

ONE TABLE

VOLUME XII ISSUE II

SPRING 2011

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Get the World's Poor and Vulnerable on Board Now

The Most Rev. Howard Hubbard, Bishop

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ALBANY

In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI issued his first social encyclical entitled Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth). This 50 page encyclical includes rich threads of theological and mystical reflection which, I believe, are worth reading and studying.

For Benedict "charity in truth" is embodied in Jesus Christ. His incarnation calls us to the "vocation" of living love in truth. In the preface of the encyclical he points out that "everything has its origin in God's love, everything is shaped by it and everything is directed towards it."

In the first chapter of his encyclical Pope Benedict makes the connection between charity and the common good. He states: "the more one strives to insure the common good corresponding to the real needs of our neighbors, the more effectively we love them. Every Christian is called to practice this charity... This is the institutional path – we might call it the political path – of charity, no less excellent and effective than the kind of charity which encounters the neighbor directly."

This common good, of which Benedict speaks, is not to be confused with the public good or the total good, but it stands in opposition to the prevailing culture of individualism and autonomy we find in the U.S.: the supposition – usually assumed to be obvious – that no other considerations beyond my personal wants are relevant to my welfare. This is often coupled with an exaggerated emphasis on individual human rights, stripped of the responsibilities that go with them. In such a world there is no room for collective rights, and no room for the common good.

Such an autonomy represents the extension of the free-market principle into all other aspects of everyday life, namely, that if everyone pursues his or her own private interests, then, thanks to an invisible guiding hand, the whole of society will benefit.

Thus, the new question needing to be asked, of the economy, specifically, and of political arrangements generally, is about the dispositions necessary for a healthy society, one in which everybody flourishes. Some call this the search for a "human ecology." **That the human ecology is in crisis, that runaway capitalism has taken off with the loot, and that humanity's lease on the planet is in real difficulty is indisputable.**

We see this, for example, in the present attempts of the federal, state and municipal governments to balance their budgets on the backs of the poor, especially by efforts to deprive unions the right to organize. Many years ago Reinhold Niebuhr observed that unions provide the power required to shape

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CREO Members

Albany United
Methodist Society

American Baptist Churches,
Capital Area Association

Capital Area
Council of Churches

Catholic Charities,
Diocese of Albany

Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

Episcopal Diocese of Albany

Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America,
Hudson Mohawk Conference

FOCUS Churches of Albany

Interdenominational
Ministers Conference of the
Capital Region

Presbyterian Church, USA,
Presbytery of Albany

Reformed Church in
America, Classis of Albany

Roman Catholic
Diocese of Albany

Schenectady Inner City
Ministry

Troy Area United Ministries

United Church of Christ,
Hudson Mohawk Association

United Methodist Church,
Upper New York Conference

Align *Your* Money with *Your* Values

Linda Chandler, Director of Development
COMMUNITY LOAN FUND OF THE
CAPITAL REGION
(F/K/A CAPITAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY LOAN
FUND)

What do Tailorama in Albany, Better Neighborhoods in Schenectady, GEM Buffalo Farms in Castleton and 2 Twisted Ladies Ice Cream shop in Greene County all have in common? They are all financed by the Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region with dollars from socially concerned investors.

Founded in 1985, the Community Loan Fund is a nonprofit financial institution with a community development mission. We offer investors a tangible way to help their neighbors and communities and to promote economic justice. Individuals, faith-based and other types of organizations invest through loans, creating a lending pool of capital so low-cost flexible loans can then be made to small businesses and local nonprofits.

We have loaned more than \$27 million and leveraged almost \$120 million, financing more than 565 community and economic development projects that support 165 small businesses, 940 jobs, 125 commercial units and 915 housing units.

Investments are offered at your choice of a fixed interest rate of from zero to 2% for one to twenty years, for a minimum of \$1,000, allowing our supporters to earn economic, as well as social, dividends. With a 25-year record of tangible, local accomplishments and a 100% repayment rate to all our investors, we are a responsible custodian for your religious community's trust, endowment, and social action committee funds, as well as the assets of individuals. We are proud to say that last year, CREO joined our investor family.

Another essential way to contribute is with donations/grants that help pay for outreach, training and technical assistance and monitoring that help ensure borrower success.

So align your money with your values and join with us as we work to improve our communities and neighborhoods. Check out our website, www.mycommunityloanfund.org for more information about our work, how you can help and our **mid-May Spring Tour** event. To set up a meeting or find out more, call 436-8586 or email Linda@mycommunityloanfund.org. ■



The Details...

Deadline for Submission
One Table Summer Edition
July/Aug/Sept...June 25

Please help us by updating your contact information. We mail our newsletters Third Class for a first-class reason – to save money. While some newsletters may arrive late, we hope the message will always be timely. **This edition was distributed the week of April 10.**

One Table is published quarterly by the Capital Region Ecumenical Organization on recycled paper. Circulation: 450 per hard copy issue, 400 per email, and is archived at albanypresbytery.org. *One Table* serves as an ecumenical voice in our region and is supported by CREO members and *One Table* readers. Only motions duly passed at Board meetings reflect the official actions of the entire Capital Region Ecumenical Organization. Opinions expressed by contributing writers are not necessarily those of CREO.

Articles, news items, and announcements are invited. Publication cannot be guaranteed, but all submissions will be reviewed for use. The Coordinator reserves the right to edit material to conform to editorial policy, style and length. Unless otherwise attributed, articles are compiled and/or written by the Coordinator. ■

Changing the Politics of Hunger

Bread for the World National Gathering

June 11-14

Join hundreds of people of faith in [“Changing the Politics of Hunger”](#) at this year's Bread for the World National Gathering in Washington DC. The Gathering will provide plenary sessions, worship services and workshops related to hunger issues. On Tuesday, June 14 participants will [lobby](#) on Capitol Hill to make U.S. foreign assistance more effective and efficient in reducing global hunger and poverty. Please visit www.bread.org for details.

A limited number of CREO scholarship funds are available to enable those in the capital region to participate. Please contact CREO for more information. ■

Get the Poor on Board Cont'd...

(Continued from page 1)

economic arrangements that are fair and just for workers.

To be sure, unions, like businesses and governments, sometimes have abused their power, but at a time of heightened inequality, to curtail the essential right of unions to collective bargaining as some are seeking to do, would be a crippling blow not only to labor but to the American middle class and to the poor. As the editors of [America magazine](#) point out, “by establishing wage and benefit standards, unions have helped to establish standards not only for their own members but for whole sectors of the economy.

Since the Regan administration, the middle class has shared very little in the nation's prosperity. The common good demands that burdens and benefits of public life be shared fairly. It is more than right that the businesses and individuals whose profits swelled during the last years be required to pay higher taxes for the upkeep of the quality of American life and its future.

This is also why we should be following carefully the present debate in Congress about budgetary issues like foreign aid, trade and debt relief for the poor, or domestic policy issues about unemployment, health care, social security, criminal justice and immigration reform.

However, to appreciate this need for a renewed human ecology, the need to find common ground, we must recall what Pope Benedict points out in *Caritas In Veritate*: the graciousness of God; that God has created not a

world of scarcity but of abundance. Benedict says that love leavens the very architecture of creation; that creation is a realm of grace, freedom and flourishing and that humanity is made in the image and likeness of our infinitely loving God.

To reap the fruits of God's abundance, however, we must seek common ground with others in our diverse cultures and communities, explore the many ways in which we humans experience and respond to the transcendent mystery which is at the core of our being and discover within this plurality of meanings a vision of the common good to which we can all assent.

Recently a startling image appeared in the media. It was the picture of a huge fishing net being towed behind a trawler. But on closer inspection, it revealed a chilling reality: Around the edge of the net, 27 migrants were clinging on for their lives.

They had been abandoned by people traffickers in a small wooden boat that soon began to sink. But the captain of the trawler refused to take them on board, fearing that a change in course would jeopardize his valuable catch of tuna. So they clung to the net, ignored by the captain, until rescued by the Italian navy.

This picture is a powerful metaphor for our society and world: the poorest people clinging precariously to life as we steam blindly on in pursuit of greater wealth.

We need to stop this ship. We need to get the world's poor and vulnerable on board now. And then, together, as one humanity, seeking the common good, we need to set a new course for a better future. ■

What's Gender Got to Do With it?

Edith Leet, Ecumenical Officer

CAPITAL AREA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Rev. Deb Jameson, Community Minister

FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY

"I thought things were going well for women's rights and that we had come a long way," said Becca Leet of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Albany. "It was eye-opening to learn otherwise."

Becca made her remarks after attending Ecumenical Advocacy Days, March 25-28, in Washington, DC. She, along with Rev. Deb Jameson, Director and Community Minister of FOCUS Churches of Albany, Inc. and Edith Leet of Emmanuel Baptist, attended the conference in part with scholarships from CREO. Also attending from Albany were Felicia Gambles Collins and Fatmata Hilton of Westminster Presbyterian Church, and Roseline Takor of First Presbyterian Church.

They were among more than 700 people from 40 states and several countries who gathered to examine the theme of the conference: *Development, Security, and Economic Justice, What's Gender Got to Do with It?* For three days, they gathered to learn the facts and stories of women's issues at home and around the world.

On the fourth day, following the example of Jesus, who gathered his disciples to teach and prepare them and then sent them out to proclaim the good news, the delegates were sent out to their representatives on Capitol Hill to advocate for legislation that would address the obvious needs.

Many of the facts and stories were both eye-opening and heart-rending. For example,

- In Pakistan, a young girl was repeatedly raped because her brother had offended the village elders. She was then sent home to do the culturally appropriate thing: commit sui-

cide to cleanse her family from the shame she had brought upon them by being raped. Fortunately, her parents stopped her, and she has now become an advocate for women's rights in Pakistan.

- Two chambermaids who worked at a sister hotel to the one where the conference was held told of their success in forming a union for the employees of both hotels. Both ladies are Latinas and spoke through an interpreter.

They described how before the union they paid \$300 a month for health insurance. They also were asked to work overtime and felt that they could not refuse to do it. Now that they have a union, they pay \$20 a month for health care and work overtime only when they want to. One of the ladies said that the extra time and money have made a tremendous difference in her life and her ability to care for her two small children.

- Discriminatory practices and violence at home and in the workplace disproportionately affect women and girls and significantly reduce the likelihood of their success in work and at school. Internationally, experts estimate that up to one in three women will be beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in their lifetimes, with rates up to 70% in some countries. Nearly 50% of all sexual assaults worldwide are against girls aged 15 years or younger.
- Women are generally more vulnerable than men when it comes to poverty. Since the recession began, U.S. women – especially those who are single heads of households – have faced unique chal-



"Give her a share in the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the city gates." – Proverbs 31

(Continued on page 5)

Gender cont'd...

(Continued from page 4)

allenges. Of the 984,000 new jobs created in 2010, less than 1 of every 20 went to women. Women and children are thus disproportionately affected by cuts to programs serving those in poverty. **The spending plan passed by the House of Representatives, H.R. 1, would cut 61 billion dollars from such programs. In New York State, the impact would be that:**

- More than 24,880 children would lose **Head Start and child care**, depriving them of early learning support and their parents of the child care assistance they need to work.
- 584,000 New York students, most of them women, could lose part of their **Pell grants**, making college less affordable
- 184,300 New York workers --women, men, and young people-- could lose **job training** opportunities.
- Funding would be cut for **maternal and child health programs, community health centers, housing and energy assistance, food safety inspections, clean water, and**

medical research, among others.

Conference delegates are now asking their representatives to take the following specific actions.

1. *Reauthorize and fully fund the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).* The VAWA acknowledges domestic violence and sexual assault as crimes. It provides federal funding for community -coordinated responses to violence against women.
2. *Cosponsor the International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWA) when it is reintroduced this summer.* The IVAWA would make stopping violence against women and girls a priority in United States diplomacy and foreign aid.
3. Fully fund programs at or above FY2010 levels that serve women and families, especially those struggling to overcome poverty domestically and around the world.

To learn more about these issues, visit www.advocacydays.org. ■



"Whatever I had read as a child about the saints had thrilled me. I could see the nobility of giving one's life for the sick, the maimed, the leper. But there was another question in my mind. Why was so much done in remedying the evil instead of avoiding it in the first place? Where were the saints to try to change the social order, not just minister to the slaves, but to do away with slavery?" - [Dorothy Day](#) ■

Loving God, present in both sunshine and shadow, we follow the drama of salvation with wonder. As we walk with Jesus during this holy week, each day drawing closer to his inevitable suffering and death, we are thankful for every moment of sunshine that fell on his path. We thank you for the common folk and the little children, who sensed a glory that the proud and learned could not see.

We thank you for each waving palm frond and every shout of Hosanna. Like latecomers, at the rear of the crowd, we add our praise and pledge our love.

Hosanna in the highest! **Amen!**

Farming in Faith

Tracey Martin, Associate Director
REGIONAL FOOD BANK OF NORTHEASTERN
NEW YORK

And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food." Genesis 1:29

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." Hebrews 13:16

Ah, spring, the season of renewal – when the long winter ends and thoughts of growing things take root. Spring brings with it new life and new opportunities in the Volunteer Department at the [Regional Food Bank](#). We continue to host volunteers at our warehouse in Latham, but in the spring we expand our horizons and open our Farm to volunteers too.

Picture it with me – the land coming back to life after lying dormant all winter. Rocks forced to the surface by frost heaves. Furrows of lush dark earth revealed in freshly plowed fields. Tender seedlings planted in fertile soil. Acres of glorious vegetables growing in the sun once

spring yields to summer. Eventually, the harvest, when the fruit of the vine is

picked and delivered to the Food Bank for distribution to people in need of food assistance. And finally those people, savoring the taste of this wonderful food. Imagine it with me.

Now make it real with me – become a Farm Volunteer. There are many jobs to do all season long – from picking rocks and planting seedlings in the spring to weeding in the summer and harvesting in the fall. There is a place for you in this wondrous Farm scenario. Find out what it is by contacting our Volunteer Coordinators at 518-786-3691, x234 or volunteers@regionalfoodbank.net.

The Patroon Land Farm, managed by the Regional Food Bank, is located near Thacher Park in the Hilltowns of Albany County. ■



Camps Offer Outdoor Adventure and Spiritual Growth

Edith Leet, Ecumenical Officer
CAPITAL AREA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

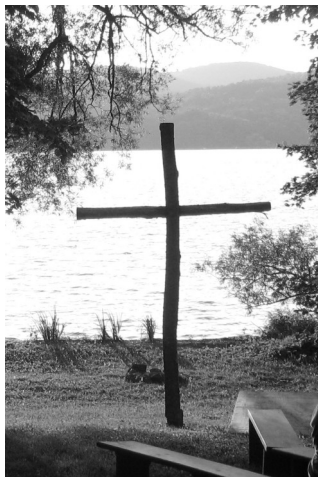
Do you know a child who would like to spend a week on the shores of a beautiful lake boating, swimming, hiking, playing games, meeting new friends, discovering his or her own creativity, exploring nature, and growing closer to God? Pathfinder Lodge on Otsego Lake near Cooperstown, NY, offers all that and more.

Operated by American Baptist Churches of New York State, Pathfinder offers camps for children from 5 to 18 and specialties from Sports to Aquatics to Creative Arts, along with traditional camping activities such as stargazing and making s'mores around a campfire. All are surrounded and infused by the awareness of God's presence and the example

of counselors and leaders striving to live their faith. Daily prayers, Bible study, and devotions help children grow deeper in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity. Pathfinder welcomes children from all backgrounds and faith traditions. Some scholarships are available.

Opportunities abound for adults as well, with weekend retreats in the summer and family camping from May 7 through October 10. Camps for Special Needs Adults and Teenagers enable people with developmental disabilities to experience God's love and all the fun of camp in this wonderful setting.

For complete information and registration forms, please visit the ABS-NYS website at www.abc-nys.org. Click on Outdoor Ministries Camps and Conferences. Happy camping! ■



Without Fear

Rev. Kent Busman, Director

FOWLER CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

Last summer a first time volunteer counselor came up to me and made a very unique comment. She said, "I like this place. You're not afraid here. You're not afraid of the kids and you're not afraid of the world." I had never thought about what we do in those terms before.

At Fowler, we're not afraid of kids. Most places kids go are very afraid of them. They are fenced in as much as possible in order to keep them in line. In fact, when I arrived at Camp Fowler 25 years ago I was instructed by the outgoing director to 'not trust the kids.' How sad, eh? But things can change. We now try to live in the realm of "hospitality" over the realm of "fear." We try to draw out what's good in kids, accentuate the positive, find the 'original blessing' that's still present inside us all. That's one of the intangibles that hangs in the air at Fowler. It's one of those "some things" that makes camp a powerful experience for the children.

The other fear kids face often is a fear of the

world. We try not to be scared of things at camp. Rain, darkness, fire are things we respect, but don't fear. The same goes for things like laughing, community, singing, and yes, crying. We don't fear those things either. They are part of what draws us together as human beings, created to reflect the glory of God.

Our kids live in a world where the terrorists have already won. They live in a world of fear. Camp is one of those brief moments in time and space where they are invited to live in a new way. There are scary things in the world and things that we can legitimately be afraid of. But as followers of Christ we know of a different way to live. And at camp kids are invited into that new way. They are invited to live without fear.

Visit www.campfowler.org to live with us. ■



New Earth Day Resource Focuses on Community

Jesus assured us that, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them" (Matthew 18:20). In the midst of cultural and economic forces that encourage and reward individualism, Christians are called to reach beyond ourselves, to embrace all God's children and affirm our interconnectedness and interdependence. Earth Day is on Good Friday this year---but Earth Day Sunday can be celebrated on any given Sunday! Visit www.ncecojustice.org. ■

It's A Small World

Launch a new community of faith for all of us this summer at Skye Farm Camp. This exciting adventure will include Jewish, Christian and Muslim campers living and working together from July 17-23. With all the usual camping experiences, we will spend our days discovering our unique faiths and how we are so much alike. All youth entering grades 6, 7, 8 are invited to join us! Please visit www.skyefarmcamp.com for details, or call George Herrick, Ecumenical Officer, at First United Methodist Church in East Greenbush at 518-477-9693.

Skye Farm is a Camp and Retreat Center on 460 acres of land in the Lake George region of the Adirondacks. A ministry of the upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Skye Farm is open year round. All are welcome! ■





Resources and Announcements

For your newsletter or bulletin

Albany Guardian Society & Capital District Seniors Issues Forum
Present

Faith Communities Respond to Seniors Aging in Place

Tuesday, July 12, 2011

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Carondelet Hospitality Center, Latham

Representatives from different faith groups will examine some of the traditional ways that congregations have supported older seniors, share newer approaches which congregations are using to support seniors aging in place in various forms of independent housing, and to identify resources helpful to these congregations. Please contact Lois Wilson at LWilson502@aol.com or 518-439-4791. ■

Host a Child This Summer

The Fresh Air Fund is a program that gives NYC children a chance for a vacation. Children get to leave the city, become a part of your family, and see another way of life. They get to escape the dangers, noise and pollution. You would be giving a child (ages 6-12 for first time visit) a chance to enjoy the small things we take for granted each day. Many of these children don't get to sit and see the stars, play outside in the yard, swim, bike, or just have a picnic in the park. It is truly a rewarding experience both for the child that comes and for your own family. Children will be arriving for one and two week visits this Summer. Please consider hosting a child. Visit www.freshair.org or contact our area's coordinator, Deb, at freshair@nycap.rr.com or 518-348-1018 for more information. ■

"Equipping the Congregation for Outreach and Mission," seminar will be offered by the Gene Bennett Center for Lifelong Learning at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School on Saturday, June 4, 9 AM to 3 PM, at Calvary United Methodist Church in Latham. The course will be taught by Dana Horrell, Ph.D., Faculty Associate at the seminary, and Roderic Frohman, D.Min, Associate Pastor for Church in Society at Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester.

This opportunity is for all persons who are inspired by the idea of doing outreach and mission for your congregations, including not only seasoned practitioners but also those who feel they need more knowledge and resources to be effective.

Through an assessment tool, discussion and multi-media presentations, participants are provided examples of "best practices" in social ministry.

The seminar cost is \$65 (\$75 after May 30) and includes lunch and course handouts. Groups of two or more from the same church are encouraged, with additional registrations (after the first) at \$35.

For more information, visit www.congregationinpubliclife.org and look for "What's New," or call Becky West at 315-456-8746, or email Becky at bwest2323@twcny.rr.com. ■

Mission Challenge 2011: Where Will Your Mission Take you?

If you are interested in being part of a mission trip this year,
visit albanypresbytery.org to get connected with groups inviting ecumenical partners! ■

Getting to Know You: Islam and the Muslim World

April 30 at 2pm

This is a new public series about world culture and faith. Arising from the sincere wish of a group of local citizens for an exchange of ideas and information, the kick-off event is a screening at Conkling Hall in Rensselaerville, N.Y. of the award winning documentary film *Inside Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think* followed by a panel of distinguished guests, including a local Imam, veteran of the Iraq war, and Pulitzer Prize winning reporter. A reception will follow. Free will donation, but reservations advisable: call 518-797-3459. For more information about this event and others in the series go to gettingtoknowyouevent.blogspot.com ■

Mother's Day Gifts That Matter

Mother's Day will be here before you know it! Here are some life-giving ideas:
Pamper her with fair trade chocolate, coffee, or tea (fullcircleexchange.com and equalexchange.com)
Plant a tree in her name (arborday.org),
Give a gift of an animal at Heifer International (heifer.org),
Adopt a Native American elder (anelder.org),
Purchase a Best Gift or Kit at Church World Services (churchworldservice.org),
Support local fair trade businesses (mangotreeimports.com and mayanhands.org). ■

Capital Region Housing Fair

The **2011 Capital Region Housing Fair** is **Saturday, April 30th** from 10 am to 2 pm at the Albany Public Library, 161 Washington Avenue, Albany. Free and open to the public. Information on grant and loan programs for first time buyers and existing homeowners. Bank of America, Fannie Mae and the Legal Project will be available for private consultations about existing mortgages. Bring a photo ID and obtain a free credit report. Plenty of opportunities to get your questions answered at information tables and workshops. Details at www.ahphome.org or call 518-434-1730. ■

Food Help NY: Connecting Your Members to Nutrition Support

Are you seeing more families in need of food assistance than ever before? Is your congregation struggling to find ways to help these families?

Of all the food provided to meet the nutritional needs of those threatened with hunger, 94 percent comes from the government, and 6 percent from private charity. Even modest reductions in government programs will quickly overshadow all the good done by church and private groups. The Nutrition Consortium of NYS can help you connect children, families, and older adults to nutrition assistance programs. Visit FoodHelpNY.org or call 1-800-865-5542 to link up with Nutrition Outreach and Education Coordinators in your area. ■

† Visit albanypresbytery.org to find more ecumenical news, pastoral letters and archived One Table publications on the CREO webpages. ■

Earth Day Lobby Day - May 2

New York Interfaith Power & Light, a faith-based organization concerned about climate change, is gearing up once again for Earth Day Lobby Day. Earth Day Lobby Day is traditionally the biggest environmental event of the year in Albany, and will be held this year on May 2nd.

New York Public Interest Research Group and Environmental Advocates of New York are spearheading the event, which has featured New York's Governor for the past three years. Other organizations involved in planning are Citizens Campaign for the Environment, the Sierra Club, and Audubon.

Come for the opportunity to hear interesting speakers and meet with your elected representatives at the State Capitol. We will provide tips and information for people who have not lobbied before.

New York Interfaith Power & Light is made up of member congregations of all faiths who are working to reduce their energy use (and costs)

and who want to be good stewards of God's Creation.

In order to encourage greater participation, New York Interfaith Power & Light has rented a bus to give attendees a fun, "green" way to attend Earth Day Lobby Day. The bus will have stops in Syracuse, Binghamton, and along I-88. We will provide bus riders with a delicious lunch (included with the \$10 ticket price).

Please plan to register even if you will not be joining us on the bus or buying lunch. If you wish to participate in the full day event, you must pre-register so we can assign you to a lobby team. Register online at www.nyipl.org or call 315-256-0078 for more information. ■



Ecumenical Witnesses of Baptism

Celebrating its 16th anniversary this year, this program of the Capital Area Council of Churches is one of the most visible signs of Christian unity in our area. During 2010, teams of witnesses were present for baptisms in churches of five different denominations. Every year, pastors and witnesses (current as well as those who might be interested in joining the program) gather on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord to share experiences and learn about baptism in one of our traditions.

All are welcome to join this program throughout the year as witnesses or to request witnesses at baptisms in Albany area congregations. If you wish to learn more about this program, or learn how you could start one in your community, please call the Capital Area Council of Churches office at 518-462-5450 or visit capareacc.org. ■

Rest and Renewal to Those Who Minister to Others

Off the shores of Lake George nestles Brookside Community House and Trinity House, two private bath facilities dedicated to the spiritual growth of all who come to stay. They are primarily available to pastors and their families and lay people who are involved in ministry.

The central purpose of this ministry at Silver Bay YMCA Retreat Center is to provide rest and renewal for those who minister to others. These beautiful facilities also serve single parents and those in need of short-term emergency housing. They are available from September 1st to June 15th.

There is no fee for their use, but contributions to this outreach ministry are encouraged. Meals are provided, and when needed, guests are invited to help in the preparation of meals. During the summer months, Brookside and Trinity are used to accommodate conference participants. Visit www.silverbay.org or call Chip Devenger at 518-543-8833 x215 for more information or to book your reservation. ■



GOOD NEWS

Go tell it ... EVERYWHERE!

† There's still time for your congregation or group to participate in the region-wide, interfaith, inter-generational effort of the **Capital District CROP Hunger Walks**, scheduled for May 1, 2011. New participating churches are welcome to join with many others to raise both awareness of hunger and money to fight it in our local communities and around the world. Nearly \$200,000 is raised annually in our region.

Church World Service and its partner agencies use CROP Walk funds to respond to natural disasters; provide seeds, tools, and training to farmers; dig wells to provide clean drinking water in remote communities; and empower people (especially women) to feed their own families and improve their lives. Visit churchworldservice.org to find out what CWS is doing around the globe or call 518-462-5450 to find a CROP Walk near you. One quarter of the money raised comes back to area food pantries.

† May 9, **Equality & Justice Day** is the Pride Agenda's annual advocacy day bringing the state-wide movement together in Albany, and includes a rally, workshops, caucuses and an opportunity to speak directly with your legislator about the issues that matter to LGBT New Yorkers and our allies. Please join activists from across the state to call for equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) New Yorkers and our families. Visit www.prideagenda.org for this event or to learn more about Pride in the Pulpit program.

† *Upcoming courses of the Capital Region Theological Center. Registration required: (518)462-2470 or www.capitalrtc.org. Scholarships and group discounts available for most classes.*

“Adding Strength, Speed & Balance to Your Congregation,” w/ C. Jeff Woods, Thurs. & Fri., May 12 & 13, 9am-4pm, Explore components of healthy congregational identity and visioning with this national consultant from Alban. \$95 each day; cost for both days together: \$165. Reg. deadline: April 14, 2011.

“Thus Says the Lord: Listening to the Prophets, Old Testament II, w/ Rev. Dr. Beth Tanner,” Niskayuna Reformed, Begins July 21, A Lay Theological Education Program 20-hour course. \$250; \$200 to audit. Reg. deadline: July 18, 2011.

Empathy in Action: Intro to Pastoral Care, w/ Rev. William Grosch, M.D., Lynnwood Reformed, Begins September 8, A Lay Theological Education Program 20-hour course. \$250; \$200 to audit. Reg. deadline: August 23, 2011.

Canoeing Through Creation, w/ Rev. Kent Busman, Mon, Sept. 12- Thurs. Sept. 15, Camp Fowler, Get away into the beautiful Adirondacks for hiking, canoeing, and theological reflection on the care of God's good creation. \$300; Reg. deadline: Aug. 24.

† **“Faith Communities Respond to Seniors Aging in Place”** A free program sponsored by the Capital District Senior Issues Forum, the Albany Guardian Society, CREO, and more. July 12, 8am-12:30pm @ Carondelet Hospitality Center, Latham. Please contact Lois Wilson at LWilson502@aol.com or 518 439-4791. ■

One Table

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Capital Region Ecumenical Organization

The Covenant

“Believing ourselves to be under God’s direction through the Holy Spirit, we feel the need for an ongoing regional, ecumenical structure as a vehicle of cooperation for and among those bodies accepting the sole lordship of Christ. We are aware of the richness of our varied religious traditions, we purpose to work together for the good of all people and to strive for reconciliation among all groups and ideologies.”

“Jesus looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, ‘Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.’” **Luke 21:1-4**

“Live as children of light -- for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.”
- Ephesians 5:8-11