

ONE TABLE

VOLUME XII ISSUE IV

AUTUMN 2011

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Focus on Growing Poverty

The Most Rev. Howard J. Hubbard, Bishop

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ALBANY

In September, the Census Bureau delivered the distressing news that in 2010 another 2.6 million people in our nation slipped into poverty and that the number of Americans living below the poverty line, 46.2 million people, was the highest number in the 52 years the bureau has been publishing figures on this harsh reality. (The poverty level is \$22,350 for a family of four or \$10,890 for an individual). In New York 16% of the population is living in poverty – the third straight year that statewide poverty has increased.

Even worse, among the poor, the share of deep poverty, (defined as having less than half of the income to escape poverty) rose to the highest level in 36 years accounting for 20.5 million Americans.



These grim statistics, coupled with the fact that the number of Americans without healthcare insurance has risen by 900,000 to 49.9 million, serve to underscore the depths of the recession we are experiencing and the hardship it is creating for so many.

Minorities have been hit the hardest. Blacks have the highest poverty rate at 27%, up from 25% in 2009; and Hispanics rose to 26% from 25%. Equally alarming poverty has swallowed more children with about 16.4 million in its ranks, the highest since 1962.

An analysis by the Brookings Institution estimated that at the current rate, the recession will have added nearly 10 million people to the ranks of the poor by the middle of this decade.

Joblessness is the main culprit pushing Americans into poverty as the unemployment rate hovers at the 9% level. Those who do not have a college degree have been particularly hard hit. As Timothy Smeeding of the Institute for the Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, laments, “we are risking a new underclass...young, less educated adults, mainly men, can’t support their children and form stable families because they are jobless.”

We of the faith community have a special responsibility to address these dire statistics and the human lives behind each of them, because we bring both moral principles and everyday experience to the discussion. Through our churches we feed those who are hungry, shelter those who are homeless, educate the young, welcome refugees and care for the sick both at home and

(Continued on page 2)

CREO Members

Albany United
Methodist Society

American Baptist Churches,
Capital Area Association

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Catholic Charities,
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Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America,
Hudson Mohawk Conference

FOCUS Churches of Albany

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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 Annual
Conference

Focus on Poverty Cont'd...

(Continued from page 1)
abroad.

As Chairperson for the Catholic Bishops Committee on International Peace and Justice, I recently wrote to the members of Congress to offer several moral criteria to help guide the difficult choices they must make in this challenging economic climate. I noted that:

- Every budget and job decision should be assessed by whether it protects or threatens human life and dignity.
- A central moral measure of any budget and job proposal is how it affects “the least of these” (Matthew 25). The needs of those who are hungry and homeless, without work or in poverty should come first.
- Government and other institutions have a shared responsibility to promote the common good of all, especially ordinary workers and families who struggle to live in dignity in difficult economic times.

“We of the faith community have a special responsibility to address these dire statistics and the human lives behind each of them, because we bring both moral principles and everyday experience to the discussion.”

Hence, a just framework for these decisions cannot rely on disproportionate cuts in essential services to poor persons either at home or abroad. It requires shared sacrifice by all, including raising adequate revenues, eliminating unnecessary military and other spending, and addressing the long-term costs of health insurance and retirement programs fairly.

Yes, the moral measure of the budget and jobs debate is not which party wins or which powerful interests prevail, but rather how those who are jobless, hungry, homeless or poor are treated. Their voices are too often missing in the corridors of Congress, but they have the most compelling moral claim on our consciences and our common resources.

I hope all our partners in the faith community will join us in this advocacy on behalf of the poor and unemployed in our midst.

Read more at the *National Catholic Reporter*:
<http://ncronline.org/print/26747>. ■

The Details...

Deadline for Submission
One Table Autumn Edition
Jan/Feb/March...Dec 30

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 Oct 9.**

One Table is published quarterly by the Capital Region Ecumenical Organization on recycled paper. Circulation: 450 per hard copy issue, 650 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. ■

Connect your Faith with Congress

In the face of the nation's fiscal and employment crises, Congress needs to hear your voice: a moral voice of reason, calling for love of neighbor.

Twelve legislators, known as the "Super Committee," have been given immense power over U.S. federal budget decisions that will impact many years to come. Social safety net programs such as WIC, SNAP, Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and others are in danger of drastic cuts.

Please call our Senators and your Congress member and ask for a Faithful Budget that preserves the dignity and protects the well-being of God's most vulnerable people. To get more involved, visit www.nccendpoverty.org.

The National Council of Churches Poverty Initiative has provided a call-in number (1-888-784-0527) to connect with the Capitol

Switchboard. You will have to ask an operator to connect you to your Senator or Congressman's office.

Once you are connected with that office: "Hi, I'd like to leave a message about the federal budget." Once you reach the staffer or a voice mail, say something like: "Hi my name is _____ and I am from _____ (city, NY). As a person of faith, I am concerned that the federal budget negotiations are putting the most vulnerable peoples' dignity and livelihood in peril. I believe programs that provide health care, nutrition assistance, shelter, education, and care for God's Creation should be protected. I ask that you ensure options such as closing corporate tax loopholes and other revenue-raising opportunities remain on the negotiating table." ■



Helping People who are Homeless

Fr. George Brennan, Executive Director
CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Recently, I have met with representatives from social service agencies, directors of shelter facilities, administrators of foundation grants, and volunteers. We are all aware that, over the past few years, the number of homeless individuals and families has increased and the availability of funding has decreased. At one meeting we talked about the even bigger challenge of providing for homeless people on Code Blue nights, when the temperature falls below 10 degrees and sleeping outside is not an option. On those nights many service providers are making extra efforts to take in more people than usual, so that no one has to die in the cold. I am inspired by the openness and the spirit of cooperation that exists everywhere.

Our Emergency Overflow Shelter is facing the same challenges as everyone else and the need for more funding has never been greater. If you have already given, thank you for your continued support. Please tell others about the need

and contact our office if you have any questions or suggestions.

Shelter Wish List

Cleaning products: Pine Sol, bleach, laundry detergent, dish detergent, dryer sheets

Paper products: paper towels, napkins, toilet paper, facial tissue, heavy duty 20 gal. trash bags, food service gloves; heavy duty paper hot cups, bowls, plates; sturdy plastic eating utensils

Clothing: new socks & underwear for men

Toiletries: small sized toothpaste, shampoo, soap, deodorant, shaving cream, disposable razors, hand sanitizer

Food: cereal, Kool-Aid mix, canned apple or orange juice, snacks (cookies, popcorn, etc.), sugar, coffee, powdered creamer

Volunteers to help with meals, make beds, do laundry, sign in guests, etc.

Call the Shelter phone at 426-1227 after Oct.

20th. Financial gifts always welcome and needed.

Please make checks out to "CACC Shelter Acct." and mail to CACC, 646 State St., Albany, NY 12203. ■

A Caring Pastor's Best Friend

Rev. Don Stake

Public Relations Specialist

THE COMMUNITY HOSPICE

The call came early one morning. The voice on the other end of the line identified itself as being a chaplain of The Community Hospice, and informed me that a member of the church I served as pastor was now a hospice patient.

That began a relationship between me and a whole team of people who would serve my friend/parishioner and his family for weeks.

The Hospice Team included then, as it does now: a physician certified in hospice care who would over-see the care plan and relate to the patient's primary physician; a nurse who would be the one to manage the continuing care; a social worker to help the patient and his family work through a variety of issues, emotional, social and practical; perhaps a home health aide, if needed; a volunteer to provide ongoing friendship and assistance with anything that needed doing; and the chaplain.

The chaplain was to become my contact. A clergyperson of another denomination, she was trained to minister to the spiritual needs of people approaching end of life. If I saw something that I thought some member of the team ought to know about, she was the one I'd call.

Every week or so, the team as a whole would meet and review the care plan for my friend. Often the chaplain called me before the team meeting to ask if there were any concerns I wanted to pass along. Just as often she'd call after the team meeting to pass along something they thought I should know, like where congregational resources might be brought in, or something specific I might do.

It was a good thing for me to know that a chaplain was visiting my friend/parishioner. On some occasions, I found out that parishioners would talk more freely to a hospice chaplain than to the preacher they knew too well. The

chaplains didn't have the denominational or doctrinal label, and welcomed candid sharing.

I also found that hospice patients who were my friends/parishioners were willing, even eager, to talk with me about what they had shared with the chaplains. I benefitted from the chaplain's conversations.

Chaplains were there to care for family members, as were other members of the team, and would interpret the spiritual needs of their loved one to the family.



“They brought their healing skills to bear on the pain of loss that any caring clergyperson will experience.”

All this is to describe how The Community Hospice offers support and reinforcement of the pastoral care provided by the congregation's minister and people. The members of the Hospice Interdisciplinary Team very soon become the very best friends of any pastor who truly cares about his/her people. As the

team members improve the quality of life of those people receiving hospice care, they improve the quality of compassion-ate care a pastor can give as well.

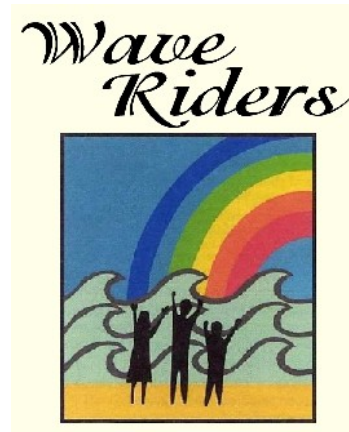
Last, but far from least, I found that the Hospice team cared for me too. They knew that ministers grieve when parishioner-friends are seriously ill and die. They brought their healing skills to bear on the pain of loss that any caring clergyperson will experience.

So, my clergy colleagues, get to know The Community Hospice, or the hospice that is closest to you. When sickness and sorrow strike folks in your congregation, the Hospice team members are the best friends you will ever have.

Don is a retired minister in the Albany Presbytery, now the Public Relations Specialist for The Community Hospice. He may be reached at 518-285-8179 or dstake@communityhospice.org. ■

Grief Support Groups for Children

The Community Hospice is starting its fall series of “Wave Riders” support groups for grieving children grades K-8. These free programs offer a safe environment for sharing grief experiences and opportunities to seek healing and growth through various activities. Young people are always grouped by age, and free programs for parents and guardians meets at the same time. Albany County groups (call Mary Crea: 694-4968) meet Tuesdays from Oct. 25- Dec. 6; Rensselaer County groups (call Will Hannah: 285-8100) meet on Mondays from Nov. 14-Dec. 12; Schenectady County groups (call Lauren: 377-8846) meet Tuesdays from Oct. 18-Nov. 22. Special programs for younger and older children are also available. Call Tara: 724-0248 for information about Albany County teen program (high school), and Candice: 694-4966 for information about the “Big Hurts/Little Tears program for pre-schoolers, ages 3-5. Pre-registration is required; learn more at www.communityhospice.org. ■



Major Theological Online Resource Launched

A unique and ambitious web-based theological resource has been launched in Geneva by the World Council of Churches and Globethics.net. It aims to redress a global imbalance of access to research materials in theology and related disciplines, bring ecumenical sharing of theological resources into the 21st century, and form a new generation of ecumenical leaders.

The growing Global Digital Library on Theology and Ecumenism (GlobeTheoLib) currently contains several hundred thousand articles, documents and other academic resources that can be accessed online free-of-charge by registered participants.

GlobeTheoLib is intended to use new digital models of information exchange to make the theological voices and resources of the global South more visible and accessible, across national, cultural and denominational barriers. It uses the electronic platform of Globethics.net, the Geneva-headquartered organization that already holds more than 650,000 full-text documents in its Global Digital Library on Ethics.

GlobeTheoLib provides access to journals, books, training materials, and theses and dissertations on theology and ecumenism. It also gives registered participants the opportunity to submit their own documents and publications to share with others from around the world.

The project is supported by a consortium that includes associations of theological libraries and seminaries, as well as mission organizations, foundations, Regional Ecumenical Organizations, and Christian World Communions. The project has been co-initiated and planned by the WCC programme on Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE).

Content for GlobeTheoLib comes from four major sources: commercial publishers with whom GlobeTheoLib has subscriptions to make content available to registered participants; rapidly growing Open Access repositories; partner institutions that make their own resources available via GlobeTheoLib; and registered participants who are able to submit their own documents to the library.

The World Council of Churches brings together 349 Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican and other churches representing more than 560 million Christians in over 110 countries, and works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Church internationally.

Globethics.net is a global network that promotes the exchange of insights and research on ethics and values between experts, institutions, and individuals, and whose International Secretariat is based in Geneva.

For more, visit www.globethics.net/gtl. ■

Circles of Protection

Rev. Deb Jameson,

Director of Community Ministry

FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY

In my first year with FOCUS (1999) I found myself, a rookie community minister, face-to-face in an escalating conflict with an angry, aggressive person at the FOCUS Winter Breakfast. It flashed through my thoughts again - "is it safe for me to be doing this kind of work? Considering the addictions, illness and instability of some of the guests who frequently come in for a meal?". My question was answered immediately as seven breakfast guys jumped up from their tables and surrounded me in a circle of protection. No harm done and the situation was defused. From that day on I knew I was with a group of people who valued the peace the breakfast volunteers, guests & staff provided, - and, sensed more deeply the particular holiness of that space and community.

The story has sustained me all these years and has reminded me again of the gospel's call to seek the welfare of the most vulnerable among us - encircling the poor with care and justice. Do we do this? What might it look like?

Many of us are disturbed to see what's happening at the state and federal level with suggested budgets that neglect, blame and punish

the poorest of our country's citizens. What do we make of the federal debt deal carved out this summer? What Congress and the "Super Committee" will do now will affect us in the coming decade as they reduce the deficit by \$2.1 trillion. So what's being put on the line? Almost everything if you are poor in this country. Many of the anti-poverty and anti-hunger programs are in grave danger of being reduced or cut, with disastrous consequences to those Jesus calls "the least of these". This includes food stamps (now called SNAP nationally), free and reduced priced school meals, low-income child and health care, Medicaid, health insurance for children, shelters, child abuse prevention to name some.

We can be gratified that our church leadership is speaking up at such a critical juncture. Denominations represented in FOCUS have weighed in on "what's next" in our country's attempt to move out of recession and debt.

Along with hundreds of other people of faith representing large constituencies - Baptist, Reformed, AME, Methodists and Presbyterians have signed on to A Circle of Protection: A Statement on Why We Need to Protect Programs for the Poor. It is an important proclamation that reminds us of who we are in community. I invite you to read it (www.circleofprotection.us) and challenge us all to find ways to encircle the most vulnerable of our sisters and brothers. ■

A long-time desire and plan of the FOCUS community to provide a community meal year-round is now a reality, as the Breakfast Program expands into a 12-months-a-year soup kitchen open to anyone in the city who is in need of a breakfast meal and a take-away lunch. On October 4, Breakfast Express began serving a cold buffet breakfast two mornings a week, Tuesday and Wednesday, from 7:30-8:30am at Westminster Presbyterian Church on State Street.

In November, the Winter Breakfast Program will resume for its 28th year. It will serve a hot breakfast three days a week, Tuesday-Thursday, from 7-9am. Traditionally, the Winter Breakfast Program has ended in April. In 2012, however, Breakfast Express will start again and will provide its cold breakfast buffet two days a week through-out spring, summer and fall.

Volunteers are needed. If you are interested and have the gift of rising early and cheerfully in the morning, we want to talk with you. Please call Paula Hennessy at the FOCUS office, 443-0460, or email: info@focuschurches.net. FOCUS will provide a lunch and orientation for Breakfast Program volunteers on Thursday, October 27, at noon at Westminster Presbyterian Church. ■



Fair Trade; Making a Difference in Guatemala

Kim Anderson, Owner

MANGO TREE IMPORTS

"I never went to school, I am a single mother and I only have one son. I used to go to the mountains every day to get firewood to sell. It was very hard work, walking up and down the mountain, looking for wood, taking limbs off the trees, chopping them into smaller pieces with my machete.

I worked like a man and I can still feel the struggle in my body. It's shameful to rely on your children but I had no choice, my son would have to help me doing this work.

I am grateful now for the opportunity to sell my products in a Fair Trade market---there are not too many places in Guatemala to sell them, and when we do sell them, we get very little money. I do not have to go the mountains anymore. I am a lucky woman and I have a lot of gratitude for this opportunity" (Maria from Cantel Guatemala).

Working through fair trade, Mayan Hands, offers opportunities to about 200 talented Mayan weavers like Maria. Fair trade has en-

abled them to overcome extreme poverty. Their children are now well fed, and they are all going to school, some to high school and the university!

Counting on a small but regular income, the women can plan and even save a little. Furthermore, in a society where women are second-class citizens, getting a fair return for their work empowers the women vis-a-vis their husbands and in their communities, and boosts their self esteem.

Fair trade is changing the lives of Mayan women, and of thousands of artisans all over the world. Won't you open the doors of your churches, places of work, or homes to these talented artisans?

Turn the vestibules of your churches, your offices or living rooms into a vibrant and colorful marketplace where people will find unique, hand-crafted items for their loved ones. The sales are fun, the products sell themselves, and you contribute your part in making this world a better place! *Join the Ballston Spa Fair Trade Coalition's 3rd annual conference on Oct 22 to learn more. Visit www.mangotreeimports.com or call 518-288-3554 for details.* ■

Fair Trade Your Holiday

For gift-givers looking for faithful ways to express their love for family and friends while also helping to make the world a more just place, there is a shopping alternative.

Two women in the Capital Region have combined their Fair Trade and "positive-impact" business practices to create **Live Well Sales**. Fairly traded jewelry, accessories, gifts for kids, home décor, and chocolate can be purchased through sales at homes, offices or faith communities. All of the products provided by the two women are fairly traded.

Kim Andersen at Mango Tree Imports supplies a wide variety of art, accessories and jewelry from her store in Ballston Spa. Brenda Rosenbaum at Mayan Hands is proud to market beautiful scarves, textiles and ac-

cessories woven by over 200 women in twelve different cooperative groups in Guatemala. Andersen and Rosenbaum are on a mission to make the world a better place through the simple habit of shopping responsibly and with heart.

Contact either of them for more information about hosting a sale to offer alternative gift giving this holiday season.

Kim Andersen: 518-288-3554

www.mangotreeimports.com or

Brenda Rosenbaum: 518-438-5636 or

www.mayanhands.org ■





Resources and Announcements

For your newsletter or bulletin

Energy Stewardship Webinar Series

GreenFaith, with US EPA's ENERGY STAR for Congregations Office, invites you to a free three-part webinar series - Energy Stewardship for Religious Facilities. It's open to leaders, members and managers of religious bodies across the country.

Most religious facilities can reduce their energy use and costs substantially, but don't know what steps to take first or how to measure their progress. This webinar series will teach you the practices that have saved religious facilities thousands of dollars.

A link to all three webinar recordings will be provided to all who register (visit www.greenfaith.org), even if you can't join them for all three webinars.

This series will give you:

- Simple steps to reduce energy use at your facility.
- Energy resources designed for faith-based facilities.
- Success stories, so you can learn from leaders that have cut their congregation's energy use.
 - An introduction to Portfolio Manager, EPA's on-line energy management tool. ■

HERSHEY: A TREAT—OR A TRICK?

We all know that chocolate is a common gift for Trick or Treaters and many people will be using Hershey chocolate in their Halloween bowls. You can support cocoa farmers and advocate for an end to child labor by instead distributing fair trade mini chocolates on Halloween this year, or avoiding chocolate altogether. Make a statement to Hershey's by urging Hershey to start sourcing Fair Trade Certified cocoa!



Across our country, many little angels and prophets will join in 'reverse trick-or-treating,' and handing Fair Trade chocolate back to adults, with informational cards attached, to explain the problems of the cocoa industry and how Fair Trade presents a solution. Through providing children with an opportunity to have their voice heard, hundreds of thousands of households in the US are getting the message: child exploitation and forced labor will not be tolerated by our kids.

For more information on why Hershey is the target of the campaign, visit www.reversetrickortreating.org and www.raisethebarhershey.org. ■

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

Hurricanes Irene and Lee: After the Storms

The Capital Region Theological Center is an ecumenical hub of timely information for those affected and those who want to help out. Please visit www.capitalrtc.org for regularly updated info.



“Doing Pastoral Care in a Time of Disasters: Issues, Challenges and Solutions”

Wednesday, October 19, 2011 from 9:00am-12:00noon

Cobleskill United Methodist Church, 107 Chapel St, Cobleskill

Presented by Rev. Dr. William Grosch, Rev. Fr. George Brennan, and Rev. Dr. Alan Rhodes, the purpose of this workshop is to help in equipping clergy and congregational caregivers in being able to identify and respond to issues that arise among their faith communities after disasters. This workshop is for anyone who is helping survivors, whether clergy or laity. For further information please call Pastor Rhodes at 518-875-6375. ■

As debates over the federal budget continue, the most vulnerable and poor members of our society are being forgotten. Visit www.circleofprotection.us, www.nccendpoverty.org, and www.sojo.net to join many local and thousands of faith leaders across the nation in letters to the Obama administration and Congress calling on them to re-direct their priorities to care for the “least of these.”

Visiting Nurse Association

* Faith in Action Care Team Members

Provide assistance and non-medical support to individuals in need of assistance (care partners) and their families. Choose services you're comfortable with and at times that are convenient for you. We value your unique talents and strengths and Team members receive comprehensive training, and support and cooperation from fellow team members. Eddy VNA Volunteers play a vital role in providing and enhancing the quality of the services we provide our patients and our highly respected by the Eddy's employees.

Please contact:

Joan Laviolette, Director of Volunteer Services, Eddy VNA, 386-3631, or email laviolettej@nehealth.com. ■

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.

Hunger Solutions New York (formerly 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 connect with Nutrition Outreach and Education Coordinators in your area. ■

New Web-Based Curriculum Addresses Faithful Citizenship

Dana Horell, Executive Director

CENTER FOR THE CONGREGATION IN PUBLIC LIFE

The Center for the Congregation in Public Life, an affiliate of Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, has issued a web curriculum to promote faithful citizenship and deepen respect for the common good.

As we wrestle with questions like jobs, health, security and ecology, there is a deeper question below the surface: ‘Am I responsible solely for myself and my next of kin or for the wider common good?’ Our faith traditions are best equipped to answer this question, and how we answer may determine not only the shape of our neighborhoods but the world our children inherit.

Designed as a six-week study course, *Faithful Citizen* includes:

- Study Guide with a 10 page lesson for group study.
- Videos—3–4 minutes long—addressing dilemmas created by the current global situation. Rather than attempting to resolve issues, these brief film clips create a shared experience as course participants and facili-

tator make what they will of the film.

- Video conversations between Robert Bellah, sociologist of religion and author of *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* and Donald W. Shriver, Jr., Emeritus President of Union Theological Seminary in NYC.

Study Guide sessions topics include: **From Individualist to Faithful Citizen.** “Why worry about the world’s troubles? I’ve got enough of my own!” - **Global Economy:** “Is my job going to China?” - **Global Ecology:** “I’ve changed my light bulbs. Now what?” - **Global Security and Governance:** “Why don’t I feel safe? And besides, why do they hate us?” - **Global Health:** “Why risk getting shots if plenty of other people refuse to be immunized?” - **Church and Family as Schools of Civic Virtue:** “How can we teach citizenship? We don’t have time to eat together!”

The Center offers resources to congregations engaged in outreach and social justice ministry. Visit our website for more information on this curriculum and other training seminars: www.congregationinpubliclife.org. ■

Concert for LGBT Inclusion in Faith Communities

Marilyn Paarlberg, Coordinator

ROOM FOR ALL

Room for All, an organization of Reformed Church in America (RCA) members supporting, educating and advocating for full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons in the life and ministry of the RCA, will host a benefit concert featuring the Albany Gay Men’s Chorus on Friday, November 4, at 7:30 pm. at the First Church in Albany, 110 N. Pearl Street.

This popular group of singers seeks to entertain and enlighten through a varied repertoire of vocal music in the rich tradition of male choral singing. The Chorus promotes pride in and acceptance of the gay community and builds bridges through positive contributions to the

greater Capital region.

The program will include several musical selections by the choir and soloists, storytelling, and an exhibit of The Shower of Stoles. This extraordinary collection of liturgical stoles celebrates the lives of LGBT people of faith who serve their communities in countless ways, while also lifting up those who have been excluded from service because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The collection bears witness to the huge loss of leadership that the church has brought upon itself because of its own unjust policies.

The event is free and open to the public; there will be a freewill offering received to benefit the work of Room for All. Refreshments will be served. For further information, call 462-6040 or visit www.roomforall.org. ■



GOOD NEWS

Go tell it... EVERYWHERE!

You've heard of Earth Day? Well now there's Food Day! Congregations seeking information about eating locally, healthfully, and supporting our own farmers, and congregations who have information to share about your own food pantries are encouraged to get involved! The first annual Food Day will be on **October 24** - a national day of awareness for local food production, healthful eating and access to healthier foods. Join Food Day activities in our area with the **Capital Region Food Day Celebration** at the Shaker Heritage site in Colonie on Oct 24, from 10am-Noon. It will be a great opportunity to share and receive information while supporting the goals of the day. Please contact any of the Steering Committee members for details: Amy Klein, Capital District Community Gardens amy@cdc.org or 518-274-8685; Michael Seserman, American Cancer Society Michael.Seserman@cancer.org or 518-454-4016; Amy Ellis, Honest Weight Food Coop amy@honestweight.coop or 518-482-2667; Anne Marsolais, American Diabetes Association AMarsolais@diabetes.org or 518-218-1755.

† *The Capital Region Theological Center is an ecumenical project offering training for laity and clergy. Registration required: (518)462-2470 or www.capitalrtc.org. Scholarships and group discounts available for most classes.*

The Apostle Paul taught that we must **"be transformed by the renewing of our minds."** We are encouraged to be intentional about finding ways to grow in our faith, our understanding, and our desire to know Christ better. Which of these courses is right for you?

"Opening the Doors: Welcoming the Differently-Abled", w/ **Rev. Catherine Patterson, NYS OPWDD**, Thurs., Oct.27, 9am-3pm, Designed to help faith leaders reach out to individuals and families of people with developmental disabilities who wish to belong to a faith community.

Boundary Awareness, w/ Rev. Dr. Davis Olsen, Thurs., Nov. 3, 9am-3pm, Explore role relationship tensions and why boundaries do or do not hold. For all congregational leaders and those who minister to children, teens, adults, or any specialized ministry.

God in the Details: A Faith & Science Dialogue, w/ Rev. Dr. Wesley Wildman, Sat., Nov. 5, 9am-3pm, The more we learn from science, the more we begin to grasp the fullness of God's glory! Explore cosmology & creation, evolution and human nature.

Go Ye: The Nuts & Bolts of Planning a Mission Trip- A Resource Sharing Event, w/a Panel of Area Presenters, Sat., Nov. 19, 9am-12:30pm, Ever wondered how to put together a mission trip- and do it well? Hear about planning, fundraising, finding volunteers, & more!

† The Capital Area Council of Churches annual **Musical Celebration**, Oct. 30, 3pm, at All Saints Catholic Church in Albany. Performers will include the Festival Celebration Ecumenical Choir, the Bell Choir of First Presbyterian Church, and the choir of the host church. Call 518-462-5450 or email CapAreaCC@aol for more.

† **[Kristallnacht Interfaith Commemoration](#)**- Nov. 9, 7pm, Page Hall, 135 Western Ave., on the SUNY Albany Campus. Kristallnacht, "the night of broken glass" on Nov. 9-10, 1938, is considered to mark the beginning of the Holocaust. Premiere screening of the film "Inside Hana's Suitcase," an inspiring documentary about the delivery of a battered suitcase to the Tokyo Holocaust Museum, leading a Japanese teacher to unravel the mystery of its owner, a young Jewish girl sent to a Nazi concentration camp. The event will feature George Brady, Hana's brother from Toronto, and Fumiko Ishioka, the teacher from the Tokyo Holocaust Museum. Free and open to the public. Call the Holocaust Survivors and Friends Center at 694-9984 for more information. ■

One Table

A PUBLICATION FROM THE
CAPITAL REGION ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATION
Autumn 2011 VOL. XII NO. IV

Non Profit
Organization
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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.”

“For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.” James 2:26

God, may your presence be felt by all humanity -- especially those who have fallen victim to hatred and inhumanity, and those whose hearts have grown cold to compassion and commitment. Amen.