The House Built on The Rock…….

As I write my final message as President of Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County, it is with unfailing certainty that our sights must be firmly set on the Christian principles of love and service…for this is the foundation that enables us to stand strong during turbulent winds and fast moving currents in this constantly changing world.

We face times and conditions that we thought we would never face, and the Church must be the standard bearer for a world that is so encumbered by hate, uncertainty, materialism and inhumanity to our fellow humans. The light of the city on the hill must be illuminated now more than ever.

When a storm arises, one’s inclination is to seek a place of refuge…a place of safety. Much as we’ve seen man-made structures unable to withstand the hurricane-force winds that come against them, where do we go to seek protection and who offers it? I believe that we find protection, security, peace and assurance within the confines of the words and teaching of Christ espoused by a Church that He acknowledges as His bride and His witness on earth.

When we are failed by institutions, by systems, by the people who we believe have our best interests at heart and we are engulfed by the legion of darkness, there has to be something that guides us out of darkness into the “light.” I believe that this light which guides us from the distant dangerous shores to safety is the Church.

David knew through all his trials… “if the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do?” We must not allow ourselves to become pawns to a system that destroys that on which we are built…the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ…the true light and the solid rock…the Truth who came into the world.

We must continue as a collective body to be the hope for the world, so others see Christ in us and His hope of glory. We have a daunting task before us. We can succumb to the forces that bind us or we can call upon the power given to us to become the victors that we are called to be.

Let the Church not believe for a second that our task is too hard…our bodies too old…our enemy too strong…or that we would shun our duty and let others do it. Arise from sleep and remember… “and let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” (Ephesians 6:9)

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.” (Matthew 7: 24-25)

Yours in Christ… Johnny C. Johnson, President, Inter-Church Ministries
A Project of Inter-Church Ministries in Partnership with Bethany Outreach Center 254 E. 10th Street, Erie PA

It’s that time of year to begin to prepare for the cold weather… and once again Inter-Church Ministries is partnering with Bethany Outreach Center to distribute our “Coats for Kids” to those in need.

All cold weather clothing donations are needed and accepted: new and gently used winter coats, jackets, mittens, scarves, boots, hats, sweatshirts – clothing in all sizes for kids, teens, adults.

So please start collecting now…so that every child in need has a warm coat to wear this winter!

Donations may be dropped off directly to Bethany Outreach Center, 254 E. 10th Street (use the German Street door) on Monday – Friday, 8 am to 12 noon

But please also call ICM at 454-2411 to give us the number of items your church or group collected…ICM will be keeping a tally! You may also call the ICM office at (814) 454-2411 to arrange for pick up.

Let’s share the warmth! Thanks…

Diane Edwards, ICM Director

---

One Table: Erie’s Interfaith and Multicultural Bridge Builders’ Gathering presents:

Voices of Erie: Gannon’s Refugee Oral History Program

Thursday, September 19, 2019
7 pm to 8:30 pm
Venue: First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant 250 West 7th Street, Erie, PA

Join your friends at One Table to hear guest speaker

Guest Speaker:  Dr. Carolyn G. Baugh

Dr. Baugh is Associate Professor of History and Arabic at Gannon University and directs the Refugee Oral History Program, geared at increasing tolerance and understanding between Erie’s diverse refugee populations and their new neighbors. Dr. Baugh will share information about her project teaching oral history methodologies to Gannon students, who record refugee oral histories and archive them on the Nash Library website. Come to hear the stories and learn something new about Erie and the world!

Light refreshments will be served.

****

Mission Statement
ONE TABLE is committed to building bridges of respect, cooperation and understanding within, across and among diverse cultures, faiths, and belief systems in Erie’s communities and neighborhoods.
Inter-Church Ministries’ “Facing Race thru Film” Series continues on the 30th of the Month with engaging conversation about structural racism, using film as the vehicle to inspire the conversation. Participants will explore the power of story-telling thru cinema in efforts to stimulate dialogue and ignite transformation toward understanding and healing. Each month, a different ‘film of the month’ is selected…so far, the films we’ve discussed have included: “The Hate You Give”; “If Beale Street Could Talk”; “Fences”; “Imitation of Life”; “Hidden Figures”; “I Am Not Your Negro”; “Best of Enemies” and “Marshall.”

The idea is to watch the selected ‘film of the month’ sometime during the month – on your own time and dime – and then we’ll gather on the 30th of the month for conversation and discussion. (This is like a book club, but with film and a focus…newcomers to the conversation are always welcome!)

September 30th Film of the Month is: “Green Book”

“Green Book” – released in November 2018 – was chosen as Best Picture at the 91st Academy Awards in 2019. This film is based upon the true story of classical pianist Dr. Don Shirley (played by actor Mahershala Ali) who hires working class Italian American bouncer, Tony Lip Vallelonga (played by actor Viggo Mortensen) to be his driver for a concert tour into the Deep South during the 1960’s. The pair must rely on Victor Hugo Green’s “The Negro Motorist Green Book” to guide them to safe establishments that were open to African Americans in the Jim Crow South. As the disparate pair witness and endure America’s appalling injustices on the road, they find a newfound respect for each other’s talents and start to face them together. In doing so, they would nurture a friendship and understanding that would change both their lives.

Film Discussion Group Will Meet On:

Monday, September 30, 2019 – 4 to 5:30 pm
Venue: Café 7-10 located at 7 West 10th Street, Erie (next to the Erie Playhouse)

Note: There are 9 copies of “Green Book” available at the Erie County Public Library.
For more information, please call (814) 454-2411 or icm@icmeriecounty.com
Would you like to own your own home?
Come to an Orientation Session

Thursday, Sept. 26, 2019
@ Greater Erie Area Habitat for Humanity Office Building, 4922 Pittsburgh Ave.
(use the North Parking Lot Front Door)
Registration Begins: 6:15 pm
Session Begins: 6:30 pm
OR
Saturday, Sept. 28, 2019
@ Friendship Baptist Church,
1719 Cascade Street, Erie
Registration Begins: 9:45 am
Session Begins: 10:00 am

After Sept. 20th, pick up packet from office at 4922 Pittsburgh Ave. (Mon. – Fri. 10 am – 2 pm) or by attending one of the above orientation sessions. A completed application requires a number of items including attendance at a prospective applicant orientation session – either Sept. 26 or Sept 28 – for Fall 2019.

RSVP at 454-7025 ext. 107
by Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2019.

Not able to attend the Fall 2019 sessions, the 2020 application window will open Mon. Feb 3, 2020 and close Fri., March 13, 2020 with orientation sessions scheduled for March 2020. (Time and location yet to be determined.)

Wayside Fall Convocation
Co-Hosted by:
- Jefferson Educational Society
- Presbyterian Women of Presbytery of Lake Erie
- Wayside Presbyterian Church

Saturday, October 12th, 2019
Guest Speaker: Debby Irving
“I’m a Good Person! Isn’t That Enough?”

Author of “Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race,” Debby Irving will be Wayside Presbyterian Church’s Fall Convocation speaker on Saturday, October 12, 2019. As detailed in her book “Waking Up White,” Debby Irving felt inexplicable racial tensions in her personal and professional relationships with people of color. As a colleague and neighbor, she worried about unknowingly offending people she very much wanted to befriend and affirm. Indeed, she often did just that. As an arts administrator, her diversity efforts were cringe-worthy and lacked traction; and as a teacher, her best efforts to reach out to students and families of color often failed miserably.

Now a racial justice educator and writer, Ms. Irving works with other white people to transform anxiety, missteps and misinformation, into action. Come and hear about her journey from white oblivion to white awareness.

@ Wayside, 1208 Asbury Road
Saturday Morning, October 12th
8:30 am – 1:15 pm
Continental Breakfast and Lunch provided
Register at (814) 833-7653 or online:
www.wayside-erie.org/events/fallconvocation/

@ Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St.
Saturday Afternoon, October 12th
2:30 pm to 4:30 pm
Lecture, Book Sales and Signing
Register at (814) 459-8000 or online:
www.jeserie.org

No cost for the event. A free will offering will be accepted at the lunch at Wayside Presbyterian. Register by Sunday, October 6, 2019.
You...and your congregation are invited!

2019 Annual Meeting & Dinner

Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>
Venue: Luther Memorial Church
225 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Erie, PA

(New Entrance to Luther Memorial Church Parking is now via W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street)
(Additional Parking is also available in Thompson and Berman Bedding Lots via W. 11<sup>th</sup>)
Cost: $20 per person

5:05 pm - Brief Election Business Meeting
5:45 pm - Meet & Greet ICM’s Council
6:00 pm - Invocation & Welcome
6:05 pm - Dinner – Sabella’s Catering plus Easy Listening Music of Mambo Jazz
6:45 pm - Program Theme: “Community vs. Chaos”

“Walking the Walk”
Guest Speaker: Joseph (Seph) Kumer
Director of Community Engagement, First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant

A night to be inspired and encouraged! Please join us!

RSVP by Monday, October 7, 2019. For more information, call ICM at (814) 454-2411.

2019 Annual Meeting and Dinner on Tuesday, October 15, 2019

___ Yes, I/we will attend. (Please indicate any dietary restrictions ___________________________)
___ No, I am/we are unable to attend, but please accept the enclosed donation of $______________

Name(s): __________________________________________________________________________
Congregation: ________________________________________________________________________
Delegates:  #1 __________________________________________________________________________
           #2 __________________________________________________________________________
Cost per person: $20       Number Attending: _____________ Amount enclosed: _____________

Make checks payable to: Inter-Church Ministries, 250 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Erie, PA 16501
Please return this reply card with payment by October 7, 2019.
It's Personal...It's Official...and I Wanted You To Know!

I wanted you to know that...at ICM’s Executive Committee Meeting on September 9, 2019, I submitted my written notification of my intent to retire at the close of 2019, and will consider December 31, 2019 as my last day of service as ICM’s Executive Director.

It continues to be an honor and a privilege to be of service to God and our neighbors in Erie County, Pennsylvania through our collective work with Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County.

Please know that I will miss you all but am looking forward to the next chapter in my life’s journey. I have the deepest confidence that God has great plans for the organization in the days and months ahead!

Yours in Christ, Diane C. Edwards, Executive Director

P.S. The ministry continues with your support and prayers...and ICM’s Transition Team and Leadership Council are hard at work already planning for the next chapter... more details will be forthcoming in the days ahead!