



# Interfaith Community of Schenectady, Inc.

May 2013

Vol. 41, No. 8

Goal:  
Sharing together,  
One God —  
One Community

## Interfaith News

~ Celebrating Forty Years ~ 1971-2011 ~

### *May Dinner Meeting*

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Dinner 6:30pm

Program 7:30pm

Dominican Retreat and Conference Center  
1945 Union Street, Niskayuna, NY

The IFC James Stamper Community Service Award  
will be presented to The City Mission of Schenectady.

The award will be accepted by  
Michael Saccocio, Executive Director of the City Mission  
who will then be our program presenter.

This will also be our annual meeting with our printed annual report and  
installation of officers for 2013-2014.

Dinner is \$12. Program only is free. If you require a vegetarian or kosher meal, please let us know when you make your reservation. Reservations due to the IFC office, 370-2150 or [schdyinterfaith@yahoo.com](mailto:schdyinterfaith@yahoo.com), by May 6.

**Dominican Retreat and Conference Center to be the site of most future gatherings.** It is becoming increasingly difficult to find congregations of any faith that have people to provide a meal for 30 +/- people. Many congregations no longer have teams that will do so. During the past year we have had two meals at other congregations catered courtesy of the Dominican Retreat Center Kitchen Staff. We are deeply grateful for that staff for assisting us in this manner.

Because of the easy access of the facilities [parking is near the entrance, everything is in one wing of one building and all on one floor] and because the Kitchen Staff finds it quite workable to prepare a delicious meal that takes into consideration a wide variety of dietary needs on a regular monthly basis, we are seeking to have the September, December, January, February, April and May gatherings at that site. The October gathering will be the Concert at Faith United Methodist Church. The November gathering will be at a site to be announced. The March gathering will be at Temple Gates of Heaven. It is our hope that this new venue will make it easier for more people to come together each time.



## From your president...

### **A Prayer -- Maya Angelou**

Father, Mother, God, thank you for your presence during the hard and mean days, for then we have you to lean upon. Thank you for your presence during the bright and sunny days, for then we can share that which we have with those who have less. And thank you for your presence during the Holy Days, for then we are able to celebrate you and our families and our friends. For those who have no voice, we ask you to speak. For those who feel unworthy, we ask you to pour your love out in waterfalls of tenderness. For those who live in pain, we ask you to bathe them in the river of your healing. For those who are lonely, we ask you to keep them company. For those who are depressed, we ask you to shower upon them the light of hope. Dear Creator, You, the borderless sea of substance, we ask you to give to all the world that which we need most—Peace.

### **Living in Confidence -- Mahatma Gandhi**

When I despair, I remember that all through history the ways of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants, and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end they always fall. Think of it - always.

### **Prophet Muhammad -- Peace be upon him**

Oh Allah! I consult You as You are all Knowing, and I seek ability from Your power and I ask you for Your great favor, for You have power, but I do not, and You have knowledge, but I do not, and You know all hidden matters. Oh Allah! If You know that this matter is good for me in my religion, my livelihood and my life in the Hereafter, then make it easy and bless it; and if You know that this matter is evil for me in my religion, my livelihood and my life in the Hereafter, then keep it away from me and keep me away from it, and choose what is good for me wherever it is, and make me pleased with it.

### **A prayer for the world - Rabbi Harold Kushner**

Let the rain come and wash away the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds held and nurtured over generations. Let the rain wash away the memory of the hurt, the neglect. Then let the sun come out and fill the sky with rainbows. Let the warmth of the sun heal us wherever we are broken. Let it burn away the fog so that we can see each other clearly, so that we can see beyond labels, beyond accents, gender or skin color. Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our selfishness, so that we can share the joys and feel the sorrows of our neighbors. And let the light of the sun be so strong that we will see all people as our neighbors. Let the earth, nourished by rain, bring forth flowers to surround us with beauty. And let the mountains teach our hearts to reach upward to heaven. Amen.

### **A prayer for world peace - Dr. Jane Goodall**

We pray to the great Spirit Power in which we live and move and have our being. We pray that we may at all times keep our minds open to new ideas and shun dogma; that we may grow in our understanding of the nature of all living beings and our connectedness with the natural world; that we may become ever more filled with generosity of spirit and true compassion and love for all life; that we may strive to heal the hurts that we have inflicted on nature and control our greed for material things, knowing that our actions are harming our natural world and the future of our children; that we may value each and every human being for who he is, for who she is, reaching to the spirit that is within, knowing the power of each individual to change the world.

We pray for social justice, for the alleviation of the crippling poverty that condemns millions of people around the world to lives of misery - hungry, sick, and utterly without hope. We pray for the children who are starving, who are condemned to homelessness, slave labor, and prostitution, and especially for those forced to fight, to kill and torture even members of their own family. We pray for the victims of violence and war, for those wounded in body and for those wounded in mind. We pray for the multitudes of refugees, forced from their homes to alien places through war or through the utter destruction of their environment.

We pray for suffering animals everywhere, for an end to the pain caused by scientific experimentation, intensive farming, fur farming, shooting, trapping, training for entertainment, abusive pet owners, and all other forms of exploitation such as overloading and overworking pack animals, bull fighting, badger baiting, dog and cock fighting and so many more. We pray for an end to cruelty, whether to humans or other animals, for an end to bullying, and torture in all its forms.

[cont'd]

We pray that we may learn the peace that comes with forgiving and the strength we gain in loving; that we may learn to take nothing for granted in this life; that we may learn to see and understand with our hearts; that we may learn to rejoice in our being. We pray for these things with humility. We pray because of the hope that is within us, and because of a faith in the ultimate triumph of the human spirit; We pray because of our love for Creation, and because of our trust in God. We pray, above all, for peace throughout the world.

Shalom, Salaam, Santi, the Peace that passes all understanding. *Bob Long*

## Do your membership contributions really help?

A year ago we lived within several hundred dollars of uncertainty. Available resources for ongoing expenses were in small supply. It was often week by week. A series of things have helped us turn things around. The raising of meal prices enabled us to cover the meals we cover free each Gathering for speakers and hosts [prior to this they had come out of operating expenses]. We have done everything to cut back any unnecessary expense [sometimes at cost to the Council]. Each of these things has helped.

But the most significant thing has been the slight increase in receiving membership contributions. This has brought enough income that we are currently a very few hundred dollars in the black. The Council wishes to express a huge "thank you" to each and every person, family, congregation and business that has helped support our efforts to bring people of faith together. We look toward your continued support.

## Payments for meals

The Council knows that there are times when, having made a reservation, something significant comes up and attendance at a gathering must be put aside. The Interfaith Community, however, pays for the number of reservations made each gathering, as well as those who come without reservation and pay at the door. If you have to miss a gathering after making a reservation, it would greatly help the financial situation of Interfaith if a payment might be made for the meal, which is \$10.00 of the normal \$12 collected when you enter. Checks maybe made payable to the **Interfaith Community of Schenectady**.

## IFC Annual Awards

**Robert J. and Dorothy S. Ludwig Interfaith Award** At the April Interfaith gathering, the Robert J. and Dorothy S. Ludwig Interfaith Award was presented to the Sisters and Staff at the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center, 1945 Union Street, Niskayuna. The award expressed affirmation of the focus of the Retreat and Conference Center which is to minister to and with people of all faith and to provide inspiration, challenge and support for spiritual rest and renewal.



**James Stamper Community Service Award** At the May gathering, this award will be given to The City Mission for its years of sustained ministry with those who are less fortunate within the City of Schenectady. Receiving the award will be Michael Saccocio, Executive Director of the City Mission representing the entire Staff. Mr. Saccocio will also be the guest speaker, providing us with a grasp of the current work which the City Mission does. Please plan to attend.



## Congratulations to Rabbi Matthew Cutler

Congratulations to Rabbi Matthew Cutler of Congregation Gates of Heaven who was recipient of the prestigious Robert Lamar Humanitarian Award, given by the Interfaith Alliance at their annual dinner in April.

The award was created to recognize outstanding individuals whose accomplishments are consistent with the mission and goals of the Interfaith Alliance to promote human rights, combat bigotry and prejudice against all groups and to secure justice, mercy and fair treatment for all people.

Rabbi Cutler embodies all the above. Past president of the Capital District Board of Rabbis, he is actively involved in Union College Hillel, is an advocate for the Jewish Gay/Lesbian/Transgender Community and serves on the Board of Bethesda House, United Way, Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson. He current chair of the Schenectady County Board of Ethics, is a Schenectady County Chaplain, as well as a police chaplain for the town of Niskayuna.

Close friend, the Rev. James Kane, formerly of Saint Helen's in Niskayuna, and presenter of the award, said "rabbi" means "teacher" and "that he is first and foremost, but not for Jews alone. He has shared his wisdom with so many in the larger community."

Rabbi Cutler has taught in the high school's under the World of Difference programs, reached out to the Muslim and Sikh communities in times of trivail and created "Mizvah Day" when 250 of his congregation volunteer at various social service agencies. In 1984, he was one of the recipients of the US Presidential Award for Exemplary Community Service.

Rabbi Cutler has just returned from a 6-week sabbatical in Ghana. He volunteered there as a teacher and community service organizer through the Global Volunteer Network.

An active life member of IFC, Rabbi Cutler will speak about his experiences in Ghana at our March 2014 dinner/dialogue dinner to be held at Congregation Gates of Heaven.

## Events of interest

**National Day of Prayer -- Thursday, May 2.** The National Day of Prayer has great significance for us as a nation. It enables us to recall and to teach the way in which our founding fathers sought the wisdom of God when faced with critical decisions. It stands as a call to us to humbly come before God, seeking God's guidance for our leaders and God's grace upon us as a people. The unanimous passage of the bill establishing the National Day of Prayer as an annual event signifies that prayer is as important to our nation today as it was in the beginning.

The National Day of Prayer is a vital part of our heritage. Since the first call to prayer in 1775, when the Continental Congress asked the colonies to pray for wisdom in forming a nation, the call to prayer has continued through our history, including President Lincoln's proclamation of a day of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer" in 1863. In 1952, a joint resolution by Congress, signed by President Truman, declared an annual, national day of prayer. In 1988, the law was amended and signed by President Reagan, permanently setting the day as the first Thursday of every May. Each year, the president signs a proclamation, encouraging all Americans to pray on this day. Last year, all 50 state governors plus the governors of several U.S. territories signed similar proclamations. [[www.nationaldayofprayer.org](http://www.nationaldayofprayer.org)]

**World Fellowship Day -- Saturday, May 4 "Behold, I Stand at the Door and Knock"** is the theme for this year's gathering. The focus is on women swinging the doors of hospitality open wide in all of life. Sponsored by Church Women United and celebrated world-wide by women of faith this has long been a tradition of drawing together women of diverse races, cultures and backgrounds. This year's event will be held at Friendship Baptist Church, 409 Union Street, Schenectady. It will begin with a free continental breakfast at 9:30 with program to begin at 10:00 am. Bring any of the following articles for Bethesda House: Large men's shoes, sneakers and clothes – and – women's clothes and shoes. For more information call Barbara Williams: 869-8812.

**CROP Walk—Sunday, May 5.** Registration 12:30; Walk 1:30, Emmanuel Friedens Church, 218 Nott Terrace, Schenectady, All proceeds raised go to fight hunger locally and nationally. See [www.sicm.us](http://www.sicm.us) for info.

**The eighth annual Muslim-Catholic Dialogue** will take place on Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at the Muslim Community Center, 21 Lansing Rd North (off Rt. 5, Central Avenue at the Ethan Allen Furniture Store) from 7-9 p.m. Registration begins at 6:30 p.m. This year, the dialogue will not discuss a specific topic, but will feature a panel from the two faith communities who will answer questions or clarify doctrinal beliefs. Rev. Christopher DeGiovine, Dean of Spiritual Life and Chaplain at the College of Saint Rose, will be moderator. Panelists include muslims Imam Djafer Sebkhawui and Dr. Mussarat Chaudhry and Christians, the Rev. James Kane and Audrey Hughes. The event is free and open to people of all faiths.

## Share your news with Interfaith Community...

**Congratulations** to IFCs past president Audrey Hughes, who will receive the 2013 Carondelet Lifetime Achievement Award from the College of Saint Rose during her 60<sup>th</sup> reunion weekend in June.

**Best wishes** to Arnetta Dix-Howard, daughter of longtime community activist Georgetta Dix, who was recently ordained and who has become pastor of the Refreshing Springs Church of God, the Hamilton Hill church founded by her deceased mother in 1955.

**Congratulations** to Marcia Mortimer and Leslie Williams, who co-authored the play "We Are Our Brother's Keepers'- Early Schenectady Voices: The Union College Relationship With the Abolitionist Spirit, 1800-1865." The Schenectady Silhouettes, Duryee Memorial AME Zion Church and Union College presented the play Saturday evening, April 27<sup>th</sup> at the First United Methodist Church with local actors focusing on the thoughts and ideas of 5 prominent men of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all with strong ties to the Schenectady area and Union College, namely Elephant Nott, Rev. Isaac Duryee, William Seward, Moses Viney and Chester A. Arthur. Marcia Mortimer told about her research on black history in Schenectady when she was our guest dinner/dialogue speaker in April 2010.

**Best wishes** to IFCs chaplain at Sunnyview, Rabbi Robert Kasman who has assumed leadership of Temple Beth El in Troy.

**Our love and support** to Mike Saccocio, Executive Director of The City Mission, Schenectady upon the recent passing of his father.

**Share Your News with Interfaith** Individuals, congregations and community groups are asked to share their news with Interfaith: notices and articles, awards, birthdays, special anniversaries, deaths, hospitalizations or illness. It is wonderful to share good, as well as sad, news – especially because it opens the way for the healing love among us to flow like refreshing streams.

## Received in April

**Individual membership renewals:** Edith Kliman, Ernest & Gloria Kahn, Mary Rainey

**Institutional membership renewals:** Faith United Methodist church

Thank you for your support!

## New for you at the Muslim Community Center

Open lounge – a place to socialize and engage. Everyone is invited to enjoy fresh cooked Arabic/Pakistani food prepared in the new cafeteria. Open every Friday from 6:30 – 9:00 pm on the main level. The Muslim Community Center is on the campus of the Islamic Center of the Capital District, 21 Lansing Road, Schenectady, NY 12309. Free WI FI is also available. A scarf shop is open at the same time.

## Interfaith Calendar for May 2013

1 Beltane and Samhain -- **Wicca/Pagan** Northern and southern hemispheres -- Celebration of the conjoining of the goddess with the energy of the god in the sacred marriage which is the basis of all creation. Celebration of endings and beginnings and of remembering the dead. Revering of elders is also observed.

2 Twelfth Day of Ridvan -- **Baha'i** -- Commemoration of the twelve day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is to be suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival.

National Day of Prayer USA – Interfaith -- An annual day of observance held on the first Thursday of May, designated by the United States Congress when people are asked "to turn to God in prayer and meditation".

Holy Friday --- **Orthodox Christian** -- On Great and Holy Friday the Orthodox Church commemorates the death of Christ on the Cross. This is the culmination of the observance of His Passion.

5 Easter/Pascha -- **Orthodox Christian** -- The Orthodox Christian date for Easter Sunday often occurs at a later date than the Easter date observed by many western churches. The day is also known as Pascha, Easter and Easter Day.

9 Ascension Day -- **Christian** -- Recognition of the departure of Jesus from earth after the resurrection. It is perhaps the earliest observed celebration in Christianity. It is observed with worship including prayers and music.

15-16 Shavuot -- **Jewish** -- Celebration of Moses' descent from Mt Sinai with the ten commandments. Plants and flowers are used in decorations.

19 Pentecost (Whit Sunday) -- **Christian** -- Observation of the day when the God the Holy Spirit came to the disciples in the forms of tongues of fire and rushing wind. It is a traditional day for baptism and confirmation of new Christians.

23 Declaration of the Bab -- **Baha'i** -- Recognition of the declaration in 1844 by Ali Muhammed that he is the anticipated "Coming One" of all religions. Work is suspended.

25 Visakha Puja -- Buddha Day -- **Buddhist** -- Marking of the birth, enlightenment and death (attainment of Nirvana) of Lord Buddha.

26 Trinity Sunday – **Christian** -- Christians honor the belief in one God with a threefold nature.

29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah -- **Baha'i** -- Recollection of the death of Baha'u'llah, the founder. Observed by prayers and readings. Work is suspended.

30 Corpus Christi -- **Catholic Christian** -- (Roman Catholic) celebration in recognition of the Eucharist - the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. The real presence of the body and blood of Jesus is honored.

## Coming events at the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center

May 11—Women's Day of Reflection -- "Spring Cleaning for the Heart? It's not too late!"  
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM . \$30 per person. Guest Director: Sr. Carol Davis, OP

May 11—Day Retreat for Men & Women -- "Living Mindfully ... Living Gratefully"  
0:00 AM – 3:00 PM . \$30 per person. Guest Director: Claudia Gregoire.  
Presenter: The Center for Excellence in Aging & Community Wellness  
To register call 518-442-5529 . Program at Dominican Retreat and Conference Center

May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, June 5, 12 , 19 Balance for Seniors -- "It's a Matter of Balance ... Managing Concerns about Falls." 10 AM - 12:00 PM . \$25.00 per person for the series.



**IFC OF SCHENECTADY**

811 N. Brandywine Ave  
Schenectady, NY 12308

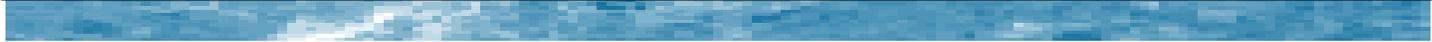
Phone: 518-370-2150

E-mail:  
[schdyinterfaith@yahoo.com](mailto:schdyinterfaith@yahoo.com)

office hours:  
Tuesday 6-7pm  
Fridays 7:30-8:30am  
Others as needed  
[Schenectadyinterfaith.weebly.com](http://Schenectadyinterfaith.weebly.com)

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**Coordinating Council Meetings**

Friday, May 10, 2013  
Friday, June 14, 2013

All meetings are held at Faith United Methodist Church, 811 Brandywine Avenue, Schenectady, and begin at 9:30 am.

**You may attend Council Meetings if you are interested.** Members and friends are invited to attend any Council Meeting to observe. If there is an interest that you would like considered, please contact Rev. Bob Long, 372-1083, at least two weeks ahead. Thank you.

**Do we have your email????**

**Please send your email address  
to us at  
[schdyinterfaith@yahoo.com!](mailto:schdyinterfaith@yahoo.com)**

**Don't forget our  
No Sweat Garage Sale  
coming soon!**

*Check us out at  
[Schenectadyinterfaith.weebly.com](http://Schenectadyinterfaith.weebly.com)*