



With just a few days left until the end of the tax year, I write on behalf of the New York State Council of Churches to ask if you would consider donating to the Council? We are proud of the work we do as a Council and have many exciting plans for 2018. We very much rely on the generosity of individuals to sustain our work. Here are some highlights of our ministry including plans for the coming year.

First, the Council certifies and supports chaplains in state institutions including state prisons. Should people in your parish or community have the misfortune of being incarcerated, it is really essential that they receive pastoral care from well-trained chaplains inside the system. Your contributions help support our staff and volunteers which manage the certification process while providing support services and visits to chaplains and prisoners in the system. Last October we had a record attendance at our annual chaplain's conference. A picture of some of the conferees is below.



Second, the Council advocates for the poor and disenfranchised in the public square. We publish legislative reports and sponsor trainings which shed light on proposed legislation and help churches focus their advocacy efforts. We also build coalitions across the state among faith based and secular groups. Examples of our collaborative work include successful advocacy for the raise the age law where New York will no longer prosecute and incarcerate most 16 and 17-year-olds as adults. We also advocated successfully for 2.5 billion dollars in the state budget for affordable housing. More recently, we have been working hard to stop Federal and State budget proposals which could adversely affect the health care and financial well-being of the citizens of New York. We also focus on immigration reform and environmental policy. This winter, we have scheduled seven trainings all over the state to help faith leaders do social justice work with their politically diverse congregations and communities.



Finally, the Council offers opportunities for faith formation. At present, the Council sponsors a well-attended United Nations Conference for high school youth. This year's conference will be held on February 20 to 22, 2018. The Council also held a conference this last summer on Bridging the Urban Rural Divide. We are planning another conference for July 10-12, 2018.



All of this work is born out of strong passion to work together ecumenically to offer the good news of the Gospel to the poor and disenfranchised, to instill hope in those who are incarcerated, and help us learn and grow together in faith.

Would you consider supporting the Council? Please [click here to make a donation](#). We also invite recurring donations which help us have a more predictable stream of income. For your reference, I include links to [a detailed description of our work](#) and [a donation response sheet](#). Checks may also be sent to our office at [1580 Central Ave. Albany, NY 12205](#).



Thank you for your kind consideration. If you have any questions or wish to share thoughts about the work of the Council do not hesitate to contact me at [508-380-8289](tel:508-380-8289).

In faith,

Peter Cook

Executive Director

New York State Council of Churches

Remember to [visit our website](#), we value your partnership in ministry with us. The New York State Council of Churches relies on contributions to carry out its ministry, [please donate](#).

Also, [like us on facebook](#) and [follow us on twitter](#).