

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

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The Call . . .

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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Hicks Memorial Chapel - lower level
616 North Highland Avenue - Pittsburgh, PA 15206

to be one in Christ



April/May 2026, Number 2

A Unifying Voice in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Mission of the Gospel and the Wholeness of Communities

Pastoral Care Conference Registration Now Open



Dr. Deborah Moon, Ph.D.

Registration is now open for the 26th annual Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference, featuring keynote speaker Dr. Deborah Moon, Ph.D.

The conference takes place

from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, May 8 at Saints John & Paul Roman Catholic Church, St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 2586 Wexford Bayne Road, Sewickley, 15143.

Dr. Moon is an associate professor in the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work with a secondary appointment in the Department of Psychiatry. Her research focuses

on developing, implementing, and evaluating interventions designed to prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and promote mental health among marginalized families in under-resourced communities.

In her lecture, titled "Transformed by the Renewal of your Mind: Using Biblically-grounded Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Based Approaches," Dr. Moon will share her innovative research into how teaching and learning CBT skills can energize and benefit churches.

Special guest speaker Rabbi Danny Schiff of the Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh will lecture on "Religion in the Digital Age."

The conference also features workshops on a wide array of topics, including:

- "Whole Person Addiction Care: Medication-Assisted Treatment, Spirituality and Psychosocial Care" with Dr. Mark W. Guy, Center for Inclusion Health, Allegheny Health Network
- "Why Can't You Just Be Normal?" Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Pastors and Members" with Dr. Samantha Baillie and Rev. Dr. Graham Standish of Samaritan Counseling
- "Churches as Peacemakers in a Fractured Society" with Rev. Liddy Barlow, Christian Associates' Executive Minister.

Registration cost of \$50 includes lunch; continuing education credits are available for an additional fee. Visit pghpcc.org for more information.

Interfaith Field Trip Opens Conversations About Death & Dying

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ...we commit this body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

Spiritual leaders from many religious traditions are invited to Pennsylvania's first exclusively green cemetery on **Wednesday, May 6 at 10 a.m.** for a conversation about our diverse beliefs and practices around death and dying.

The event is the next stop in the We Have To Talk Interfaith Field Trips series, sponsored by Christian Associates and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh's Center for Loving Kindness.

Penn Forest Natural Burial Park (121 Colorado St, Verona) is a natural burial ground: a 31-acre reserve for native plants and wildlife where individuals may be buried in biodegradable caskets, or where cremated remains may be interred.

Spiritual leaders will be able to tour the facility, learning about its history and ecological commitments. The group will then share in conversation about death and dying in their own traditions.

"While religions vary dramatically in their approaches to caring for bodies after death, and in their beliefs about death and the afterlife, I think we'll find a lot of common ground in our



experiences of providing spiritual care for the dying and their families," said Rev. Liddy Barlow.

The event welcomes clergy, vowed religious, and lay leaders. Space is limited and pre-registration is necessary at casp.org/wehavetotalk#may6.

REFLECTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Dear friends,

As he reflected on his mission to walk on the moon fifty-five years ago, astronaut Edgar Mitchell reflected on the shift in perspective that comes from seeing the Earth from space. (Warning: he uses saltier language than typically appears in these pages, but I think his point is well taken.)

“You develop an instant global consciousness, he said, a people orientation, an intense dissatisfaction with the state of the world, and a compulsion to do something about it. From out there on the moon, international politics look so petty. You want to grab a politician by the scruff of the neck and drag him a quarter of a million miles out and say, ‘Look at that, you son of a bitch.’”

While today’s conflict resolution experts rarely recommend dragging anyone to outer space, Mitchell’s comments resonate with advice I’ve heard from international specialists through my work with Common Ground USA’s Pennsylvania Resilience Network. When bogged down in conflict—when everything seems to circle around immovable talking points, demands, and counter-demands—it can be transformative to **zoom out** and take a much wider view. To shift the conversation from the immediate to the long-term: what would we each like this situation to look like in ten or twenty years? To name our deepest values, and to discover that those values are likely shared. To consider what this problem might look like from 250,000 miles away.

This month, astronauts returned to the moon, traveling farther than human beings have ever ventured before. The four travelers of the Artemis II mission orbited the moon, observing its mysterious far side as they passed out of radio contact with all of humanity. When they emerged from the silence, astronaut Christina Koch spoke of the future ahead; of the many astronauts she hopes will follow; landing on the Moon; exploring its surface; establishing a scientific base. But, she added, in the end, “we will always choose Earth. We will always choose each other.”

This, too, resonates with the best wisdom on conflict resolution. When we find ourselves rehearsing the same tired arguments, we can alternatively decide to **zoom in**, to choose the human in one another. To see one another’s humanity, beyond our positions or the labels we wear. To find unexpected connections: our families, our neighborhoods, what makes us laugh. To remind ourselves that each one of us, even those whose perspectives we most despise, is made in the image of God.

God is, after all, the one who can zoom out to survey the whole created universe, planets and moons unimaginable, sparkling in space. And God zooms in to know each one of us better than we know ourselves, as close as every heartbeat. In this Eastertide season, we remember that God also chooses Earth, chooses us, and has chosen us from the dawn of time.

In Eastertide we know that Jesus’ choice for us could not be stopped even by the inhumanity and shame of the cross. Because Christ chooses us, we are called to choose one another.

When Artemis II pilot Victor Glover reflected his hopes for Earth during the mission, he said, “I would love it if we could all agree, for that time, let’s just be humans. I’m challenging all of us to think more about unity.”

With our fragile planet, our essential interconnection, and God’s choice for us in mind, let’s do exactly that.

Your sister in Christ,



The Rev. Liddy Barlow
Executive Minister



Photo by Brian Cohen



On April 4, 2026, NASA astronaut and Artemis II Commander Reid Wiseman peers out of one of the Orion spacecraft’s main cabin windows, looking back at Earth, as the crew travels towards the Moon. (Photo: NASA)

Remembering Pastor Donald B. Green, D.Min.

With hope in the resurrection and thanksgiving for a life well-lived, Christian Associates celebrates Pastor Donald B. Green, who died March 19 at age 78.

Pastor Green served as Executive Director of Christian Associates from 2002 until his retirement in 2014.

“He served in difficult times,” said Rev. Liddy Barlow, describing both the deep conflicts that divided church bodies in the early 2000s and the 2008 financial crisis. “His steady hand and collaborative spirit helped Christian Associates weather these challenges and prepare for the future.”

Pastor Green took steps to ensure Christian Associates’ structural and financial sustainability. Under his leadership, Christian Associates named its strategic priorities—*collegiality, collaboration, and connectedness*—and restructured, moving from a bicameral model to a single leadership body, the Council of Bishops & Executives. He concluded Christian Associates’ beloved but expensive television ministry, developing a budget better suited to current conditions. He also secured a generous grant from a local foundation to

bridge the transition to a new executive leader after his retirement.

In the wake of 2004’s Hurricane Ivan, Pastor Green was at the center of establishing the Long-Term Recovery Task Force, which distributed thousands of dollars and hours of volunteer assistance to affected residents. The Task Force brought together civic, secular, and faith-based organizations, leading to the creation of today’s Western Pennsylvania VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters).

Pastor Green nurtured the Foundation of HOPE, Christian Associates’ partner in ministry, in the early years of its existence, and was active in initiatives to address violence and addiction. He also engaged in interfaith work, and was recognized by both the Jewish and Muslim communities for his contributions to dialogue and friendship across faith traditions.

Prior to his ministry at Christian Associates, Pastor Green served as Assistant to Bishop Donald McCoid of the Southwestern PA Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and represented that body on Christian Associates’ Church & Community



Pastor Green (left) meets Pope John Paul II during a 2004 visit to Vatican City with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

Committee. He previously served several Lutheran parishes in the Hershey and Lancaster area.

His beloved wife, Kathy, died in 2025. Pastor Green is survived by his three children, Jason, Ben, and Angela, and grandson Bradley.

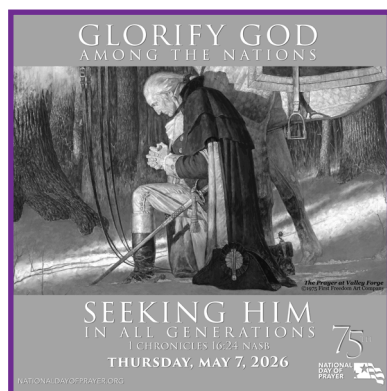
Rev. Liddy Barlow will represent Christian Associates at Pastor Green’s funeral in Lancaster in May. “Don offered so much grace and wisdom to me when I stepped into his footsteps,” she said. “He left a rich legacy. Thanks be to God for his life and his ministry!”

Local Churches, Organizations Host Ecumenical Events for National Day of Prayer

Several Western Pennsylvania churches and organizations will hold ecumenical events to commemorate the National Day of Prayer, scheduled this year for Thursday, May 7.

Each year, the National Day of Prayer Task Force identifies a theme to unify and guide prayers. This year’s theme is “Glorify God Among the Nations—Seeking Him in All Generations.” The theme verse for 2026 is “*Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.*” (1 Chronicles 16:24)

Local events will be held throughout the day, beginning with the Greene County Prayer Breakfast, which takes place from 7:00-8:15 a.m. at the Greene County Fairgrounds, Waynesburg. Organizers invite you to join them “for



a time of ecumenical prayer with county leadership as we humble ourselves, pray, and seek God’s face.”

In Allegheny County, Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation will host its annual Pittsburgh Prayer Breakfast from 7:15-9:00 a.m. at Acrisure Stadium, Pittsburgh.

The event will feature speakers from around the region, including keynote speaker Bradley J. Lingo, president of Grove City College. Registration is required; visit plf.org for more information.

Washington County organizers will hold their service, “One Family—One Lord,” from 10:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. at North Franklin Township Volunteer Fire Company, Washington. The event will

feature “a gathering of diverse local churches, organizations, and community leaders gathering as one family, for one day, for one purpose, praying to one Lord, offering him glory and seeking him in all generations.”

In Fayette County, the Brownsville Area Ministerial Association will hold its annual service at 6:00 p.m. at Cast Iron Amphitheatre, downtown Brownsville. “Our service focuses on our shared prayers for the flourishing of the people of our community and the country,” said Rev. Laura Blank, pastor of Pleasant View Presbyterian Church. “We celebrate local leaders who work to lift up the vulnerable.”

Christian Associates’ Executive Minister, Rev. Liddy Barlow, will speak at the Brownsville event.

More local events are continually added on the NDP website, nationaldayofprayer.org.

Reckoning With Antisemitism

For months, Christians around our region have been reckoning with antisemitism. Through text studies and sermon workshops, speaker opportunities and partnerships with neighboring synagogues, Christian leaders have demonstrated their commitment to understanding this ancient prejudice and rooting it out of our tradition.

As the culmination of this phase of the Reckoning with Antisemitism as Christians project, we can share the work we've done with one another—and with our Jewish neighbors.

On the evening of **June 24**, we will gather at Rodef Shalom Congregation (490 Fifth Ave, Shadyside) for the celebration of this project so far. For the first time, we'll share our new book collecting sermons and essays by local Christian leaders offering their reflections on antisemitism. We'll share testimonies from pastors who have



Christian leaders confer with Rabbi Andy Shugerman at a Reckoning with Antisemitism sermon workshop.

engaged in the project over the past year. We'll explore the impact that Christian reckoning has had on our Jewish neighbors.

“The first step in building trust is demonstrating that Christians take antisemitism seriously, that we are dedicated to dismantling bias and

caring about the welfare of Jewish people,” said Rev. Liddy Barlow. “Our sermon collection, and our attendance and participation in the event on June 24, will be an important testimony to our commitment to ending antisemitism.”

More information about the program, and a registration link, will appear in the next edition of *The Call*.

This won't be the end of the Reckoning with Antisemitism project: plans for another year of learning and dialogue are already underway. Subscribe to our email list to be sure you find out about next steps: casp.org/reckoning.

Reckoning with Antisemitism as Christians is a partnership of Christian Associates and the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, with support from the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh.



Bring Christian Associates to Your Church!

Preachers, you deserve a break! Invite Rev. Liddy Barlow to preach, teach, or bring greetings to your church this year, and enjoy a much-needed Sunday of rest. Many Sundays in late summer through the fall months are still available.

Rev. Barlow loves to share about the ministry of Christian Associates in churches large and small throughout Southwest Pennsylvania. All honoraria go directly to the mission of Christian Associates. Reserve your Sunday today! Email Rev. Barlow at ibarlow@casp.org.



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Your Vote Matters

The League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh encourages *all* citizens to engage in the public sphere and actively participate in elections as informed voters. Vote your values on May 19, 2026.

Nonpartisan election and candidate information and voting resources for the upcoming Primary Election are available at our webpage, lwvpgh.org/community.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS*
OF GREATER PITTSBURGH
412-261-4284
info@lwvpgh.org

Pastors' Workshop:

Growing the Church

The top critical issue facing the church is decline. As our churches shrink, our voices fade and our influence wanes.

Our churches can grow again, but it requires changing how we lead and what we emphasize.

Join Rev. Dr. Graham Standish as he presents five key principles to sustain church growth.

Scan code to register. Cost: \$15 includes refreshments.



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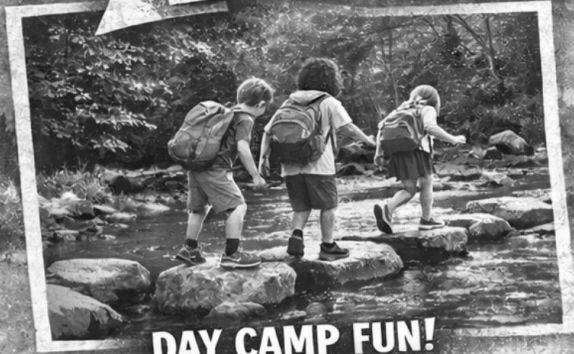
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Faith Forming Families Network at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

CHILDREN'S SPIRITUALITY DISCUSSION BREAKFAST:

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

May 14, 2026, 9:00-11:30 a.m.

In Person at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Should children participate in regular worship? If so, what role can they play, and how do we make space for them in the sanctuary?

How can we best support parents bringing their children—and ensure the sanctuary is welcoming to children of all abilities? If not, what would it take to develop a worship program specifically for children?

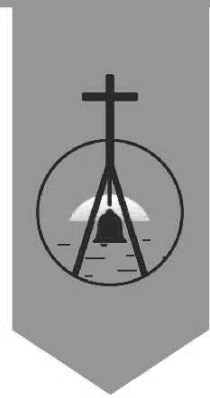
Share your thoughts, experiences, and ideas as we unpack this complex topic. You'll have ample time to engage with colleagues and hear from a panel of local ministers who approach children in worship in different ways.

Join the Faith Forming Families Network for a delicious breakfast and a lively conversation about children in worship.

www.pts.edu/F3-Network 412-924-1405



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Write a Letter, Lift Your Voice Against Hunger



A room full of advocates from across Southwest Pennsylvania gathered for the Rising to the Challenge Advocacy Workshop with Bread for the World in March. Speakers included Lisa Scales, Rev. Liddy Barlow, Rev. Heather Taylor, Dawn Plummer, Ann Sanders, and Sr. Carol Stenger.

The local Bread team is aiming to organize 30 “Offerings of Letters” in churches around our region in coming months. To learn more about how your church can put your faith into action by writing letters to Congress about critical measures to alleviate hunger in our communities, visit bread.org/ol, or plan to attend the next meeting of the SWPA Bread Team: Friday, May 29 at 11:30 via Zoom. Contact chairperson Joyce Rothermel, rothermeljoyce@gmail.com, to receive the link.

Save the Date: America’s Potluck

Get your picnic basket ready for the biggest community potluck ever: America’s Potluck on Sunday, July 5!

Across the country, neighbors will gather to share food and conversation, looking beyond our differences to celebrate all we share as American neighbors, as we gather exactly 250 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Here in our region, you can plan to join a giant community potluck picnic at the J&R Day Camp in Monroeville, or host a potluck in your own backyard. We’ll have lots more information in the next issue of *The Call*: for now, make sure to mark your calendar!



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