



Witness in the Public Square

Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.

The New York Athletic Club

180 Central Park South, New York City



A Luncheon Honoring

Esther Cornelius.....Founder, Lutheran Schools for Blind, Deaf and Mentally Challenged Kids, India

Doug Geed.....Anchor/Reporter, News 12 Long Island

Liz Mazzotti.....Kingdom Servants Co-chair, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Niskayuna

For their Witness in the Public Square

All proceeds to benefit the Atlantic District Mission Society.



Esther Cornelius

Founder, Lutheran Schools for Blind, Deaf & Mentally Challenged Kids, India

Mrs. Esther Cornelius was born on July 25th, 1927 and raised in Madurai. In the late 1940s, she studied at the American College where she regularly accompanied her Father on his social work visits to the Beggar's home in Madurai and did her field work with the mentally challenged in Chennai. In 1954 Esther married Rev. N.J. Cornelius and moved to Ambur, where while working as a high school teacher, she introduced the society in this area to the idea that the disabled have to be taken care of and were not to be neglected. She was the first person ever to do so.

In 1971 Mrs. Cornelius's life took a tragic turn when her husband suffered a heart attack, leaving her widowed with 9 children. She was advised to take up a teaching job offer abroad, where she could escape the terrible circumstances of being a widow with children in India. However, her calling to serve the underprivileged was stronger and instead she decided to resign her teaching job and complete her training for the blind, thus starting her mission for the disabled and underprivileged.

With a solid foundation in teaching and education (Bachelor of Science and Education) Mrs Cornelius went on to become the founder of various institutions including:

"Deaf School in Ambur"- (India 1970), "The Blind School in Bargur"- (India 1972), "School for Mentally Retarded Children"- (Pernambet, India 1974), "The School for Polio Affected Children"- (KGF, India 1975), "School for Triple Handicapped Children" - (Mumbai, India 1983), "Tabitha Girls Boarding" - (Ambur 1985) management of the redevelopment Program, "Home for Physically Handicapped Children" - (Krishnagiri, India 1989), "Supporter of the Training Centre for Disabled Adults" - (Vaniyambadi India 1990), "Compassion Day Care Centre" - (Vellore /KGF/ Vaniyambadi India 1993) orphans, semi orphans and poor children are given education, food and shelter, "Supporter of the Vocational Training Centre Jovana Home for Blind Women" - (Chennai India 1998), "Helping unwed mothers, saving them from suicide, and sending them to the rehabilitation centers.

Since 2005 she has been striving to promote education and medical care for the Hill tribes in the interior part of Yelagari and is currently looking for funding and donor agencies to start "Cross Mercy Bethania Home for homeless, underprivileged Children in K.G.F India.

Mrs. Cornelius turned her tragedies and losses into dedication for the less fortunate and her attitude of giving without expecting anything in return has been a great inspiration to others. She is a truly remarkable woman, who has dedicated her life to serving the disabled, blind, deaf and underprivileged people stricken with poverty in South India, making a true change in the lives of many people. As a pioneer in this field, Esther was knocking at many doors, appealing, begging, arguing and fighting to prove that even the poorest among the poor have a right to live and have food, shelter and an education.

Mrs. Cornelius at 91 is still active doing humanitarian, charity works.



Doug Geed

Anchor/Reporter, News 12 Long Island

An award winning journalist, a dedicated family man, and a devout man of faith, Doug Geed wears many hats and each of them with great pride.

One of the most recognizable faces and trusted people in television news, Doug is an original member of the News 12 Long Island team when it became the first 24-hour, local television news station in the country in 1986. His 37 year news career has garnered him numerous awards, including 10 Emmy Awards. In 2004, he was named Long Island Journalist of the Year by the Society of Professional Journalists. And, he was inducted as part of the inaugural class into the Long Island Journalism Hall of Fame in 2014. Most recently, Doug was named one of the 50 Most Influential People on Long Island by City & State Magazine, a national publication dedicated to covering government, politics and the media.

Although he has been hailed as one of the best "news men" in the business, one of his greatest journalistic pleasures is the show he created, hosts and produces, the Emmy Award winning "East End Show". Now in its 21st season, it is one of the longest running shows on TV.

Past Witness Honorees

2003

David Benke
Don Matzat
Gene Schnelz
Howard Capell

2004

Janet George
Chris Jones
Gloria Edwards
Gerald Kieschnick
Vic Albers★

2005

Alma Kern★
John Mesloh
Edwin Meese

2006

Betty Duda★
Paul Crumb
Kathy Funfgeld
Dale Meyer

2007

Vic Nelson
Nancy Graf Peters
Don★ and Pat Bokenkamp
Wayne Graumann
Jack Vessey★

2008

John and Debbie Vergara
Gerard Arpey
Linda Reiser
Charles Mueller

2009

Michael Meese
Terry Kieschnick
Howard Crumb★
Jon Coyne

2010

Merle Freitag
Kurt Senske
Charles and Kathy Froehlich

2011

Stephen Unger
Harrison Oellrich
Lee Ielpi
Jennifer Adams

2012

Pam Tebow
Viji George
Fred Kraegel

2013

Ingo Dutzman
Jean Garton★
Robert Morris
Timothy Yeadon
The coalition of the willing

2014

Brad and Susan Hewitt
Tilahun Mendedo
Joel Wilson

2015

Ralph and Dorothy Schulz
Ken Ko
Mark and Kathy Helge

2016

Randy and Linda Gast
Tom and Penny Cedel
John and Monique Nunes

2017

Bong Yu
Paulina Janssen-Mesloh
Ross Edwards

2018

Esther Cornelius
Doug Geed
Liz Mazzotti

★ Called to Glory

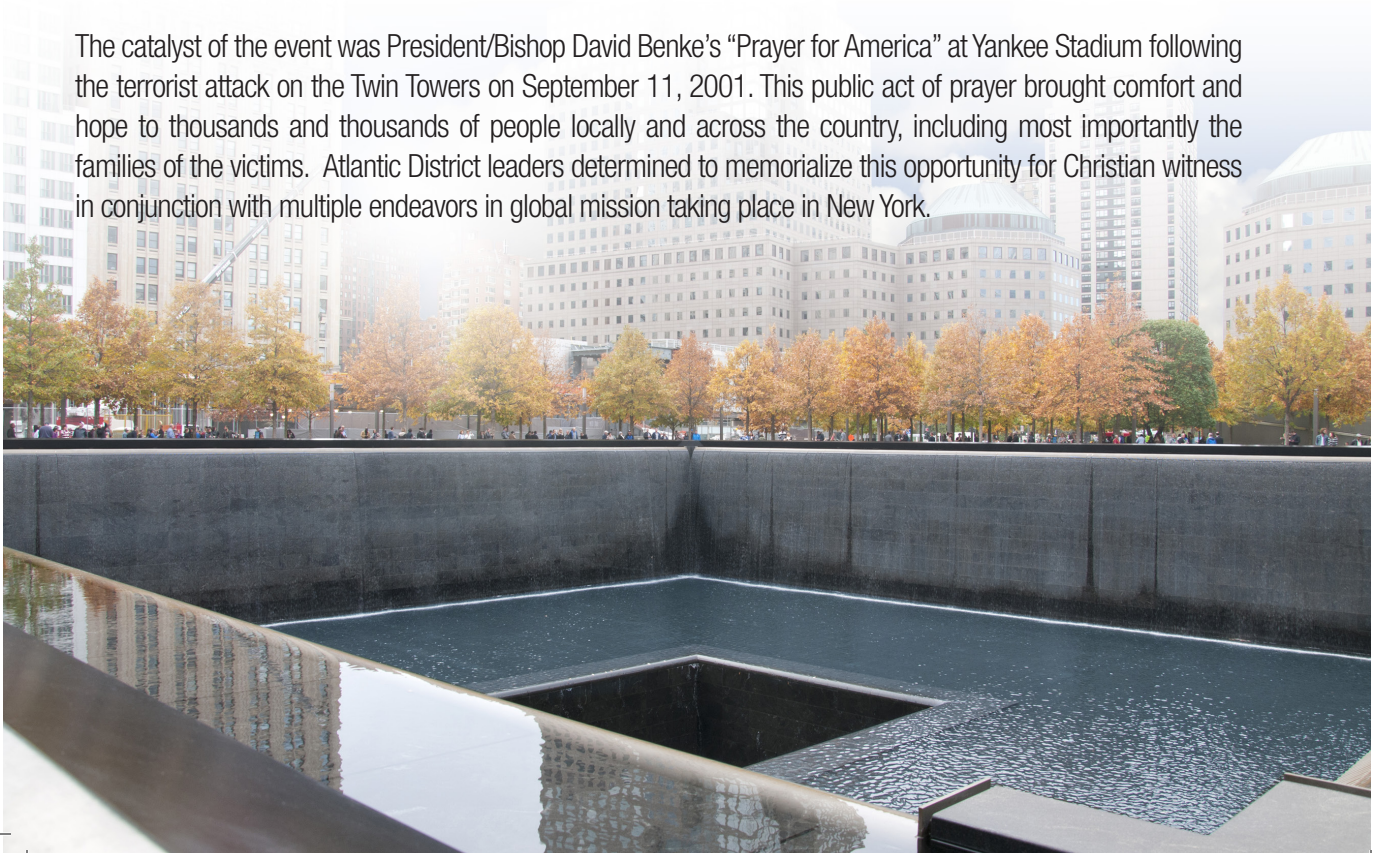
History of the Witness

The “Witness in the Public Square” is the primary mission funding event of the Atlantic District. It has provided over 2.3 million dollars of support to mission endeavors throughout the Atlantic District and around the world. These funds have supported work among many Chinese, Korean, Bengali, Liberian, Pakistani, and others in our midst in New York; feeding people in Liberia during the Ebola crisis; social ministry efforts in Far Rockaway after Superstorm Sandy and many more . . .

The “Witness in the Public Square” honors those who have provided an exemplary witness in bringing Christian values to the public square through word and deed. Honorees can come from all walks of life: Edwin Meese, 75th US Attorney General; “Coalition of the Willing”, people involved in Superstorm Sandy Response; Gerard Arpey, CEO of the parent company of American Airlines; Gloria Edwards, LCMS & LIRS & LWR Board of Director member; Kathy Funfgeld, Atlantic District Lay Deacon, support of her church and the Atlantic District; among many others.

The “Witness in the Public Square” is more than an event. It is a commitment to continuing the ministry of Jesus, Paul, the saints who have gone before us, and all who bring the love of God to bear, outside the sanctuary into their communities for the sake of the world. It is about “Engaging the World with the Gospel of Hope.”

The catalyst of the event was President/Bishop David Benke’s “Prayer for America” at Yankee Stadium following the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001. This public act of prayer brought comfort and hope to thousands and thousands of people locally and across the country, including most importantly the families of the victims. Atlantic District leaders determined to memorialize this opportunity for Christian witness in conjunction with multiple endeavors in global mission taking place in New York.



Doug's faith journey has taken him down many paths. As a young man, he was confirmed at Faith Lutheran Church in Syosset, where his family worshipped for many years. After college his family moved to New Hyde Park where he took a break from church but, continued his inner search for his meaning of Christ and the growth of his own faith journey. After marriage, he and his family joined Ascension Lutheran Church in Deer Park for a few years before finding St. Luke. Feeling a sense of "Christian home", Doug and his family joined the church and has worshipped at St. Luke for the past 21 years.

His involvement has included a member of the Youth Minister Search Committee, the Inaugural Rally Day Committee, the Pastoral Search Committee, lay reader, communion assistant, usher, and most recently as President of St. Luke's Church Council.

Doug grew up in Syosset, Long Island, New York. He received a Bachelor of Journalism Degree from the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1980. He was also one of the founding adjunct professors for the University of Stony Brook's Communications School.

Doug has been happily married to his wife Christine for 33 years and has three children, who are the joy of his life, son Kyle, and his two daughters, Kendall and Kierin. A devoted father, he coached little league in Half Hollow Hills for both Kyle and Kierin's teams and supported Kendall on the lacrosse field. He never missed a play, concert or special event and continues his parental supporting role at each of LuHi's Football games, where Kyle is a coach. Not that his children do not give him enough to love, he is also the proud grandfather to Kierin's dog, Callie and Kendall's dog Bandit and her three guinea pigs, Bella, Cubby and Peanut.



Liz Mazzotti

Kingdom Servants Co-chair

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Niskayuna

Born in Schenectady, New York, Liz was baptized and confirmed at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Niskayuna, New York where she has been a life long member. Liz serves as Kingdom Servants co-chair at Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Frederick Peper, charter member of the newly established Immanuel Lutheran Church in 1902, was her great-grandfather. Grandparents Karl and Elsa Rossi continued on to be pillars of Immanuel. Their daughter, Elsa Supley, (Liz's mom) saw her seven children all baptized and confirmed at Immanuel. Elsa was a very active member at Immanuel until her passing in 2005. Liz married Victor Mazzotti in 1982 at Immanuel. They have two married sons (Victor and Danielle, Philip and Nicole), and two grand daughters, Ella and Sophia. Their youngest grand daughter, Sophia, was baptized at Immanuel in December. She feels very blessed to have six generations as part of Immanuel's history.

It is from that history where Liz learned that the love and grace of Jesus Christ is for the community as a whole and her church is the starting point for impacting people's lives in real and practical ways. Liz has dedicated her service at Immanuel towards this goal. She has served as the leader of Immanuel's outreach ministry, Kingdom Servants. Kingdom Servants was combined in 2012 with the idea of joining Social Ministry and Evangelism. Through out many years, Liz lead dinners at Ronald McDonald House and the Damien Center; serving dinners at the Schenectady City Mission, collections for the Ronald McDonald, City Mission, SAFE, Inc., back to school supplies for City Schools, Milk & Honey program for church members and friends, and her annual Adopt-A-Family & Those In Need program at Christmas. This September, Immanuel along with Niskayuna Schools, is kicking off the NISKY NOW food program to support children and families specifically in the local school district. Liz is grateful for the members and friends of Immanuel who generously support the continued outreach with their donations, time and prayer.

On behalf of her family, Immanuel members and friends, Liz shares this recognition with them.

Program of Events

Cocktail Reception and Welcome

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Grace

Lunch

Recognition of Honorees

Musical Offering

Benediction

Mission and Ministry in the Atlantic District



“Engaging the World with the Gospel of Hope”

The Great Commission tells us to, “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching.” The Atlantic District of the LCMS seeks to fulfill this command by reaching out into the neighborhoods around us, because “all nations” reside there. The mission and history of the Atlantic District has been one of welcoming and embracing each wave of immigrants and newcomers from around the world by boat, plane or foot.

The Atlantic District seeks to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of one of the most densely populated, ethnically diverse areas of the country. The Atlantic District is the eastern half of New York State including the Adirondacks, Capital Region, Hudson Valley, Westchester County, the five boroughs of New York City, Nassau and Suffolk counties of Long Island.

There are nearly 100 churches, 34 schools, including 4 high schools and Concordia College – NY, and a number of other social service ministries. The Gospel is proclaimed in at least 12 languages including:

American Sign Language, Bangla, Cantonese, English, French, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish, Tamil, and Urdu. There are also more than 50 different cultures represented in our congregations from 5 continents around the world like: African American, Caribbean, Central American, Dominican, Ghanaian, Guyana, Jamaica, Liberian, Malagasy, Tobago, Trinidad ...

There are 11 missionaries to various cultural groups directly supported by funds from the Atlantic District Mission Society. These missionaries and our parishes baptize adults, youth and babies from no faith and other faiths like Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and others. Together we seek to serve those around us with the gospel in word and deed. Christ sends us out from His altar, pulpit and font, to serve the community and neighborhoods around us with the love and forgiveness that Christ has given us.

Thousands of people come to know the love of Jesus through the service of our Lutheran Schools and Social Ministries like: Concordia College – NY; Martin Luther

High School; Long Island Lutheran High School; Lutheran Counseling Center; Lutheran Friends for the Deaf; Lutheran Services NY Alliance; Lutheran Social Services NY; Our Savior High School, Centereach; Our Saviour High School, The Bronx; The Lutheran Care Network; The Wartburg and many many others.

The harvest is truly plentiful, but the laborers are few. As we look toward the future, the Atlantic District recognizes that times are changing and yet the message remains the same. The same Jesus, who died for the sins of the world, died for the sins of the people

today. As we strive to serve the needs today, we look at redeveloping properties to provide: affordable housing; partnerships with schools; senior housing; and community meeting areas. These are opportunities to share the hope of Jesus Christ into the lives of people.

The Atlantic District seeks to encourage, equip and empower all of our servants: ordained, commissioned and lay by raising up leaders from all the communities in our midst so they may share the Hope of Jesus Christ.



Mission Focus:

New York City has the greatest concentration of people from Haiti in the USA. The official numbers between Brooklyn and Queens are about 156,000, however the actual number is estimated to be 400,000.

Pastor Jean Gardy Cenat, a native of Haiti has brought together a worshipping community of Hatian immigrants. They have partnered with St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Canarsie and Pastor Christoph Schulze. Under the direction of Pastor Cenat and the power of the Holy Spirit a church continues to grow among the Haitian people. Pastor Cenat Engages the World with the Gospel of Hope as he preaches and teaches in French, while holding down a full time job to take care of his family.

This mission started with a pastor and a desire to share Jesus with the people of his country. People coming to the hope we have in Jesus, supported by you.

Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, (3 John 1:5-7a, ESV)

Witness in the Public Square

Hosted by.....Rev. Derek G. Lecakes
Honorary Chair.....Rev. Dr. William R. Diekelman
Committee Chair.....Mrs. Carol Mittelstaedt
Staff.....Mrs. Kristen Schulz, Mr. Peter Labenberg, Ms. Th. Arndt
.....Mrs. Marcia Kollmann, Rev. George Carstensen
Pledge of Allegiance.....Mr. James Regan
Grace.....Rev. Matthew Gonzalez
Musical Offering.....Rev. Dr. Dien A. Taylor
Bass-baritone.....Mr. George Heath
Pianist..... Ms. Deborah Reiss

The Bishop’s Circle

.....

John and Paulina Mesloh
Howard and Carolyn Crumb

Table Sponsors

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