

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATES OF SOUTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA

*A Unifying Voice in the name of Jesus Christ
for the Mission of the Gospel and the Wholeness of Communities*
Mailing Address: PO Box 5241 • Pittsburgh, PA 15206 • Phone: 412-688-9070
Web: www.casp.org • Facebook: www.facebook.com/christianassociateswpa

Dear kindred in Christ in the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh: Grace and peace to you! This year, Christian Associates has continued to expand our witness; in fall 2016, we welcomed the Bruderhof Communities of Southwest Pennsylvania as our newest member. In May, the Council of Bishops and Executives traveled to the Spring Valley community to get to know our new friends and enjoy their extraordinary hospitality.

Such **Collegiality**, convening Christian leaders to build relationships grounded in trust and common values, is central to the work of Christian Associates. In March, we facilitated a full-day retreat for the Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives. We also recognize the importance of collegiality on the local level, launching an online directory of local ecumenical groups in our region, available at www.casp.org/localecumenism.

Through **Collaboration**, we put these relationships to work, speaking and acting for the common good. Our Church & Community Committee continues to find new ways to bring the Council's statements on welcoming refugees and ending racism to life. Our Theology & Education Committee's recent e-book on the gifts each tradition offers to the wider church is available at our website.

Our **Connectedness** ministries bring the voice of the church to civic, community, and interfaith partnerships. We work with the Foundation of HOPE, Bread for the World, the Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, the Greater Pittsburgh Interfaith Coalition, Standing Firm, Cease Fire PA, and many other organizations. We have begun a partnership with Healing Communities, which helps faith groups support families and communities affected by incarceration. In February, we played a key role in organizing "Becoming One – Standing Together," a community interfaith worship event in solidarity with immigrants and refugees.

Our ministries would be impossible without the steadfast support of our member judicatories. I am so grateful for the diocese's multifaceted encouragement, including your generous financial contribution. Bishop McConnell now serves as Vice President of the Council of Bishops and Judicatory Executives, offering wise and committed leadership among his peers; thank you for sharing him with us.

Although the gifts we receive from judicatories are vitally important to our work, we also look to other donors to support our mission. To make your own gift of any size to Christian Associates, visit www.casp.org/donate.

"By this," Jesus said, "everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." We live in an increasingly fractured and fractious world. It is all the more important for Christians to love one another across our differences, setting a vivid example of cooperation and harmony. Thank you, Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, for joining Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania as we seek to build up that love in our communities.

Your sister in Christ,
The Rev. Liddy Barlow
Executive Minister