



Interfaith Community of Schenectady, Inc.

October 2013

Vol. 42, No. 2

Goal:
Sharing together,
One God —
One Community

Interfaith News

~ Celebrating Forty Years ~ 1971-2011 ~

November Dinner Meeting

Wednesday, November 6, 2013

Dinner 6:30pm

Program 7:30pm

Islamic Center of the Capital District
21 Lansing Road, Schenectady, NY

The program will focus around the theme
“Hatched, Matched, Dispatched”
and will look at three sacred events in life through the eyes of faith.

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, by October 31.

The Annual James Stamper Concert has been canceled this year due to an inability to find a date in October without many other substantial conflicting events. The concert is being re-evaluated. For years one of two major fund raisers for Interfaith, the concert has often fallen on dates with other major concerts going on. Attendance has diminished in recent years to mostly people providing the program and their own families. If you would offer suggestions for re-evaluation, please contact President Bob Long, 372-1083, or the Interfaith Office.



From our President

A Magnificent Gift to Us all

I first met Bishop Hubbard in 1962. I was working at the United Methodist Society on Elizabeth Street in South Albany. Bishop Hubbard was coordinating Hope House just a few blocks away. We were doing similar work in a similar portion of Albany. Since then I have watched Bishop Hubbard's vocation expand and take flight as I served several congregations within a short radius of downtown Albany. I celebrate the vital, practically helpful and deeply effective ministry he has had in so many areas and at so many levels. I am blessed – we are all blessed -- that he has been a major spiritual leader in the Capital District through so many years.

My friend, The Rev. James Kane, Coordinator of the Albany Diocese Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, has compiled the following list of Bishop Hubbard's achievements through the year. It follows here, in bullet form:

SOME OF THE ECUMENICAL/INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES OF BISHOP HOWARD HUBBARD (1977-2013)

Notes: Born: 10/31/38 – Troy, NY

Ordained Priest: 12/18/63 ("50th" to be celebrated 10/21 & 11/16) Ordained 9th Bishop of Albany: 3/27/77

5 Honorary Doctorates (Siena, College of St. Rose, Niagara, St. Bernard's Institute, St. John's University)

-Co-Founder of HOPE HOUSE Drug Rehabilitation Center

-Past President of URBAN LEAGUE

-Board member of Hospitality House

-President of LIVCORP (hostels for mentally handicapped)

-Delegate to White House Conference on the Family (1980)

-Chair/Member of R.C. Diocese of Albany Commission for Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs(1968-1977)

-Member of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Believers (1983-87)

-Co-Chair of USCCB's Oriental Orthodox-R.C. Dialogue (1983-present)

-Chairman of USCCB's Committee on International Justice & Peace

-Co-Chair of N.Y. Labor/Religion Coalition

-President of New Yorkers for Alternatives to the Death Penalty

-“State of the State” of Jewish-R.C. Relations address each year of the “Hayyim & Esther Kieval Institute for Jewish-Christian Studies at Siena College (1983-2013); presenter [with Rabbi Bloom & Rev. Dr. Bob Lamar]

-Cardinal Cassidy, Pres. of the Vatican's Secretariat for Religious Relations with the Jews, stated at C.S.R., that the Albany Diocese was the 2nd best in the U.S.A. in Jewish-R.C. relations: spearheaded by Bishop Hubbard: Leading “From Fear to Friendship”: A Celebration for Jews & Christians – at I.C.C.Palm Sunday, March 23, 1986

-“Golden Heart” Award: Temple Beth El, Troy (6/29/80)

-“B'nai B'rith Youth Services Award (4/13/80)

-4 Chaplains Brotherhood Award (3/84)

-“Americanism Award”: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (6/4/89)

-“Circle of Humanity Award”: Temple Israel (3/28/98)

-“From Fear to Friendship Award”: Temple Beth Emeth (10/3/2000)

-“Robert Lamar Humanitarian Award”: Interfaith Alliance (4/29/08)

-active member/co-chair of the Judicatory Executive Forum of Capital Region Ecumenical Organization (CREO)



-approved R.C. membership in the Capital Area Council of Churches [by invitation of Rev. Bob Lamar]
 -Appointed diocesan ecumenical/interreligious affairs officers: Mr. Joe Powers & Fr. Jim Kane
 -Endorsed R.C. participation in the 1990 Albany Billy Graham Crusade
 -Speaker for the Capital Region Theological Center
 -"Pastoral Considerations Episcopal-R.C. MARRIAGES: Document issued by the 2 Dioceses of Albany: 1982
 -Co-led 2 goodwill Missions to Israel-Rome-Geneva: w. Rabbi Martin Silverman & Rev. Robert Lamar '83, '85
 -Participant each year in the C.A.C.C.'s Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Service
 Approved monthly "Our Neighbors' Faith" column in the diocesan newspaper, The Evangelist 1st = 9/83
 -Wrote a number of "1st Thursdays"[his columns] for The Evangelist on ecumenism/interfaith.
 -Attended Installations of Bishops Ball, Herzog & Love of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany
 -Presentation on USCCB's Pastoral on Peace for FOCUS Churches of Albany: 1/25/84
 - Presentation on USCCB's Pastoral on Peace for Temple Beth Emeth, Albany: 2/10/84
 -Coordinated a diocesan response to WCC's Faith & Order Commission's: "Lima Document" (B.E.M.) 1984
 The list continues, though what you read above helps provide an understanding of just how significant Bishop Hubbard's leadership has been to all people of faith within the Capital District. We celebrate his life among us for these years. And as he moves into retirement we look forward to his continued leadership among us. Shalom, Salaam, the peace that passes understanding *Bob Long*

Mark your calendars now for our 2013-2014 Program Year meeting dates

Monthly Gathering dates and places:

- November 6, 2013, Wednesday – at the Islamic Center of the Capital District, 21 Lansing Rd, Schenectady
- December 3, 2013, Tuesday, Dominican Retreat and Conference Center, Union Street
- January 21, 2014, Tuesday, Dominican Retreat and Conference Center
- February 11, 2014, Tuesday, Dominican Retreat and Conference Center
- March 4, 2014, Tuesday, Congregation Gates of Heaven, Ashmore and Eastern Parkway, Schenectady
- April 8, 2014, Tuesday, Dominican Retreat and Conference Center
- May 7, 2014, Wednesday, Dominican Retreat and Conference Center.

When you can plan ahead, it is possible to invite friends and neighbors to this aspect of our shared life which you hold significant. Please do so regularly.

Congratulations to this year's Carlyle Adams Ecumenical/Interfaith Awards

The highlight of the Capital Area Council of Churches Annual Dinner Meeting, Wednesday, October 2, at the Albany Country Club, was the presentation of this year's Dr. Carlyle Adams Ecumenical/Interfaith Award to Dr. Mussarat Chaudhry and Audrey Hughes, co-chairs of the Muslim-Catholic Dialogue sponsored by the Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs Commission of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. Both recipients have long and impressive resumes of leadership within their faiths and between their faiths. Imam Abdul-Rahman Yaki, Imam at the Islamic Center of the Capital District, provided a moving message and introduction to the two recipients. Congratulations to Dr. Chaudhry and Audrey Hughes ... we look forward to your continued presence and leadership among us all.



Interfaith Community Co-Sponsors JCC 2013-2014 Film Festival

The Interfaith Community is co-sponsoring the showing of the film, "Disobedience: The Sousa Mendes Story," in the Jewish Community Center Film Festival on Saturday, March 1, 2014, 7:30 PM at the JCC Auditorium. The film depicts the true story of the Portuguese Consul in Bordeaux during WW II, Aristides de Sousa Mendes, who saved 30,000 refugees on his own, defying his government orders. A devoted Catholic, he decided to obey God's law rather than man's law. A speaker from the Sousa Mendes Foundation will lead a discussion. A reception will be provided. Bring a neighbor and/or friend(s).

From the Coordinating Council

To each one who is a member of Interfaith, the Board is asking several things at this time:

- That you keep up with news in the newsletter, marking the dates of monthly gatherings on your calendar and attending as many monthly gatherings as possible – the real strength of any organization is in its participation;
- That you share you personal, or institutional, visions for the Interfaith Community – it is revitalizing to engage new visions for new directions and ways to fulfill purposes; and,

That you make a generous contribution each year when your membership renewal comes due.

No one will beg. No one will nag. No one will scold. No one will embarrass. But the Interfaith Board is unanimous in bringing to you the reality of both the gifts and needs of this practically helpful community. We invite and encourage your participation ... the gift that you can give.

Events of interest

Church Women United of Schenectady and Vicinity invites all women to World Community Day, 2013, on Friday morning, November 1, at 9:30, at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1935 The Plaza at 1229 Baker Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12309. A free continental breakfast and an ecumenical worship service will be held. Come to worship with women from a variety of backgrounds and church traditions and to learn how you can help us in our ministries in Schenectady and Saratoga Counties. Your presence will be a blessing to us.

Finding Sacred Common Ground: Three Abrahamic Traditions—Christianity, Judaism and Islam all spring from the life and faith of a revered Father Abraham. Yet over the years, generations have come to different understandings about how to express the faith we have received from this great ancestor. We live in a time in which we desire to understand and connect with others of different traditions. Professor Landau will help us consider both the challenges and the opportunities involved when we seek to come together with those of other faith traditions. Explore the tensions and possibilities for cooperation that exist in Jewish-Muslim relations. Consider ways that we can begin to promote Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations, and build lasting Abrahamic partnerships. Professor Landau will guide us through ways of greater understanding, offering tools to foster constructive conversation, build trust, and pave the way for new advances in Interfaith relationships. This course is being held March 13-14, 2014 at Congregations Gates of Heaven, 852 Ashmore Ave., Schenectady, NY , Contact the Capital Region Theological Center for more info, 462-2470.

Dominican Retreat and Conference Center becomes IFC's more regular gathering place

With everything on one level, from parking to dining room to meeting room, and with a kitchen staff who can cook for larger groups and provide vegetarian meals as well, the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center has offered and Interfaith has accepted the invitation to hold most of our gatherings at that facility, beginning this September.



Empathy is a response that is at the heart of all faith relationships. Here is what several faith leaders say about empathy.

"When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares."

— [Henri J.M. Nouwen](#), *The Road to Daybreak: A Spiritual Journey*

"You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read. It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive, or who had ever been alive."

— [James Baldwin](#)

"We must learn to regard people less in the light of what they do or omit to do, and more in the light of what they suffer."

— [Dietrich Bonhoeffer](#), *Letters and Papers from Prison*

"Self-absorption in all its forms kills empathy, let alone compassion. When we focus on ourselves, our world contracts as our problems and preoccupations loom large. But when we focus on others, our world expands. Our own problems drift to the periphery of the mind and so seem smaller, and we increase our capacity for connection - or compassionate action."

-- [Daniel Goleman](#), *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*

"I call him religious who understands the suffering of others."

— [Mahatma Gandhi](#)

"The great gift of human beings is that we have the power of empathy, we can all sense a mysterious connection to each other."

— [Meryl Streep](#)

"If it is not tempered by compassion, and empathy, reason can lead men and women into a moral void."

— [Karen Armstrong](#), *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*

"We who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface hidden tension that is already alive"

— [Martin Luther King Jr.](#)

"Each of us in our own way can try to spread compassion into people's hearts. Western civilizations these days place great importance on filling the human 'brain' with knowledge, but no one seems to care about filling the human 'heart' with compassion. This is what the real role of religion is."

- Dalai Lama

"Compassion is not just feeling with someone, but seeking to change the situation. Frequently people think compassion and love are merely sentimental. No! They are very demanding. If you are going to be compassionate, be prepared for action!"

- Desmond Tutu

Islam has taught me true empathy. I grew up in America's safe neighborhoods, attending excellent public schools. With this advantage, I never experienced discrimination or disrespect from others until after I embraced Islam and wore the hijab, the Muslim headscarf. By taking on this visible identifier, I learned what it feels like to be the "other." When someone spit on the street as I passed, just after the 9/11 tragedy, I experienced a little of what Catholics and Jews and other religious minorities in America went through in decades and centuries past. When my husband, a native of India, and I were swiftly refused a previously promised lease on a house after we faxed in our driver's license photos to the out-of-town owner, I understood the resentment and frustration felt by those who suffer insidious bigotry. When I was made to stand with my arms and legs spread like a criminal for a physical pat down in plain view of other air travelers, I understood the humiliation of being profiled simply because of my faith. However, I consider these experiences a privilege, as they have taught me empathy for those who have suffered simply for being.

- Kari Ansari "On Being a Muslim"

Empathy is evocative; it calls up what is hidden. Every one of us bears a vast accumulation of unuttered sorrows, scruples, hopes, and yearnings, frozen in the muteness of our natures. In prayer, the ice breaks, our feelings begin to move our mind, striving for an outlet. Empathy generates expression. - "

Man's Quest for G-d" by Abraham J. Heschel

Share your news with Interfaith Community...

CONGRATULATIONS to the Rev. Pamela Hoh, recently installed as the new pastor of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scotia and **BEST WISHES** to the Rev. Dennis Meyer, pastor there for 37 years who retired in July.

CONGRATUATIONS to the Rev. Abby Norton-Levering who has left the Glenmont Community Church to become the Ministries Coordinator for the Albany Synod of the Reformed Church in America. Abby is wife of the Rev. Bill Levering, pastor of the First Reformed Church in Schenectady.

BLESSINGS to Barbara DiTommaso who just retired after 33 years of serving as director of the RC Diocese's Commission on Peace and Justice.

The First Unitarian Society of Schenectady on Wendell Avenue voted last May to change the name of this liberal religious group to Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady.

Share Your News with Interfaith Individuals, congregations and community groups are asked to share their news with Interfaith: notices and articles, awards, birthdates, 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.

A special way to honor or remember. Gifting is a wonderful part of celebrating a special occasion. You may receive many precious gifts on your birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion. You may give gifts to others on their special days.

God asks us to re-direct our great love for God through specific gifts for others, that they might live more fully the Life that was intended for them. God's way of giving is deeply meaningful. May we offer that, to celebrate your special day or that of a family member or friend, you consider a gift to the Interfaith Community of Schenectady in their honor or memory. We trust that you will also feel honored by this same gift.

Received in September

Individual membership renewals: Naomi Bristol, Neil & Jane Golub, Paul Tocker Rev. bob Long, Ellen & Benjamin Wallach, Sam & Dot Thompson

Institutional membership renewals: Faith United Methodist Church

Thank you for your support!

We made a change this year...

In the past "dues," which I prefer to call "gifts of support and encouragement," were asked by all members on the month in which they joined Interfaith. The Interfaith Council acted early in 2012 to bring the receiving of "gifts of support and encouragement" to a calendar year. "Gifts of support and encouragement" are now sought from all members and friends within the months of January and February of each year.

If you have not made your "gift of support and encouragement" yet during 2013, we ask that you, as an individual, family or organization, make your gift to the effective work of Interfaith before the end of the year. To all who have provided gifts to date in 2013, we express thanks. We

Interfaith Calendar for October 2013

- 4 Saint Francis Day -- **Catholic Christian** -- Recognition of service to people and appreciation of natural world, as practiced by St Francis and the Franciscan Monastic Order which he founded.
- 5-13 Navaratri -- **Hindu** -- Festival of the divine mother honoring Durga, wife of Shiva, and seeking her blessings. Also observed as a celebration recalling the days of Lord Krishna.
- 14 Waqf al Arafa -- Hajj Day -- **Islam** -- Observance day during Hajj when pilgrims pray for forgiveness and mercy.
- Thanksgiving - **Canada** – Interfaith celebration of gratitude for life and life’s necessities.
- Dasara -- **Hindu** -- Celebration of victory and valor. Lord Rama is remembered as winning a victory over evil.
- 15-18 Eid al Adha -- **Islam** -- Festival of Sacrifice. The day after Arafat, the most important day in Hajj ritual. A three-day festival recalling Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to Allah.
- 18 Saint Luke - Apostle and Evangelist – **Christian** -- Remembrance of Luke, disciple of Jesus.
- 20 Birth of the Báb -- **Baha'i** -- Honoring of the founder of the Babi religion, forerunner to Baha'u'llah and the Baha'i faith.
- Installation of Scriptures as Guru Granth – **Sikh** -- Sikh scriptures, the Adi Granth, are honored as perpetual Guru.
- 27 Reformation Day -- **Protestant Christian** -- Anniversary of their tradition and its emphasis on the place of the Bible and religious freedom. On October 31, 1517 c.e. Martin Luther posted a belief statement on Wittenberg Church door. The date of public observation is the Sunday before October 31.
- 31 All Hallows Eve – **Christian** – Eve preceding the day for honoring saints, known and unknown.. For some, saints are persons with reputation for unusual lives of holiness and devotion to God or who were martyred for their faith. For others, saints are all who offer the commitment of their self to God as know in Jesus. A Holy Day of Obligation in the Roman Catholic Church where saints have special formal status.

The Interfaith Community is seeking two representatives of your congregation to be present at monthly gatherings. Gatherings are held at differing congregations in the Schenectady Area. Each gathering begins with a common meal and is followed by a relevant presentation. Representatives from congregations gain interfaith insight to communicate with their congregations in return. They can also share their congregation’s multi-faith values and experiences with the greater Interfaith Community. ***I ask clergy and laity from congregations of all faiths to discern who might be representatives from your congregation and support them as they attend gatherings.*** For further information, call Pastor Bob Long, President of Interfaith, 372-1083.

Solidifying the Membership Roles

Over a year ago a goal was set to update membership data so that it more accurately reflects current reality. During early fall Barby Harris, Sandy Goble and Scott Ebeling have directed considerable time in working through several older lists to create a more workable reality. The list will be published later this fall, along with the criteria used for including people on the list. Thanks to Barby, Sandy and Scott for their diligent work.



IFC OF SCHENECTADY

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office hours:
Tuesday 6-7pm
Fridays 7:30-8:30am
Others as needed
Schenectadyinterfaith.weebly.com



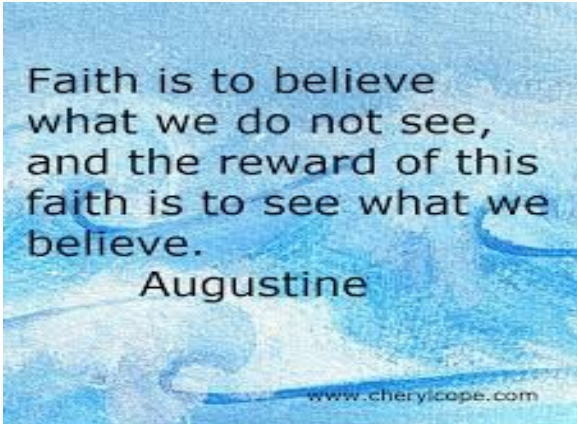
Coordinating Council Meetings

The Council will meet on the second *Thursday* morning (this is a correction from last month) at 9:30 am at Faith United Methodist Church, 811 North Brandywine Avenue, Schenectady, 12308 on the following dates: [October 10](#), [November 7](#), [December 12](#), [January 9, 2014](#), [February 13](#), [March 13](#), [April 10](#) and [May 8](#). On occasion these may have to be changed.

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)

Check us out at
Schenectadyinterfaith.weebly.com



Faith is to believe
what we do not see,
and the reward of this
faith is to see what we
believe.

Augustine