



## Prison Partnership Program

Spring 2018

An Ecumenical Ministry Program  
by the Hudson River Presbytery

*"...he sent me to proclaim freedom for  
the prisoners" - Luke 4:18*

### Timothy Cardinal Dolan Celebrates Christmas with the Inmates of Taconic Correctional Facility and renames the Chapel in honor of the first female Catholic Prison Chaplain in NYS



Photo Credit: Chris Sheridan, Catholic New York

Pictured above include Timothy Cardinal Dolan; Anthony J. Annucci, Commissioner of NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (behind the Cardinal's left shoulder) and to the Cardinal's left, Sharon Grist Ballen (head bowed), Assistant to Presbytery Prison Partnership; Ken Waldemar, Volunteer, Taconic Cemetery and Garden Project; and Rev. Dr. Hans Hallundbaek, Coordinator, Presbytery Prison Partnership Program.

**On December 18, 2017, Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York, celebrated Christmas Mass for the inmates and staff of Taconic Correctional Facility in Bedford Hills. After Mass was completed, Cardinal Dolan greeted each inmate personally. He then processed to the Prison Chapel, which he renamed "The Sister Antonia Maguire Chapel" (pictured above). Sister Antonia was the first female Catholic Prison Chaplain in New York State. She spent more than forty years in Prison Ministry. Sister Antonia died in April 2017.**

## You made Christmas better for many



The Annual Collection of Christmas cards, calendars and Bibles by the Churches of the Hudson River Presbytery continues! Thanks to your generosity, PPP was able to package and send many (seven of which are pictured at left) large boxes to Prison Chaplains in our local prisons. The Chaplains then distribute the Bibles, calendars and perhaps most importantly, Christmas cards, which allow inmates to send a Christmas card to their families and keep those relationships alive. Thank you to all of our churches and individuals who contribute in this way each year. It means so much to those who have, and who have been given, so little.

According to Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York, one-third of the US population has a criminal record. [Click here for the article](#)



Photo courtesy of Cuomo's Flickr Page

## UN Event February 1, 2018



Above: Brian Fischer, Retired Commissioner, Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, speaking at the UN.



Some of the Co-hosts of the event (l-r): Hans Hallundbaek, Coordinator PPP; The Honorable Ib Petersen, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations; Jean-Didier Mboyo, VP, International Prison Chaplains Association (IPCA); Charles Sullivan, President, Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE); Ryan Smith, UN Rep for PCUSA. (Missing from photo: Bruce Knotts, below, and Doug Leonard, UN Representative of the World Council of Churches).



Some of the over 100 attendees  
at the UN Side Event

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Leeanna Varga, Director of Programs,  
Episcopal Charities

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Rev. Dr. Darren Ferguson, who  
received a standing ovation after his  
speech at the UN meeting

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JoAnne Page, President and CEO,  
The Fortune Society

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Bruce Knotts, Director of the Unitarian Universalist  
United Nations Office, co-host of the event

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Teresa Kellendonk, Vice President, International  
Prison Chaplains Association (IPCA), Canada

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Jean-Didier Mboyo, Vice President, International  
Prison Chaplains Association (IPCA), Congo; and  
Charles Sullivan, President, Citizens United for the  
Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE), co-hosts of the  
event

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Chris Burdick, Supervisor,  
Town of Bedford

On the occasion of the 56th Session on Social Development, the Prison Partnership Program co-hosted its second Side Event at the United Nations on Thursday, February 1, 2018. Other co-hosts were:

- **The Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations**
- **The World Council of Churches, the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Presbyterian Church USA**
- **The International Prison Chaplains Association (IPCA)**, which has about two-thousand members serving as Prison Chaplains in more than fifty countries.
- **Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE)**, which has thirty-nine chapters in the US and representatives in close to thirty countries. CURE engages in legislative prison reform efforts in the US.

*Special thanks and photo credit to Alan Pogue, photographer.*



Ib Petersen, Ambassador, Permanent  
Representative of Denmark to the United Nations,  
co-host of the event

The event, entitled ***A Human Dignity, and Faith Perspectives, on the Eradication of Poverty as One of the Main Root Causes of Incarceration***, included the following speakers:

**Bikkhu Bodhi**, *President, Buddhist Association of the United States*

**Chris Burdick**, *Supervisor, Town of Bedford*  
**Darren Ferguson**, *Minister and National Director of Public Relations, Healing Communities*

**Brian Fischer**, *Retired Commissioner, NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision*

**Teresa Kellendonk**, *Vice President, International Prison Chaplains Association (Canada)*

**Bruce Knotts**, *Director, United Nations Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association*

**Doug Leonard**, *UN Representative for the World Council of Churches*

**Jean-Didier Mboyo**, *Vice-President, International Prison Chaplains Association (Congo)*

**JoAnne Page**, *President and CEO, The Fortune Society*

**Ib Peterson**, *Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations*

**Karen Shiel**, *Rehabilitation Through the Arts*  
**Charles Sullivan**, *President, Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants*

## The Advisory Council



Pictured above are the members of the PPP (soon to be renamed Interfaith Prison Partnership) Advisory Council and Staff: Rik Pike, Merle McJunkin, Peter Johnson, Judi McCandless, Steve Holton, Janet Donat and Hans Hallundbaek (staff).

We are very pleased to introduce the Advisory Council of the Presbytery Prison Partnership Program as we transition to the Interfaith Prison Partnership Program of the Hudson River Presbytery. Look for more on the big announcement of our transition in our Fall Newsletter! These six individuals have stepped up, and stood up, for Prison Ministry. They have worked tirelessly to ensure that this ministry is alive and that it continues. Included is a brief Bio of each member:

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**Janet Donat - Family Services of Westchester, EMERGE Program Director**

Janet has been working with incarcerated women for the past ten years at the Westchester County Department of Corrections through the EMERGE (Educating Mothers to Embrace Re-entry and Gain Employment) program and has coordinated the Coming Home Re-entry program in collaboration with faith-based communities in Bronxville, Rye and White Plains. She feels honored to serve on the board of the Interfaith Prison Partnership Program.

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**Rev. Stephen Holton - Interim Pastor, St. James Episcopal Church, North Salem, NY**

Ordained in 1989, Fr. Holton served for 18 years as Rector of St. Paul's On-the-Hill in Ossining, reaching out to town leaders and people of many faiths to build up the community in which everyone lives. He has had a multi-faith ministry among Christians, Muslims and Jews since 1982. While at General Theological Seminary in New York, he served a prison chaplaincy at Brooklyn House of Detention for Men, where he discovered a deep love of witnessing to the humanity within each person, and the compassion available in God and found in the Bible, for the sake of building new lives in any circumstance. He is excited to be a part of the Interfaith Prison Partnership, and looks forward to new ways of building community both among those inside, and between those inside and outside. God is within all.

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**Rev. Peter Johnson - Pastor, Denton Presbyterian Church, New Hampton, NY**

Though Peter recently finished his Doctor of Ministry degree, he is preparing to retire on May 31st after thirty-two years of parish ministry; fifteen of which were performed at Denton Presbyterian Church. His immediate future includes rest and reflection, and spending time with children and grandchildren. He and his wife, Joanne, look forward to exploring new horizons and experiencing new adventures. Peter joined the IPP Advisory Council because of his four year service (1972-76) as a Correction Officer at the Mountain View Correctional Facility, Annandale, NJ. A formative experience for him, he thought he might help others think about the prison culture with more insight and compassion.

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**Judith McCandless - Member Engagement Coordinator, The Reformed Church of Bronxville**

Judi has been a member of The Reformed Church since 1993, and went on staff there in 2015. Over the course of her membership, some of her volunteer efforts have included Deacon, Elder, Chair of the Pastoral and Congregational Care Council, Consistory Nominating Committee Chair, Confirmand mentor, Adult Education Speaker, and Prison Ministry Volunteer. For the past several years, she has been volunteering monthly at Sing Sing, meeting in a discussion group with men who are alumni of, or currently enrolled in, a Master's Degree Program offered through New York Theological Seminary. Of all of her volunteer roles over the years, Judi has found her prison ministry work to be the most meaningful of all.

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**Rev. Merle McJunkin - Pastor, Antioch Baptist Church, Bedford Hills, NY**

The Reverend Merle D. McJunkin has served as Pastor of Antioch Baptist Church since 2015. During his tenure, new ministry initiatives, activities and teaching/training courses have been implemented. The congregation's Affordable Housing Project was completed in fall 2017. Pastor McJunkin previously served congregations in Philadelphia, Cleveland and Rochester. He is a graduate of Colgate Rochester Bexley Hall Crozer Theological Seminary, which is now known as Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. With missions, social justice and education as main areas of focus of his ministry, working as a part of the Advisory team is a natural fit for him. Rev McJunkin is married to Mrs. Karla R. McJunkin. They are the proud parents of Shayla M. McJunkin.

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**Rev. Richard Pike - Associate Rector, St. Matthews Episcopal Church, Bedford, NY**

Richard Pike, Associate Rector at St. Matthew's in Bedford, hails originally from England and moved to New York while working at Christie's auction house in 2004. A member of Grace Church in New York for a decade, Rik earned his Master of Divinity degree from General Theological Seminary in Chelsea, Manhattan and was ordained in the Diocese of New York in 2014. Married to his wife, Tracy, in 2010, they are proud parents of twin daughters and a son. Rik is enjoying his involvement with the IPP and works hard at further developing St. Matthew's relationship with both of the Correctional Facilities in Bedford Hills and with the multitude of outreach organizations that do such good and necessary work with the incarcerated in the region.

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### Yale Divinity School's Practical Theology Conference



On Saturday, April 14, 2018, Iraq War Veteran and Returned Citizen **Judah Takia Parham** (pictured above) and **Hans Hallundbaek**, Coordinator of the Prison Partnership Program, presented at Yale Divinity School's Association of Practical Theology Biennial Conference in New Haven, CT. Their presentation, "Engaging Our Incarcerated Neighbors through the Transformative Power of the Arts", addressed restorative justice in a society that incarcerates individuals at an extremely high rate and with an equally high rate of racial disparity.

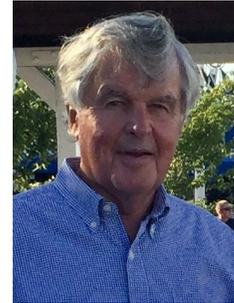
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### Working in Partnership

On September 14, 2017, and on March 23, 2018, **Chris Burdick**, Supervisor of the Town of Bedford; **Tanya Mitchell-Voyd**, Superintendent of Taconic Correctional Facility; **Ken Waldemar**, Volunteer on the Adopt-A-Prison Committee;



and **Hans Hallundbaek**, Coordinator of the Prison Partnership Program, met at the Town Hall to discuss working together as a community for the benefit of all who reside in the Town of Bedford, including those who live within its two Correctional Facilities. Their meetings continue as the Town and Prison work together for the good of the community, of which they are both a part.



### **Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE)'s Rwanda Conference May 2018**

As a courtesy to our friends and colleagues at Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE), we are passing along event information about their upcoming May 21-25, 2018 Eighth International Conference on Human Rights and Prison Reform, to be held in Kigali, Rwanda. The photo at right is of the Genocide Museum in Kigali, one of the places conference attendees will visit while at CURE's Conference.



The conference will explore reconciliation, restorative justice practices, alternatives to imprisonment, and other issues in the criminal justice context, while taking an up-close look at the Rwandan experience of post-genocide reconciliation, especially through the "Grass Courts." In addition, experiences and knowledge of recent advances and trends in the area of human rights and prison reform will be shared.

CURE's Rwandan Conference will hold plenary sessions in the mornings and then will be arranging activities for the attendees in the afternoons. Visitors will have the opportunity to visit villages of reconciliation, Rwandan prisons, genocide museums and national parks. **Hans Hallundbaek**, Coordinator of the Presbytery Prison Partnership program and the NGO Representative for CURE to the United Nations, will be presenting at the conference in Rwanda.

Another extremely unique opportunity will be the chance to see the famous Silver-back Gorillas. **Only 900 mountain gorillas remain on earth.** Human access to the 62-square-mile park is severely restricted, with only 80 visitors permitted to take one of the guided gorilla treks each day. Groups of up to eight are allowed to spend one tightly monitored hour with one of the 10 families.



To learn more about CURE and the Conference in Rwanda, [click here](#)

### An Alternative to Incarceration for Youth

On February 14, 2018, **Hans Hallundbaek** was invited to be interviewed by a special group of students who are taking a video journalism course as part of an **Alternative to Incarceration Program at the Fortune Society.** The Digital Media Training Program was founded in 2013 by broadcast journalist **Melvin McCray** (pictured at right) to train under-served students in New York



City in journalism and video production.

Photo (courtesy of Alan Pogue): Jean-Didier Mboyo, VP IPCA, Melvin McCray (holding camera), Bruce Knotts, UUA, Christopher Padmore, Jr (student), Charlie Sullivan, CURE, (in corner) and Ryan Smith, PCUSA

The overall topic was White Collar Crime versus Street Crime. They are examining the ways society and the criminal justice system perceives and handles them. This video journalism course is part of an initiative called Youth Empowerment Television. They are training young men and women to become citizen journalists. Their hope is to get their stories broadcast on WNET Channel 13's MetroFocus program. A student from last year's class got her story aired recently: <http://www.harlemeyes.com/metrofocus/>

They hope to have several stories completed to offer for broadcast on MetroFocus on NYC's Public Broadcast System. This would be a wonderful opportunity to give voice to an under-served population.

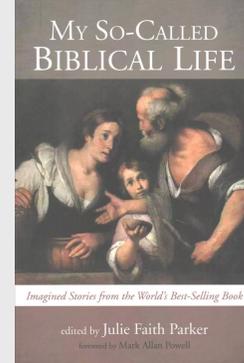
[Visit The Fortune Society website](#)

### Recommended Reading

**Julie Faith Parker**, assistant professor of the Old Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH (and wife of Hudson River Presbytery minister, Bill Crawford, of Larchmont Presbyterian Church), has written a book entitled *My So-Called Biblical Life*, with a foreword by Mark Allan Powell. Her book transforms one-dimensional portrayals of Bible characters

into vibrant portraits of men, women, and children whose struggles and hopes still speak to us today. Julie will be moving back to New York as the Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at General Theological Seminary in Manhattan, effective July 1.

[To purchase a copy of this book, click here](#)



## Prison Tour of Bedford Hills Correctional Facility and the Cemetery at Taconic Correctional Facility



Pictured: L to R: Dawn Morello, Sonia Trew-Wisdom, Steven Holton, Tanya Mitchell-Voyd (Superintendent of Taconic Correctional Facility), Merle McJunkin, Nicole Schwalbe, Nada Khalifeh, Hans Hallundbaek, Peter Johnson, Kelvin Walker, Leeanna Varga, Ken Waldemar. (Missing: Heather Brown-Huston, Heather Fink, Ann Akers, Jason Nevarez, Cari Patterson, Rik Pike, and James Vanschaick)

*"The minute the gate closed behind us, I realized I couldn't leave until the group left. For a few hours, I got a glimpse of what it must feel like to be in a place where you are not free to go until someone releases you or you die. It gave me a whole new picture of why we need to be present with and show the compassion of God to the incarcerated".*

*- Rev Kelvin Walker, Pastor, Bedford Community Church*

The morning of October 12, 2017 found twenty clergy at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. For many, this was their first time "inside" a prison, where they were able to tour the prison, and to also visit the nursery, where they spoke with a representative of Hour Children; and to see "Puppies Behind Bars" in action with its staff and the inmates/trainers who work with these special dogs.

*"As clergy from local congregations, it was such an honor to learn about our role in the rehabilitation of inmates. By our presence we bring the love of our members to the inmates, and the hopes of the inmates to our members. Bring them together and you get healing for our communities. - Rev. **Stephen Holton**, St. James Episcopal Church, North Salem*

*"I was looking at mothers and babies behind bars at BHCF. I could not help but think of my grandson, Jackson, and his Mom. It brought tears to my eyes as I considered that possibility. Then there is the Puppies Behind Bars program of BHCF. As I listened to one of the dog trainer/inmates explain how the dog she was training would help a wounded warrior, once again water rose to my eyes. Finally, as we were preparing to leave for the day, we had the opportunity to visit a cemetery on the grounds of the Taconic Correctional Facility. There are at least 20 markers for babies who died behind the walls of that prison over the years. I am still thinking about that!" - Rev. **Peter Johnson**, Pastor, Denton Presbyterian Church.*

# Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice April 20-23, 2018 Washington DC

*A World Uprooted: Responding to Migrants, Refugees and Displaced Persons*



The Capitol of the United States where Hans, and 1000 other attendees of Ecumenical Advocacy Days, met with Representatives and Senators on April 23, 2018.



The New York State delegation of EAD inside the Capitol as they prepare to lobby Congress. Hans Hallundbaek, representing the Hudson River Presbytery, is back row, second from left.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) is a unique national gathering of almost 1,000 progressive ecumenical Christians. Their goal is advocacy, accomplished by strengthening their Christian voices to mobilize for advocacy on a wide variety of U.S. domestic and international policy issues.



Rev Alonzo Johnson presenting to a crowd of attendees at EAD.



Alonzo Johnson (above) and Hans Hallundbaek gave a presentation entitled "No Longer Exiled: Bridging the Gap Between Church and Mass Incarceration" at The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC at Ecumenical Advocacy Days.

They addressed how our criminal justice system focuses on isolating and dividing community - separating certain groups from others: minorities, the disenfranchised, the poor, people of color, social and economic classes, those who are in prison and those who return from prison - rather than connecting people together for a sense of belonging to a community, a basic human need. There is a great need for the church to foster ideas of bridging the gap between the church, community and local

At this conference, EAD offers training sessions for all of the participants who then go to scheduled meetings with their respective Representatives and Senators on Capitol Hill to advocate for peace and justice in their particular field. At these meetings, participants have the opportunity to dialogue with their Congresspeople not only about what is important to their organizations or area of interest, but also to hear from their Congresspeople what is happening in that area in our current government.

Hans attended EAD April 20 - 23, 2018, to advocate on behalf of prison issues. He conducted a presentation with **Rev Alonzo Johnson**, who is the Coordinator of the Self Development of People, Presbyterian Church USA (CPJ) and who has experience in urban, social justice ministries and volunteer prison Chaplaincy at Luther Luckett Correctional Facility, LaGrange, KY.

Alonzo and Hans' presentation was entitled **"No Longer Exiled: Bridging the Gap Between Church and Mass Incarceration"**.

jails and prisons. This is a community-based justice system focused on the healing of broken relationships, in direct opposition to today's outdated, punitive model. Through the exploration of Restorative Justice motifs, their workshop offered analysis of the intersection of economics, race, class and power and how they are operative in the current predatory system of mass incarceration. In this Restorative Justice model, each jail and prison becomes a place for churches and ministries to engage in community outreach, healing and reintegration.

On Monday, April 23, 2018, Hans met with **Mecole Hayes**, Legislative Assistant to Representative **Sean Patrick Maloney**, who represents the 18th District of New York; and representatives for Senators **Schumer** and **Gillebrand**.

[If you are interested in learning more about EAD, click here](#)

### **Prison Sunday at First Presbyterian Church, Katonah**

**Rev Dr Darren Ferguson**, Pastor of Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Far Rockaway, NY; **Nancy Gernert** of Woman2Woman prison visiting program; and **Hans Hallundbaek**, PPP Coordinator, raised the roof, and packed the seats, to bring home the message of Prison Ministry on a beautiful Sunday morning at Katonah Presbyterian Church. Bishop Ferguson's sermon was entitled "The Welfare of the City", followed by an Adult Ed (pictured at right), led by Nancy and Hans.



### **Prison Ministry at All Souls' Parish, The Presbyterian Church Port Chester NY**



Racism and economics' drastic effect on whom goes to prison, the need for reform, and the issues of forgiveness, restorative justice, and rehabilitation were discussed during the December 3, 2017 Church Service at All Souls Parish The Presbyterian Church, whose heritage dates back to 1660. **Rev. Jane Ann Groom** invited **Hans Hallundbaek**, Coordinator of the Presbyterian Prison Partnership, to speak to the congregation at All Soul's Parish The Presbyterian Church in Port Chester, NY on these issues and prison ministry in general. Hans was accompanied by **Judah Takia Parham**, a returned citizen and Iraq war veteran, who spoke with the congregation about her experience in prison. If you would like to have Hans and Judah speak at your church, write to Hans at [hans@hudrivpres.org](mailto:hans@hudrivpres.org)

Just a reminder that PPP has its own Facebook page, which we encourage you to "Like" and to "Write Something" that you would like to post or share with others about the important work that you are doing.



We are very pleased to be sending the Spring 2018 PPP Newsletter on Prison Ministry to you.

Sharon Griest Ballen | Editor, PPP Newsletter |  
[sharon@hudrivpres.org](mailto:sharon@hudrivpres.org)  
Hans Hallundbaek, Coordinator | Prison Partnership Program |  
[hans@hudrivpres.org](mailto:hans@hudrivpres.org)

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