



Cherry Blossoms at the National Mall in D.C.

Louisiana Interchurch Conference

L-I-Newsletter

April 30, 2018

"To live the faith we hold in common"

Photo taken by our Executive Director while in D.C. for a rally to end racism. The nearby Tidal Basin Reservoir area is known for its blossoming cherry trees.

Contents:

- *When the Advocate Comes (Article from our Director)*
- *May 3rd - National Day of Prayer. The theme for 2018 is Unity ...*
- *President proclaims April "Second Chance Month." Second chances for the one in four Americans with a criminal record ...*
- *PAR guide available for free - as an app for those with Apple I-Phones or Androids ...*
- *National Workshop on Christian Unity held in April. Highlights from our Executive Director ...*
- *A.C.T. Now: Unite to End Racism event held in D.C. Summary info. from our Executive Director...*
- *Enjoying fellowship with the New Orleans Association of the United Church of Christ. Dan and Samuel pleased to be guests ...*
- *Offering thanks to our recent contributors - we couldn't make it without you all!*
- *Dates to calendar & website links ...*



When the Advocate Comes

*Article from our Executive Director,
Rev. Dan Krutz*

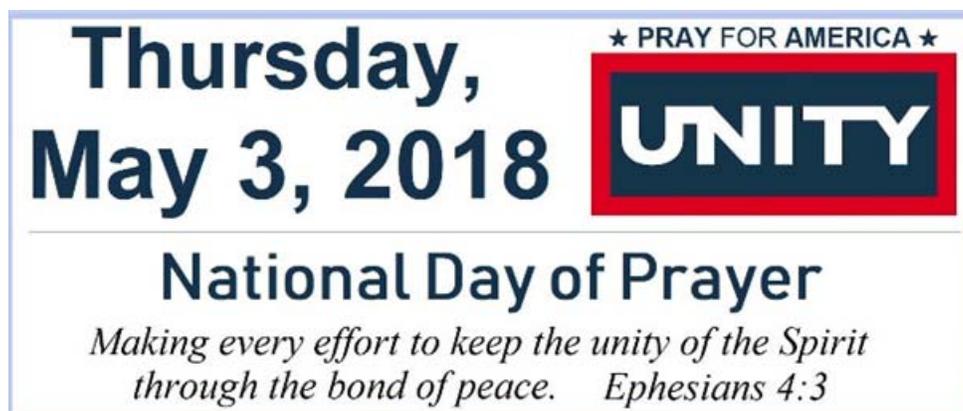
²⁶ But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me; ²⁷ and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning. John 15:26-27

There are several characteristics that come to mind when we think of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity. One of those words is sometimes translated as Paraclete or Helper. Within this category such descriptive words as Advocate and Counselor are also used to translate this term. I suppose at times in arrogance we might think we have no need of the Spirit of God to work in our lives; we say we can do it all by ourselves. For very different reasons others may have had experiences in their lives that make it hard for them to reach out to others and to reach out to God. They desperately want guidance and help but find it next to impossible to reach out. Still others are completely indifferent to the notion of seeking help within the spiritual realm. Indifference may well be the gravest barrier to a relationship with God today.

Though it is certainly possible to look to the Spirit to guide individuals in their daily discipleship, here Jesus is speaking to those gathered as the once and future church. We hear the story of the Spirit witnessing to Jesus, and we are called to be witnesses as well. You have probably sat through lots of introductions of keynote speakers as have I, and often those speakers give a presentation that bears out the truth of their introduction. What do we have to say about Jesus who died, rose again, and now has returned to the Father? Where do you begin as you think about what might convince someone else of the Christ?

As for those who followed Jesus and experienced his ministry, it was Jesus' deeds as much as his words and teachings that caused them to do what they did. In a number of instances these disciples left much that was important to them to follow Jesus. Those who saw Jesus challenge the moneychangers in the temple precincts must have been beside themselves that someone would throw over their tables and bring judgment upon them for their actions. Just as powerfully, Jesus healed the sick and ministered to those outside the community of faith or who were not active.

As we prepare to commemorate Pentecost Day and the gift of the Paraclete, the Advocate, the Counselor—all manifestations of the Holy Spirit—we shall also be sent out into the world as bearers of the Spirit by being Advocates, Helpers, Counselors and Witnesses. May The Holy Spirit within us guide and direct the Church into God's world and witness to God's power to bring justice and peace!

The logo for the National Day of Prayer is enclosed in a blue border. On the left, the text "Thursday, May 3, 2018" is written in a large, bold, dark blue font. To the right of this text is a red square containing the word "UNITY" in white, bold, capital letters. Above the "UNITY" square, the text "★ PRAY FOR AMERICA ★" is written in a smaller, dark blue font. Below the date and the "UNITY" square, the text "National Day of Prayer" is written in a bold, dark blue font. Underneath that, the phrase "Making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:3" is written in a smaller, italicized, dark blue font.

**Thursday,
May 3, 2018**

★ PRAY FOR AMERICA ★

UNITY

National Day of Prayer

*Making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit
through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:3*

On Thursday, May 3rd, the [National Day of Prayer](#) (NDP) will take place across America. We invite you to take time to join in unified prayer for our nation. It is hoped that more churches will become involved in this amazing event which brings together believers in as many as 50,000 or more events each year across this land.

The National Day of Prayer is patterned after what took place on June 12, 1775, when the 2nd Continental Congress declared a Day of Public "Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer" for the citizens of all 13 colonies, urging them to gather in their churches on July 20 to pray for America. When God's people fell to their knees that day in July and cried out with desperate pleas to the God of Armies, they did not know that from that conflict America would become the greatest, most God-blessed nation in history! Numerous American Congresses and presidents have called for national days of prayer down through the past 200 plus years, beginning with George Washington. In 1952, Congress passed and Harry Truman signed a law making the National Day of Prayer an annual event, and in 1988, Ronald Reagan signed a law to observe the NDP on the first Thursday of May each year, so that churches and Christian societies and people of all faiths could plan from year to year to gather for prayer for our nation.



April 2018 -- President Proclaims April Second Chance Month

Every person has dignity and potential. But one in four American adults has a criminal record, which limits their access to education, jobs, housing, and other things they need to reach that potential.

President Trump has taken a bold move in helping more than [135 organizations](#) fight for those who have paid their debt to society. *"This proclamation gives us hope in our work to help people with a criminal record reach their God-given potential in life,"* said Craig DeRoche, senior vice president of advocacy and public policy at Prison Fellowship.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view a copy of President Trump's declaration.



**PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH
COUNCIL OF LOUISIANA**

Earlier this year, the Public Affairs Research Council (PAR) released its Guide to the 2018 Louisiana Legislature. The PAR Guide is a pocket-sized booklet for citizens that is filled with key information about Louisiana's elected officials and state agencies, (available at a nominal cost). However, the PAR Guide is also available as a free APP if you have an Apple I-Phone or an Android. Just access the site where you would normally purchase / download APPs and search for PAR. The app will provide much of the same information contained in the paper Guide, but will also be updated throughout the year.



National Workshop on Christian Unity

Pictured is Lisa Sharon Harper, a theologian-in-residence for the NWCU who led the group in Bible study for this April event in Silver Springs, MD.

The logo to her left was adopted in 1995 as the official logo for the National Workshop on Christian Unity.

The logo affirms the cross as central to Christian unity. On either side of the cross is the outline of a chalice, which represents the existing unity (although not complete) and the anticipated full communion, which is the goal of the ecumenical movement. The space between the chalice and cross suggests the hands of prayer embracing the reconciling cross.

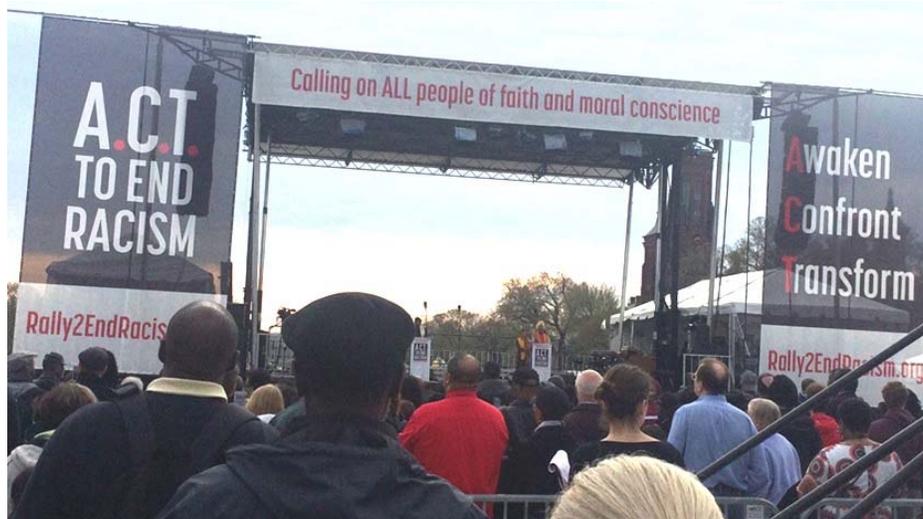
God's Power Nurturing Communities of Witness and Dialogue was the theme for this year's NWCU , April 16-19, 2018. Since we met in Silver Spring, MD, practically in the shadows of our nation's capital; the title of one of a dozen workshops, "(The Church in) The Public Square", sums up one of the main thrusts of this year's gathering. The question was raised, "How do people of faith address political polarization while standing on their principles?"

Through presentations by a Theologian in Residence, Ms. Lisa Sharon Harper, inspirational reflections were given as we began the day with daily Bible study. The preacher for the opening worship was Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., who reminded us that our Faith calls us into the public square and into the political arena.

During this Workshop participants were given time on Tuesday afternoon to visit one of several sites in the D.C. area. Most of the participants went to the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The Museum provided the backdrop for our workshop in that much of our discussion focused on race in America and the role of the church at times in perpetuating slavery and racism while now striving to overcome the sin of racism in America. There were also several updates on dialogues among our churches. The banquet speaker on Wednesday evening, The Rev. Thomas Rosica of Salt and Light Catholic Media, offered a list of over a dozen opportunities and challenges in ministry as the Church moves forward. One to mention is the need to hand on to the current generation the insights and successes of Vatican II. The Church at times has become indifferent to the quest for Christian Unity, and the Church is called to keep the prayer alive that we are called to be One. For the first time in my presence at these events there was the suggestion by a Roman Catholic leader that in certain instances the Church might see the sharing of the Eucharist as food for the journey rather than the goal for which we strive once all other evidences of division are removed.

Rev. Dan Krutz

A.C.T. Now: Unite to End Racism



Rally stage at A.C.T. To End Racism event

A.C.T. Now: Unite to End Racism was in part a rally staged on the Capitol Mall earlier this month in Washington, D.C. A-Awaken, C-Confront, and T-Transform was the movement launched to take up the work of overcoming racism in our culture and society.

Among those in attendance were our Executive Director, Rev. Dan Krutz, and Dr. Don Longbottom of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ. The event on April 4 marking the 50th Anniversary of the Assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, began with a walk from the King Memorial and ended at the Rally site on the Capital Mall near 12th Street on the Mall (Smithsonian Metro Stop) A considerable number of organizations and faith groups joined the National Council of Churches as partners, sponsors, and endorsers. For the most part, the early April weather cooperated with those assembled for the Rally. The morning was warm and beautiful, but a front blew in at lunchtime that brought cooler temperatures and high winds. Still, thousands stayed for the afternoon.

The goal was to shine a light on the legacy of slavery and racism in our nation, the need to commit ourselves as people of faith to bring it to an end, and to mark the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by commemorating his life and ministry. There were fantastic speakers and singers, too many to mention, and an atmosphere of love and respect was evident throughout the day. The Commemoration of Dr. King's life through speeches and greetings by many Faith Leaders from a spectrum of religions, punctuated by Gospel choirs; it is hoped, will give rise to a new movement to overcome racism in America.



Fellowship and Worship time at Beecher United Church of Christ, New Orleans, LA, during the **UCC New Orleans-Spring Meeting** held on 4/21/18.

The Rev. Brenda Square gave a sermon on loving your neighbor.

LIC Executive Director, Fr. Dan Krutz, and LIC Bread or Stones Coordinator, Mr. Samuel Rottman were pleased to be invited to and present at the Spring meeting of the New Orleans Association of the United Church of Christ on Saturday, April 21, 2018. Fr. Dan was able to bring greetings and Samuel was able to tell the group more about the children's anti-poverty program. The UCC-New Orleans Association has been actively supporting the LIC for a number of years. Our appreciation goes out to all of the members of the New Orleans Association!

Offering thanks to our recent contributors

The majority of the LIC operating income is contributed through the leadership of our member Judicatories, whom we deeply appreciate and depend upon. Additionally, we offer our sincere thanks to our ministry partners who have contributed as listed below.

Contributions received from March 29, 2018 through April 29, 2018:

Endowment Fund for Christian Unity: **Mrs. Martha M. Boone** (in memory of her sister, Rev. Mary E. Moody);
and **Mr. & Mrs. Herman Guidry**.

Thank you all!

Please pray for this ecumenical ministry. If you would like to help financially, please mail contributions to:
Louisiana Interchurch Conference, 527 N. Blvd., 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, or contribute online via
PayPal at <http://www.lainterchurch.org/contribute/index.htm>.

Dates to calendar

National Day of Prayer – May 3th

Children’s Sabbath – First week of May

Bread or Stones Task Force Meeting – May 3rd, Baton Rouge

May Friendship Day – Church Women United – May 4th

Annual Assembly meeting dates:

2019		March 11-12, Lafayette
2020		March 2-3, tbd – New Orleans or Houma

Fall Board meeting dates:

2018		Sept. 24-25, Lake Charles
2019		Sept. 23-24, Monroe

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“To live the faith we hold in common”

President: The Rev. Cynthia Fierro Harvey; President Elect: The Rev. Dr. Timothy Jones;

Executive Director: Fr. Dan Krutz

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Louisiana Interchurch Conference

527 North Blvd Fl 4, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5720

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