community every Saturday. Reverend Lacey is a Local Elder of Mount Teman AME church in Elizabeth, NJ.

**REVEREND
ALEYAH LACEY**

Pandit Ramdular Singh originally migrated from Guyana in 1987, and has been living in Piscataway, NJ over the past thirty years. He has been a Hindu Priest for over thirty-five years, and serves as the spiritual mentor and President of the Nirvana Humanitarian Foundation (NHF), a New York based 501 C3 charitable institution.

He started as a community leader who promoted cultural and religious activities while professionally functioning as a senior high school teacher, a position he held for twenty years before migrating to the US. In the US, he was employed as a Senior Credit Analyst in the International Banking industry where he worked for twenty-one years while pursuing a vocation as a Hindu priest. As a Hindu priest he performs a wide range of religious rituals, serves as a marriage officiant, and offers sermons in temples and private homes in the US, Canada, and Guyana.

**PANDIT
RAMDULAR SINGH**

Paul Sanner is the Director of Music and Organist at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield. He directs the adult, children's and handbell choirs and occasionally leads worship. Prior to joining the staff at PCW, he was the Minister of Music for many years at Second Presbyterian Church in New York City. Paul and his family live in West Orange, NJ along with their small but mighty dog.

PAUL SANNER

LOVE THE IMMIGRANT

Rabbi Avi Friedman
Congregation Ohr Shalom



There once was a poor man with a wife and three children who managed to put enough food on the table by bootlegging. He illegally supplied alcohol to the people of his village without paying the appropriate taxes to the government. When the authorities found out, they were not happy. He was arrested. He – and his family – knew that his crime was punishable by years in prison or worse – conscription in the army. So, his family scraped together enough money for him to post bail and he promptly disappeared. Instead of facing the charges against him, he made his way to the US, where he started a new life.

It took a number of years, but eventually he was able to bring his wife and three children to America to join him. They added a fourth child upon their reunion in this country. Two of the four children served in the US Armed Forces. Although neither of the parents had attended anything beyond grade school, two of their four children attended college and graduate school. The

other two married college graduates. Although they didn't live to see it, all of their grandchildren attended college. I know this because I am one of those grandchildren.

My father was the baby born here in this country after the escape from Poland. If he were born today under those circumstances, he'd be called an anchor baby. Back then, he was simply called an American.

I tell this story not because it is unique. My hunch is that just about every American Jewish family has a similar immigration story to tell. I tell this story because we cannot have an honest conversation about immigration today without first considering our own families' immigration experience. About 98% of American citizens are the descendants of immigrants.

The arrival of Jews in America escaping persecution in places like Russia and Romania in the late 18th and early 19th centuries contributed to American citizens establishing organizations like the Immigration Restriction League. The IRL advocated for immigration reform. This reform arrived and it was called the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, which passed the Senate by a vote of 78-1. We know that the quotas established in 1921 and strengthened by the even more restrictive Immigration Act of 1924 were instrumental in preventing Jews from escaping Europe and coming to this country after the rise of the Nazis.

While the word "Jew" is never mentioned in these acts, the 1924 law in particular targeted Southern and Eastern Europeans. With the onset of the Great Depression, there was no chance that these laws would be softened or repealed. People were too nervous about the impact of immigration on the economy. Besides, the country had plenty of other problems to deal with. As Ecclesiastes teaches: "*Ein Hadash Tahat Ha-Shamesh* – there is nothing new under the sun." This is the same old story.

While one might think that our own immigration experiences would be sufficient to convince us as Jews to support less restrictive immigration policies, our commitment to proper treatment of newcomers goes back way further than the 1920's or even the 1880's. We only need to look to the Book of Leviticus to hear the Bible's view on this issue: "You shall have one standard for *ger* (stranger/newcomer) and *ezrah* (citizen) alike: for I am Adonai your God (Leviticus 24:22)." In other words, we can't have one set of laws for people fortunate enough to be born here and another set for those who came here later in life.

LOVE THE IMMIGRANT

Rabbi Avi Friedman
Congregation Ohr Shalom

Don't get me wrong – I understand that we must have laws and rules and processes. We need to have certain security protocols in place. However, we should be talking about making it easier for people to get here – and not harder. After all, shouldn't others get to experience the blessings of this land just as our immigrant ancestors did?

Rabbi Moses Maimonides – a man who had to flee his homeland of Spain due to the persecution of Jews – took this a step further. In his code of Jewish Law – the *Mishneh Torah* – written toward the end of the 12th Century – he wrote the following: “The love of the stranger who has entered beneath the wings of the Divine presence is enjoined by two Biblical commandments: One because he is considered to be within the category of “*reyim*” or friends, and one because he is a “*ger*” or stranger (*The Laws of Behavior* 6:4).” This is really a rather remarkable teaching.

Maimonides understood then – as we understand now – that people basically fall into two categories: those who see immigrants as others and those who see immigrants as fellow human beings. Maimonides said that it doesn't matter where you fall on the spectrum. If you think that they are somehow fundamentally different than us, then for you the Bible says “Love the Stranger.” If you think that immigrants are just like us with different languages and customs, then for you the Bible says “Love your neighbor.”

Either way, the bottom line according to Maimonides is “Love the immigrant.” I couldn't agree more.



“First Friends of NJ and NY upholds the inherent dignity and humanity of detained immigrants and asylum seekers. We provide compassion and hope through volunteer visitation, resettlement assistance and advocacy.”

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CAN OUR DEMOCRACY SURVIVE

Sean Foley, MSW, LSW



Democracy is beginning to crack under the weight of tribal politics and fictitious news. The causes of these fissures are the result of many considerable causes; political partisanship on the national, state and local level, TV networks and radio stations that are designed only to appease a particular political tribe, and most portentously, social media applications with its algorithms designed to “think for us.” Social media’s involvement has created a society of political brainwashing that further separates us from fact and unbiased agendas. This is what was so disturbing about the Cambridge Analytica & Facebook scandal, for it was not just about the stealing of the public’s data, but using that stolen data to successfully achieve a mass scale societal brainwashing.

Smartphones and the internet have been an immense element for exacerbating our political divisions. No matter what new algorithms or regulations that the leadership team over at Facebook strategically puts in place, it will do little to reduce the polarity of our politics. (As a side note about Zuckerberg’s proposed changes; I personally don’t feel any confidence about his steps to improve his application for the better of society. Any individual(s) that continuously works to engineer new ways to keep people hooked on their application from the moment they wake up to the moment they fall asleep doesn’t get my trust. To me, it’s similar to your local heroin dealer promising to use his product in a different manner in hopes it will reduce suffering in the neighborhood.) There are many reasons for the political detachment we are currently experiencing. For one, the majority of society is just not neurologically capable of navigating the internet or social media without predominantly utilizing the primitive areas of our brain. Upon observation, the internet and social media have exposed how primitive we are in the face of such great technologies. These platforms of communication cause a large part of our society to fall further into their political “tribes.” No matter how evolved humans have become, millions of years of evolution have not prepared us for the power of “tweets” and “likes.”

This new technology has also contributed to a shortened attention span and because of this anything past 280 characters or a video longer than one minute causes us to lose concentration and just plainly bores us (for example, if you are still reading this, congrats you have an attention span longer than the average person.). Topics revolving around politics, government, economic and social justice are very complex issues and without an effective attention span cognitively equipped, then how are we to learn of democracies complexities and not be bored of its details? We simply can’t and it causes us to take a stand on issues that are expressed by the partisan opinions of tweets and memes.

If we are only subscribing to pages and people who think like us, we neglect ourselves from understanding the other side, causing us to withdraw from engaging in any thoughtful discussion with those whom have diverse principles. This act further places the public into a profounder ideological bubble. Yes, I know you are probably saying, “Sean have you seen some of these people on the internet, they are insane!” I have and I completely agree with anyone who exclaims that viewpoint, for there are some people whom are so lost and extreme in their politics that engagement may be pointless. Nevertheless, these hyper-partisan individuals only calculate into a small fraction of our population and if we can personally engage with people with different beliefs, it will reduce the likelihood of more of these extremely biased individuals from falling further into the depths of political division.

To fix our politics, we need not only to be politically engaged and present in the voting booth, we must also learn how to civically engage with one another. It is vital that society recalls how to become non-defensive,

CAN OUR DEMOCRACY SURVIVE

Sean Foley, MSW, LSW

use active listening and apply understanding when we are observing a person's political beliefs that differs from our very own. We forgot this art of civility because of the political bubble in which many of us currently habituate in. Political divisive Facebook posts, tweets and memes are only designed to divide individuals ideologically further. This allows people to become comfortable only with their political allies and political philosophies, which results in people reacting with great sensitivity and discomfort when they are presented with different views. Thus, in an effort to avoid such negative emotions and distress, individuals simply place the person(s) into the category of a "political enemy", and erases them from their technological circle. This allows a person to avoid any negative emotions while using social media and finding comfort in those whom think only like them. With technology advancing at its current heightened pace, this divide will only grow further and our political divisions will be at heights even more consequential and devastating than it is now. This is why the public must take action and learn to get uncomfortable by openly and rationally discussing opposing political views. They must also begin to move away from using sites such as Reddit and 4chan, political divisive websites and from pages on social media applications that are designed to show explicit political bias. Colleges and universities should promote political clubs to host forums bringing Republicans and Democrats together discussing party philosophies to decrease partisanship on campuses. Towns and committees should engage in discussions that can present unbiased dialogues about one another's political beliefs. These actions are necessary if we are to keep engagement and understanding with each other in this time of political contention. In the end we must practice in our thoughts, the quote by Sherry Turkle, in which, she states that, "Intelligence once meant more than what any artificial intelligence does. It used to include sensibility, sensitivity, awareness, discernment, reason, acumen, and wit." Let us be human again and deny power to the machines and applications, it is one of two ways to ensure the survival of our democracy. The other is well, I think we all know the other.

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(11 Springfield Avenue, Cranford, New Jersey 07016) during normal business hours

For further information regarding the drive, contact Skip Winter at ahwinterjr@aol.com, or Jean Wands at wandsmj@aol.com. For more information about the project, or if you know a homeless veteran, contact Operation Chillout at (609) 619-0861, or visit www.operationchillout.org

For more information about the First Presbyterian Church of Cranford, visit firstprescranford.org



Donations to benefit



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MEDICAL ETHICS A CALL TO CONSCIOUSNESS

Rev. Dr. Angela M. Battle
St. Paul AME Church, Kenilworth NJ



As I was doing my weekly reading I ran across a scripture in Colossians 1:16-17. "For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." I often thought this was a deep and powerful scripture. It gave me peace to know that all things good or bad were in Christ Jesus and he held all things together. What concerns me now is what is allowed to happen with all things. Today, the all things I want to mention are Medical Ethics. Paul addressed this letter to the church at Colossae. Paul wanted to combat the false teachings of legalism. I want to combat the false teaching of legalism too, but on a different level. As we know there are some laws in the past there were passed that actually hurt others such as the Jim Crow laws and now the separation of children from parents at the border. And when there is no law that hurts people too! What is Medical Ethics?

Well in seminary, we had to take Christian Ethics. Christian Ethics to me was public policy, the law without racial and ethnic discrimination, principles, morals and Christ. You needed to have a special way of thinking and wrestle with society through a worldview. When I speak of Medical Ethics I reflect upon a set of values from the medical profession that review the practice of clinical medicine and in the scientific research.

With Medical Ethics, Science has now found a way to tap into our cognitive behavior via technology. One may ask how that is possible. As human beings we have a central nervous system which is composed of our brain and spinal cord. Down our backs runs the nerves connecting the signals from our brain to spinal cord and ultimately to the rest of our bodies. Basically, we are now one human communication machine and our central spinal cord nerve is a human fiber optic cable. Human cells are specialized to conduct electrical currents in the body. The spinal cord is the pathway for messages sent by the brain. The main focus of the central nervous system is to communicate between the body and the brain. Sounds far fetch. Speak with some of our medical colleagues at leading medical universities to verify. Microscopic nerves cells collected into macroscopic bundles called nerves carry electrical message all over the body. It carries nerve impulses to muscles and glands. Nerve cells are required for cognitive motor functions that affect the body. This impacts our thinking and behavior. A neuron can transmit thousands of impulses a minute. Millions of impulses delivered daily by way of sensory neurons are channeled directly to the brain for analysis and consequent action. Conscious and unconscious decisions are made. Now here is my concern, they consider this technology. My point of view is once you are able to tap into human beings this is a medical ethics concern. My argument is when you are able to tap into my thoughts, change my thoughts which are a new form of brainwashing or worse yet control my thoughts this is a deeper level of human trafficking. You control the mind, the body will follow.

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Let's weigh this on a constitutional scale. According to the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, it states no person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. If your thoughts can be controlled by someone via technology, that is taking away a freedom or a liberty without due process of law. Invading thoughts is only one aspect remember once in the human body via the central nervous system this involves voluntary and involuntary responses in the body. False symptoms can also lead to loss of productivity. Taking time off from work for symptoms you do not have, medication you do not need and tests that should not been given. Side effects from medication taken leads to other illnesses. Chemical waste of unnecessary prescribed drugs disposal is another hazardous symptom from the Medical Ethics concern. This is a threat to public health. Pharmaceutical is big business. It is impossible to put a dollar amount on the pain, suffering and dysfunction that drugs causes in our everyday lives. The mechanisms by which drugs causes harm are topics of ongoing research.

Another aspect is the mental health feature, while seeing a mental health provider is beneficial in most cases with this new science, we will need to revisit the standards, requirements and certainly the medications that is administered. Going back to the legalism while is it sad to say some psychological evaluations still have cultural bias and some of the tests may be based on cultural experience. There are also other tests with hidden oppressive realities. We may want to look at the insurance concern, the effect this new science has on families.

In writing this article what did I hope to accomplish? It is my hopes that we look into the Medical Ethics of this new technology and establish some laws and regulations. Without laws and regulations, this new technology may be a detriment to society and can be used as retaliation and for adverse actions. I have mentioned only a few of the economic injustices. What does the state and the federal government plan to do now that they know about this new technology and how it is being used? Our mission should be to expose, administer and ensure continued compliance and protection for the people. Our purpose was to raise awareness and request transparency. We need to review the impact that medical ethics have on society. Supply all the evidence, analysis, and research to bring the experts, doctors, and other essential professionals to the table.

Our goal is to have our legislators commit to a comprehensive plan and strategy to address these new issues. We need to reengineer for best business practice the methodologies, assessments and cases law that needs to be legislated. Our objective is to acknowledge this technology exists and have timelines for the legislation. The fact is this technology now sits in the hands of Homeland Security and certain Police agencies. Let's move this medical technology to where it belongs in the hands of medical professionals to oversee organizations such as the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), the Physician' Desk Reference, American Medical Association, United States Department of Health & Human Services Research and the National Institute of Health. Medical Researchers have an ethical responsibility to the patients. The providers and patients will never be able to make evidence based health care decisions if the data is not in the public domain. In addition, future research cannot benefit from what other researchers have already done if results are not reported and or published in a timely fashion.

MEDICAL ETHICS A CALL TO CONSCIOUSNESS

Rev. Dr. Angela M. Battle
St. Paul AME Church, Kenilworth NJ

Physicians will now have to deal with two sides of the extreme the Munchausen's syndrome and the technical use of tampering with the central nervous system. The important thing is at least the medical profession will know. In the Bible, it reads, the gates of hell shall not prevail; well some people are using this new technology as a gate.

History has proven two things that works in order to restore and transform you must one publically expose it and secondly establish and reinforce legislation.

During Paul's time there were false teachings claiming to have secret knowledge and powers and denies Christ true humanity. Today, we have people that have secret knowledge and powers and deny the public the truth and hurts humanity. If there is a counter teaching on the secret knowledge and powers of the central nervous system and the ability to infiltrate another human being, please let us know. In Paul's day the Gnosticism was the belief that matter is evil. While I do not believe matter is evil, I do believe having the ability to control another human being without their knowledge or consent is evil and a violation of our constitutional right.

The dual approach is public awareness and legislation. We need policies in place to govern decision makers, business behaviors emphasizing the potential impact of health policies on citizens. Medical Ethics and Health will be an evolving work in progress ensuring we inform and protect the public. We should have concrete reform that the Federal Government mandate and regulate. Medical Ethics is a serious problem and there is no provision to report abuse of the technology.

The Medical Ethics should take a comprehensive multidimensional approach to the misuse of technology and distribution of medication. We need policies, research and public awareness. Stay tuned for more information and action alerts as we continued to bring this important issue to the forefront. Investing into humanity is worth the exerted effort. Human beings are a vital resource. We have taken seriously our mandate to inform the people. We are tending to flock of Humanity. This is our calling to fulfill. We are to boldly proclaim the Gospel, actively engaged in community service, and function as kingdom citizens by our civic engagement.

In closing and I ask that you contact your legislator and have him or her inform you of this technology. Please know it is your federal and state dollars paying for this technology as they call it. You have a right to know and have full disclosure. For more information read my book entitled, "Man Cover".

We Keep Our Promise Initiative

Economic Injustice Awareness Project

"Love & Legislation will improve the world"

revabattle@gmail.com

#NJ HILL DAY – CONGRESSIONAL RECEPTION 2019

Elder Skip Winter First Presbyterian Church of Cranford

On Wednesday, July 24, I had the honor of attending the #NJ Hill Day – Congregational Reception, along with over 300 other affordable housing advocates and proponents of eliminating homelessness. The event was led by Monarch Housing with Monarch Housing CEO Taiisa Kelly serving as Master of Ceremonies. Thirteen impact speakers who spoke of their journey's while homeless, along with two speakers from the Opportunity Starts at Home Campaign, along with state speakers and members of the House of Representatives from NJ and Senator Robert Menendez also spoke. The topics which everyone spoke about were varied, including support for federal programs and priority initiatives such as McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants, Fair Housing, Medicaid, Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, Low Income Housing Tax Credits and the National Housing Trust Fund.

Members of the House of Representatives who spoke and showed support for the initiatives were, U.S. Representative Any Kim (D-NJ-3), U.S. Representative William Pascrell (D-NJ-9), U.S. Representative Donald M. Payne, Jr (D-NJ-10), U.S. Micki Sherrill (D-NJ-11), and U.S. Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12). Staff representing U.S. Representative Frank Pallone (D-NJ-6) and Senator Cory Booker also spoke.

Senator Robert Menendez declared that elected officials must “expand access to safe and affordable housing and that “no family should be forced to live in unsafe conditions because of how much money they make.”

Some of the alarming statistics that were presented were as follows:

- ◆ In NJ, it takes an average of working 120 hours per week at minimum wage to rent a 2 bedroom apartment.
- ◆ 99 % of the counties in the United States have issues with making available affordable housing.
- ◆ In the United States, on any given night 552,000 individuals are considered homeless, with 160,000 of those being children and 261,000 being women and girls of which 25% are Hispanic and Latino and 9% are veterans (2018 HUD Survey Statistics).
- ◆ Individuals with disabilities are very effected when it comes to be homeless.
- ◆ Per U.S. Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman stated that 2 out of 5 people in New Jersey are unable to keep up with their bills and that 23% of the homeless in NJ are children.
- ◆ U.S. Representative William Pascrell called affordable housing and homelessness the “silent crisis.”

At the same time the highlights of the day were the testimonials from the Impact Speakers who at one time were homeless and were able through true grit and determination and with the help of government assistant find a place to live.

OPPORTUNITY
STARTS AT HOME



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Cindy Hannen

St. Michael Church, Cranford



Cindy on left with her children

Sunday, July 14. This would be the day that the ICE raids were to begin in earnest, searching out undocumented families in Union County, and deporting them immediately. Here I am, heading off to church, knowing that families like my own, are cowering in the shadows, wondering if today would be the day they are found out, and pulled from their homes.

I sat in church, and prayed for the safety of these families. As the first hymn played, I thought, how ironic. The sabbath day for people who are Christian, was chosen to be the last day some families would have together.

Then my attention turned to the New Testament reading. It was the story of the Good Samaritan. This was a story I knew so well, from my childhood. Even folks who are not Christian, know about it. It has to do with helping others. There is even a “Good Samaritan” law, that protects a bystander from being sued, in the case that they stop to help someone in medical need, and the outcome is not favorable.

But as I listened again, to that reading, I was reminded that the question posed to Jesus, by the Pharisees, was, “Who is our neighbor?”. Of course, the Pharisees were trying to trick Jesus, as usual, into saying something that was non-compliant with Jewish law. There was great deal of bigotry against the Samaritans, yet it was the Samaritan who helped the Jewish man who had been beaten by robbers.

That’s when I felt that this lesson was truly speaking to me, and hopefully everyone who heard it that morning. These families who have come to our borders, seeking asylum, they are our neighbors. They may not look like us, or speak like us, or have different faith traditions, but they are our neighbors. I believe that Jesus would want us to treat them as such. The Samaritan not only treated the wounds of the injured man, but lifted him onto his donkey, and brought him to an inn. He then gave the innkeeper some money to take care of him, and said that if more money was needed for his care, he would provide it upon his return.

The very next Sunday, the Scripture readings could have been titled, “Unexpected Guests”. One describing an unanticipated visit for Abraham and Sarah, whose kind hospitality provides them with a joyous promise—that despite their advanced years, will have a son in the coming year. The other reading describing a visit by Jesus to Martha and Mary. Martha, being a diligent host, rings out her hands, at the responsibility of preparing and serving the guests, while Mary sits at Jesus’ feet, anxiously awaiting his stories. While Jesus is appreciative of Martha’s efforts, he reminds her that the real blessing is being missed. Forget the details of the food and the dishes and the beds. Embrace that which is most important.

The unexpected guests at our borders deserve our compassion and understanding. The details of the food, and the beds are important, but if we show compassion and caring, a solution can be found. If we could agree that our borders cannot be open to criminals yet must be an asylum for those fleeing persecution and abject poverty, as solution can be found. The answer is in the coming together.

I believe that all faith traditions can come together to support the people who arrive at our borders seeking help.



WATERFRONT ALLIANCE



GROUNDWORK
Elizabeth

KEEP OUR WATERWAYS CLEAN!

#TRASHTAG CHALLENGE



Groundwork Elizabeth



Groundwork Elizabeth



@gwelizabeth

Join Mayor Chris Bollwage, Waterfront Alliance and Groundwork Elizabeth's efforts to continue our ongoing commitment to clean our Elizabeth urban trails, waterfronts and waterways.

Dates:

1. June 15, 2019
2. July 13, 2019 **City of Water Day**
3. August 10, 2019

Time: 10:00am-2:00pm

Location: 34 S Broad Street,
Elizabeth, NJ, 07202. At the Elizabeth River Trail Arch.

Look for registration table upon arrival.

Registration Link: Refer to Groundwork
Elizabeth Website for link!

For more Information: www.groundworkelizabeth.org
or call (908)-289-0262



Community Service Hours Provided!
Bring your forms!
Snacks and refreshments provided.





ANNUAL IRA GELLER WALK-A-THON

SEPTEMBER 14, 2019
OAK RIDGE PARK,
CLARK, NJ



REGISTRATION: 11:00 AM
EVENT TIME: 12:00 PM—3:00 PM

GAMES, ACTIVITIES, & LIVE MUSIC
WALK AROUND THE PARK
FOOD & COMMUNITY



FREE REGISTRATION AT
CAU2019IRA-GELLER-WALK.EVENTBRITE.COM

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INFORMATION AT CKRIAK@CAUNJ.ORG

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We're Connected to You!



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.



Questions?

Carly Kriak at 908-354-3040 x4376 or ckriak@caunj.org



Religious Services at CAU

Did you know that the CAU community is exploring religion and having worship in a unique and innovative way?



UCICC member, Reverend Aleyah Lacey of Mount Teman A.M. E. Church on Saturdays gathers members of CAU's (Community Access Unlimited) DD Community and TOP youth to explore faith and worship. You are invited to share your faith and talents at these interfaith services. Services are held on Saturdays at 11am and 1pm and are for an hour long. If you have a positive inspirational message, would like to provide worship, and have a willing heart to serve please consider being a blessing at these interfaith services.

Rev. Aleyah Lacey pictured left

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 Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council at UCInterfaith@caunj.org



SOCIETAL VIOLENCE: NOT AN EPISODE, BUT A CONTINUUM...

Reverend Carmine Pernini
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rahway NJ



In 1920, a German newspaper published an editorial response to Jews fleeing to Germany from Russian violence, “The increasing immigration of this new group of people (Russian Jews) is gradually becoming a serious problem. Although one may be far from wanting to deny these unfortunate ones the right to asylum, it must not be forgotten that a large proportion of these arrivals are made up of people whose immigration and settlement in our country meets justified concerns. Pity for them must not blind us to the fact that they are largely unfit for integration into our society.”

Months later a response to the above editorial was given by the famous scientist Albert Einstein, “In the public, increasing voices can be heard that demand legal measures against the newly arriving asylum seekers (...). These people are deemed black marketeers, smugglers and criminals or work-shy. All these arguments are aimed at taking the strongest measures, i.e. to cram them into concentration camps or force them to leave the country. A measure that destroys so many livelihoods should not be based on bold allegations. Even less it should be based on demagogic agitation that doesn’t live up to the facts nor is capable of effectively remedy existing damage. (...) Truly, the recovery of our country cannot be brought about by the use of force against a small, defenseless fraction of the population.”

Shortly thereafter a leader of the Socialist Worker Party visited the camps where Jews were being detained and responded, “It’s not just our responsibility, but of every upstanding person to bring this shame to an end as fast as possible.”

Weeks later, a German politician responded to the visit by saying, “All in all, we can say that this whole thing has been blown out of proportion and is used for political agitation by the left (quotes taken from “Three Arrows,” a historical commentary from YouTube).”

Were the quotes above to be abstracted from their historical circumstance, they could easily be placed on the lips of contemporary politicians concerning the US debates about the Southern Border. The quotes above highlight how the debate about immigration and who is worthy and who is not has played out in the past with damnable consequences like the Holocaust.

The dehumanization of Jews did not begin in the 1930s, but in the 1920s when Jewish immigrants began to flood German borders. Richard Evans, author of “The Coming of the Third Reich” which is a three volume history of the rise of the Reich said, ‘A historian once speculated what would happen if a time-traveler from 1945 arrived back in Europe just before the First World War, and told an intelligent and well-informed contemporary that within thirty years a European nation would make a systematic attempt to kill all the Jews of Europe and exterminate nearly six million in the process. If the time traveler invited the contemporary to guess which nation it would be, the chances were that he would have pointed to France, where the Dreyfus affair had recently led to a massive outbreak of virulent popular antisemitism.’ No one saw the Holocaust coming, especially not in Germany. Given this prophecy, we have to ask, “Do we see the violence coming?”

SOCIETAL VIOLENCE: NOT AN EPISODE, BUT A CONTINUUM...

Reverend Carmine Pernini

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rahway NJ

We have been conditioned to think that violence is episodic, that it occurs out of nowhere and recedes into the darkness from where and whenever it arose. Yet, history – historians – tell a different story: violence is a continuum and what we say and how we say it lays the groundwork for what we will eventually do.

There was a time, not long ago, when the tears of a child would turn the heads of all conjuring concern for suffering innocence. Today, as has been said, “These are not our children.” Propagandistic, yes, but the lie that this utterance covers up is not the blanket lack of empathy as much as the violence of the word “our.” They are not “our” kids, those African slaves hijacked and forced into labor in these shores, those poor folk too lazy to work, those people who pray to another God, and as the quote above states, the Jews fleeing Russian violence to Germany in the 1920s. The goal of propaganda is NOT to get you or I to believe something which is false, but to make us doubt the truth. The violence of “our” is the lie that a border makes anyone less ours. They are ours, all of them. What happens when you are not “ours?” For me, as a Christian, the lost “ours” are God’s, thus, mine, and my responsibility. The point being that history tells of the possibility of where all this goes, where the debate about the camps becomes moot not because of vile extraordinary tyranny, but of benign, ordinary neglect and ubiquitous apathy. When we get there, the only way to plot the course is through here. Violence is not an episode, but a continuum.

The phrase “not ours,” akin here to the German editorial from the 1920s about Jewish immigrants seeking a home in Germany from above, “they are largely unfit for integration into ‘our’ society,” along with many others like it, provide distance between the underlying atrocity and the rationalization which follows “not ours” lending credence to plausible deniability. Again, the point of course being not to get you or I to believe a lie but to doubt the truth when we come upon it. The truth, veiled in ‘reasonable denials’ is all people are ‘ours,’ and by decree of the God I worship, we are all related, siblings, in ways that are deeply spiritual and essential to human flourishing. The violence done to a sibling does not begin with the violent act, but in the denying of our relationship to one another – that we are all ‘ours.’ That is where we are today, not a mass extermination, but the laying of the groundwork for one. Not merely an episode of violence, but on a continuum of violence, as history demonstrates, which leads down a path to more widespread violence. #NeverAgainIsNow



SAVE THE DATE *WOMEN OF FAITH CONFERENCE*

OCTOBER 29, 2019
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
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DISCOVER YOUR SUPERPOWERS

at the

TOP Annual Youth Conference

Wednesday,
August 21, 2019

at

80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07201



***IN YOUR HEART IS THE
STRENGTH TO FACE
LIFE WITH COURAGE.***

Wednesday,

August 21, 2019

9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

CAU Main Office 80 West Grand
St. Elizabeth, NJ 07202

RSVP to Tana Owens at

908-482-0159 or

towens@caunj.org

\$5 Each

Day Includes:

Workshops, Prizes

Entertainment





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

80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ
07202

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

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

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 listings.
openings. Community Access Unlimited is an Equal
Opportunity Employer.

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 infor-
mation on how to locate services provided by other agencies.

This month we highlight **one of 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 resi-
dents 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.

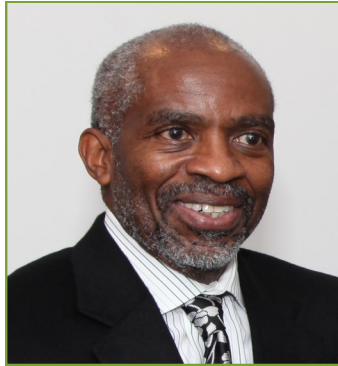
* Documents and interview are required to qualify.

Contact Gene Tavera X 4272.

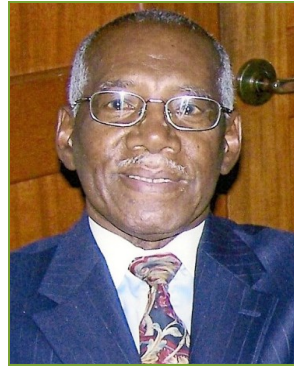
UCICC Outreach Coordinating Team



*Sidney Blanchard,
Associate Executive Director
Community Relations
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
Community Organizer
cwalker@caunj.org*

Join & Be Active Today!

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

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



Advertise in the UCICC Newsletter!

Have an exciting event or program happening?

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

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



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

www.facebook.com/UnionCountyInterfaithCoordinatingCouncil



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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 UP- COMING EVENTS

UCICC Steering Committee

August 1, 2019 at 10am
80 W. Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
See Right side

Union County Interfaith Camp

Date: August 14, 2018
Time: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
Location: Third Westminster Presbyterian Church
780 Salem Ave, Elizabeth, NJ 07208

UCICC Steering Committee

September 5, 2019 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202
See Right side

Union County Day of Prayer

Date: September 24, 2019
Time: 7:00PM-8:00PM
Location: The Presbyterian Church in Westfield
140 Mountain Ave.—Westfield, NJ 07090

UCICC Steering Committee

October 3, 2019 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202
See Right side

Woman of Faith Conference

Date: October 29, 2019
Time: 6:00 pm –9pm
Location: Community Access Unlimited
80 W. Grand St.—Elizabeth, NJ 07202



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