



**AKRON AREA
INTERFAITH
COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER
January 2024**



A MOMENT OF PEACE IN AKRON

On Thursday, December 21, 2023 The Akron Area Interfaith Council hosted a candlelight vigil for peace in the world at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron. Many people from diverse backgrounds came together to hear prayers being offered by representatives from the Akron area faith community. The faith leaders were from The Baha’I Faith, Unitarian Universalism, The House of the Lord, The Jewish Faith, The Akron Interfaith Immigration Advocates, the Muslim Faith, and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Father Shevchuk from the Holy Ghost Ukranian Catholic Church was scheduled to be there, but had to cancel due to illness. Each faith leader offered insights for all to ponder in solidarity with each other. Members of the faith community joined together to grieve for those who are suffering as a result of war, to pray for peace throughout the world and to reconnect with our humanity and with each other.

Participants lit candles in the darkness of the Winter Solstice and were challenged to not just pray for peace, but to go out and do the work of peace by reaching out to those who may seem different than them. They were challenged to get to know someone from a faith or culture other than their own, and to ask themselves “What am I willing to do to bring about peace in my family, my community, my country, and my world?”. Participants left with hope in their hearts and a sense that Peace is possible.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed toward making this event a success.

Peace,

Susan Gallagher,

AAIC President



Pictured from left to right: Pastor Daren Brake, The House of The Lord; Rev. Dr. Josh Snyder, Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron; Susan Gallagher, Akron Area Interfaith Council; Jaudith Yeppes, Akron Interfaith Immigration Advocates; Rabbi Josh Brown, Temple Israel; Dr. Lydia Rose, Islamic Center of Akron and Kent; Pari Koshbin, Baha'i Faith of Northeast Ohio; Rev. Tom Bodie, Chaplain Akron Children's Hospital; and John Edgerton, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

**26.2 TO LIFE MOVIE
AND PANEL DISCUSSION
with Markelle Taylor**

**Sunday January 14, 2024 at 3:00pm
Akron Civic Theatre**



The San Quentin Prison Marathon has an unconventional route: 105 dizzying laps around a crowded prison yard. *26.2 TO LIFE* is a new documentary that tells the story of incarcerated men who are members of the 1000 Mile Club, the prison's long distance running club. They train all year for this 26.2-mile race. For the men who take their places at the starting line on a cool, sunny November morning, completing the marathon means more than entrée into an elite group of athletes. It's a chance to be defined by more than their crimes. Cheering them on is a small staff of volunteer coaches, veteran marathoners who train with the runners throughout the year. The bonds they forge on the track create a community that transcends prison politics and extends beyond the prison walls as members are released. *26.2 TO LIFE* is a story of transformation and second chances. The film offers a rare glimpse into a world out of bounds, as the men navigating life sentences seek redemption and freedom... or something like it.

[Trailer](#)

Tickets: \$15—[Purchase Tickets Online](#) at TicketMaster

 **CATHOLIC MOBILIZING NETWORK**

Free Webinar | Jan. 11

**THE U.S.
DEATH PENALTY
IN 2024:
A STATE OF THE UNION**

Save Your Spot

The U.S. death penalty is in a constant state of evolution. Each year brings changes in the pace of executions, the rate of death sentences — even the possibility of abolition.

Join CMN on **Thursday, January 11**, from 2:00—3:00 p.m., for a timely webinar exploring these shifting dynamics: "[The U.S. Death Penalty in 2024: A State of the Union.](#)"

[RSVP Now](#)

at <https://catholicismobilizing.org/event/us-death-penalty-2024-state-union>

During this free, one-hour event, a distinguished panel of death penalty experts and Catholic leaders will delve into the capital punishment landscape in 2024. Together they will highlight important trends in executions and death sentences, public opinion, and the Catholic response to the use of the death penalty at the federal and state levels.

Meet Our Panelists:

Most Rev. Paul Coakley, Archbishop of Oklahoma City

Herman Lindsey, Executive Director of Witness to Innocence

Robin Maher, Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center

POWER | LOVE ♥ JUSTICE WEEKEND-AKRON

JANUARY 12TH-15TH



CORPORATE CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS: CRUCIAL, COURAGEOUS, CONVERSATION TOPICS:

**MENTAL HEALTH/TRAUMA,
YOUTH VIOLENCE INTERVENTION,
& DEATHS OF DESPAIR**

**ORGANIZATIONS CHOOSE A 60-90
MINUTE TIME SLOT THROUGHOUT THE DAY
*WILL BE HELD AT PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS**

REGISTER ON EVENTBRITE TO PARTICIPATE

12

**FRI
DAYTIME**

REGISTER ON EVENTBRITE



DR. YOLANDA SEALEY-RUIZ



A CHANGE MAKERS SYMPOSIUM: IGNITING A COMMUNITY FOR TRANSFORMATION

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: DR. YOLANDA SEALEY-RUIZ

SCREENING OF DOCUMENTARY "MY LIFE"

**PANEL DISCUSSIONS: 2 STUDENT AND
COMMUNITY PANELS**

**LOCATED AT - UNIVERSITY OF AKRON,
JOHN HOWER TABER STUDENT UNION,
GARDNER THEATRE**

REGISTER ON GOOGLE FORMS

13

SAT

PANELS

9AM-3PM

REGISTER ON GOOGLE FORMS



CONCERT

7:30PM

SCAN FOR TICKETS



ticketmaster



EVENING CONCERT

GOSPEL CONCERT HEADLINERS:

**PASTOR SMOKIE NORFUL &
ERICA CAMPBELL**

**OPENING ACTS BY: PAULA DEPREE &
UNITED VOICE MASS CHOIR**

**LOCATED AT GOODYEAR THEATER
1201 E MARKET ST. AKRON, OH 44305**



YOUTH DAY OF ACTION:

**YOUTH AND VOLUNTEERS WILL BE
CLEANING UP THE COMMUNITY AT
SELECTED SITES THROUGHOUT AKRON
WHILE CREATING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR
YOUTH TO PROVIDE DIALOGUE FOR
CRUCIAL COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS**

REGISTER AT GGCPINC.ORG

15

MON

10AM-2PM

**EVENT REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR ALL MLK WEEKEND EVENTS
ALL EVENT LINKS CAN BE FOUND ON GGCPINC.ORG**

SPONSORS TO DATE:

DR. KING'S DREAM
WEEKEND SPONSORS:



RE-IMAGINING
PUBLIC SAFETY SPONSOR:



CIVIL RIGHTS SPONSOR:



SOCIAL JUSTICE SPONSORS:



PEACE AND EQUALITY SPONSORS:



DREAM PROMOTER SPONSORS:





Akron
Urban League

MOVING FORWARD

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2024

A N N U A L

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Breakfast

HILTON AKRON/FAIRLAWN
3180 W MARKET ST, AKRON, OH 44333
8:00AM-9:30AM

SPONSORED BY

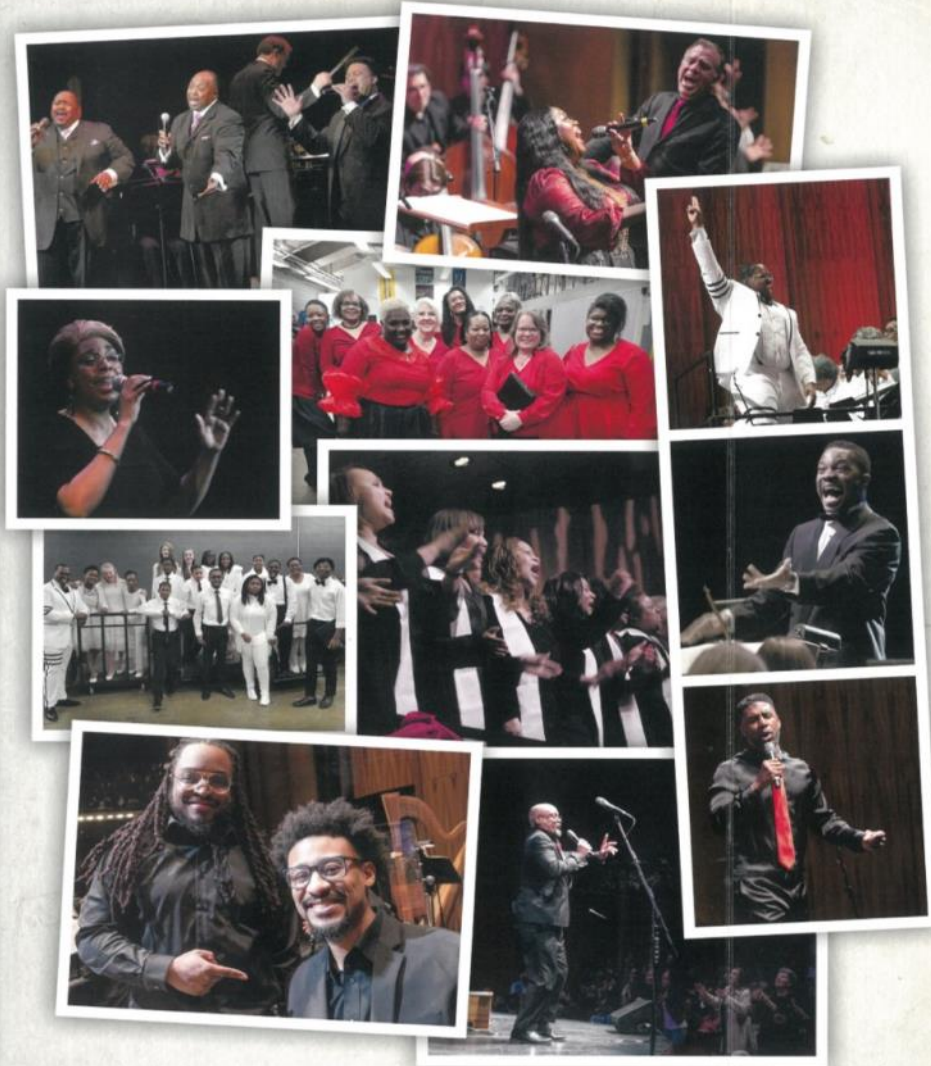


**ILENE
SHAPIRO**
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Department of Job and Family Services

akronurbanleague.org






GOSPEL
meets
SYMPHONY

**Celebrating 30 Years
of Music and Fellowship**

Join in celebration of the community spirit that has made Gospel Meets Symphony the highlight in Northeast Ohio for 30 years. Choirmaster Jonathon Turner and Maestro Christopher Wilkins lead the Akron Symphony Orchestra and the Gospel Meets Symphony Choir in one of Akron's proudest and most enduring musical traditions, featuring some of the area's best musicians and vocalists, including the GMS 2.0 Youth Choir.

February 10, 2024

7:30 PM

E.J. Thomas Hall

Tickets start at \$20

Group discount for 10 or more

330.535.8131 or AkronSymphony.org

Upcoming Lenten Series from Diocesan Social Action Office (DSAO)



**2024 DSAO VIRTUAL LENTEN SERIES
"INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE"**

Catholic Responses to Division & Discord
Online Zoom Series

First Four Thursdays in Lent

7:30-8:30 PM

February 15—March 7

For ZOOM link,
RSVP at DSAO@ccdoacle.org

Sponsored by DSAO, in Collaboration With:
Catholic Mobilizing Network, Ohio Braver Angels, Sisters of Notre Dame/JPIC and USCCB.



MISSION

The Akron Area Interfaith Council (AAIC) exists to initiate, coordinate and enable effective inter-faith responses to the social, moral, ethical and cultural issues of our community and to promote freedom of religion, equality and understanding.

VISION

We envision a strong network of faith communities that collaborate to make our city a haven for all.

GUIDEPOSTS

- Diversity is a blessing and enriches us all; the diversities of all peoples, languages, cultures, and colors must be cherished and celebrated.
- We are responsible for each other's welfare.
- Because of the importance of individual's faith traditions in developing underlying values, faith communities can contribute to the development of a more just, humane, and ecologically responsible society. [We refer here to "faith traditions" vs. "religion" as AAIC is interested in reaching not only congregations but also those who are searching and may not have a specific faith affiliation (such as the NONE's).]
- Members of AAIC oppose any and all forms of discrimination, especially those based on faith, gender, race, heritage, nationality and sexuality
- Advocacy and Social Justice: AAIC has consistently put issues of social justice at the forefront. Our past history shows a deep concern for inclusiveness. The group has been focused on the issues faced by the immigrant populations in Akron, ongoing issues of racism in the community, hunger, as well as xenophobia.

TO JOIN AAIC

Please visit our website for information on yearly dues:

Individual membership— \$30.00/yr.,

Institutional— \$50.00/yr.

Send your check or donation to:

Akron Area Interfaith Council

3300 Morewood Rd.

Akron, Ohio 44333

or send a membership fee via the following link:

<https://donate.fundhero.io/aaic/aaicmembership>.

Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month. We are meeting in person and via Zoom.

Website: Akroninterfaith.org

Facebook Group: Facebook.com/AAICOH