



The Good Word

December 2007

What Lights Our Way?

More than fifty members of MCC gathered for a special meeting on Sunday, November 18. A resolution regarding the funding and installation of lights in the upper parking lot was approved by consensus. The resolution was amended to assess the lighting in the lower parking lot and take the necessary action to bring it also into compliance with city code. We are able to undertake this project using money pledged to the Growing in Sanctuary Appeal because the cost of re-roofing the Covenant Room is significantly less than was projected. This decision was made anticipating that most of us will fulfill the financial commitment we made to the Growing in Sanctuary Appeal by April 1, 2008. Hopefully, the project will be completed in time to light our way into the sanctuary as we gather to celebrate Christ's birth on Christmas Eve, Monday, December 24.

The Christmas Cycle (the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany) begins with the first Sunday of Advent on December 2 and end with Ash Wednesday on February 6, 2008. I invite you to ponder how all the Biblical references to light during the Christmas Cycle contrast to parking lot lighting. The LED lights that will be installed are energy efficient, cast good clean light and increase our visibility, lowering the risk for injury and accident. But there are also limitations to the benefits of parking lot lights. Parking lot light does not illuminate the colors of the prairie or contours of the distant landscape. Nor is this light bright enough to read the words on the page of a book held at arms length. The lighting in a parking lot prevents us from gazing at the stars overhead. It's said that you

can worship by this light. I don't think the poet who wrote Psalm 8 was inspired to praise the Creator while parked under a light post in a parking lot. "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals, that you care for them?"

I wonder to what extent your and my life is illuminated by parking lot lights. It's not great light, but it's enough to see our immediate surroundings and order our lives accordingly. Parking lot lights keep the darkness we dread beyond the reach of our comfortable parameters and we make every effort to live within the confines of the white lines. Parking-lot-lite lives work until the energy supply dries up, but if we are truthful, (and we are!) don't we really long for more? Rather than expending all of our energy keeping darkness at bay, don't we long for courage to walk in darkness with hope that there is light beyond darkness that is not tied into an energy grip of our own making, but is eternal and everlasting?

There are several changes to keep in mind pertaining to worship on Christmas Eve. We will gather to celebrate the birth of Christ with worship at 5:00 and 9:00 p.m., NOT 10:00 p.m. as in years past. The early service will be family friendly and Holy Communion will be served at only the 9:00 p.m. worship. Unlike last year when two worship services were held simultaneously at 5:00 we will gather closely as one community of faith in the Blessing Room. One constant with years past is that we will hold a small candle as a symbol of the light of God's light that comes into the

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MCC News

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world through the gift of a child. The sanctuary lights overhead will be turned off and we will sing Silent Night by candlelight. "Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light. Radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus Lord at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth." (Verse 3).

My prayer is that God will move us from parking-lot-lit lives to see the light that shines in the darkness, and trust that darkness shall not overcome the light.
Jeff Wild

JAVA FOR JUSTICE!

Place your December coffee order by Dec. 2nd ready for pick-up on Dec. 9th. Count all of the people on your Christmas gift list who drink fair trade coffee and then order Mt. Meru Coffee for them as your better-than-Fair-Trade gift to friends and family, near and far. (Our coffee farmers receive \$3.20/pound vs the \$1.26/pound from FT purchases. Most of the work is done by volunteers and only minimal money goes for administration and distribution.) Coffee can be purchased in 12 oz. (\$8) or 4# (\$38) bags; regular or decaf; bean, drip or perk. Make your checks out to MT. MERU COFFEE PROJECT and place them in the envelope by the sign-up sheet in the Shalom Room on the Coffee Table. Your support remains the sustaining force in the lives of many coffee farming families in Tanzania, a partnership program with the ELCA synod in Milwaukee and the ELCA Meru diocese.

From Iraq-

*Mr. Spencer,
I received the box yesterday - Thank You. That was a lot of soup! We put it out for Soldiers to take and this morning 70% of everything is already gone. The gesture of support is much appreciated.*

CSM Randall Sumner

Original Message from Brad
Subject: Package

I'm about to send a package of items donated by members of the Madison Christian Community. It contains ramen soups, beef jerky, some interesting magazines, a few New Testaments and Christmas cards. There may be a bit more. It's a large box, 18 x 18 x 24 but not all that heavy, although it is a bit of a struggle for me to move it around (but then I'm 68, overweight, and a bit flabby.) Inside the package are some bags so it could be opened and some of the things carried in the bags. For low-density things like the ramen soups (and the jerky) it's more economical to send in large packages.

I've chosen you because of the number of troops for whom you are a contact.

Back in June you may recall I sent two boxes of comics.

Thanks for all you and your companions do.

Aid for the Troops

Two of the things the troops request are beef jerky and cup-style ramen soups. Both of these are low-density products.

The opportunity to send Christmas cards to the troops that they can send back to family and friends has passed, but there is still plenty of time for you to send a Christmas greeting to a soldier you know or go to anysoldier.com.

Pray Daily

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Fellowship Groups & Activities

Calling all Barbara Kingsolver Fans

The Theological Discussion Group chose *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver for their winter read.

"This is the story of a year in which we made every attempt to feed ourselves animals and vegetables whose provenance we really knew...and of how our family was changed by our first year of deliberately eating food produced from the same place where we worked, went to school, loved our neighbors, drank the water, and breathed the air."
(Barbara Kingsolver)

Join in the discussion at 7 p. downstairs MCC, on Wednesday, December 19, January 16 and February 20.

MCC Caroling—Tuesday, December 4

All are invited, adults and children of all ages at St. Mary's Care Center on Maple Grove Rd. We will meet by 6:30 p. to carol from 6:30 p.-7:30 p. We are then invited to the Kuhn's home for Christmas cheer from 7:45-8:45 p. Please bring your favorite Christmas treat to share. Beverages provided. Questions call Karen Kuhn or Kris Knoepke.

Come to the Free Community Hymn Sings in Overture Hall at 11:00 a. on these dates: Dec. 22 , Jan. 26, Feb. 16 , March 29, and April 26. It is a really nice opportunity to hear the lovely organ and sing favorite hymns.

MCC Community Group

Join Community Group on Saturday, December 1 at 6:30 p. for a free concert at Oakwood featuring Bob Johnson and His Cohorts (Polkas, etc.)

Sunday December 16, 7:00 p.
White Elephant Gift Exchange at Doug & Kathy Johnson's, 5701 Anchorage.
Bring a Christmas Treat to share.

Wednesday, December 19, 7:45 p.
Planetarium show at Memorial High School, *Star of Bethlehem*. Admission is \$2.00.

Monday, December 31
New Year's Eve Progressive Dinner—
Sign up on the bulletin board in the Shalom Room at MCC.

MCC Film Group Schedule

We meet at 7:00 p. at various homes.

Friday Dec. 21 *Little Miss Sunshine*
Host: Ann Bolger

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Published Monthly by the Madison Christian Community

Church Phone: (608) 836-1455
Next Issue: January 2007
Articles Due: December 20 to the church office
Newsletter Preparer: Sonja Keeseey-Berg
Newsletter Proofing: Lucetta Kanetzke and Karen Schwarz
Newsletter Collators: Brad Spencer and Linda Lorentzen
Newsletter Mailing Ready: Eileen Bolstad and Doris Roberts

Fellowship Groups & Activities

You are invited to join the MCC Choir for *The Sunday After Christmas Choral Service* from Howard Kanetzke

It's time to begin rehearsals for "The Sunday After Christmas Choral Service". We met for the first time November 25 -in the Covenant Room, after the services, at 11:30 a.

The theme for the December 30th service will be "Gifts the Christ Child Brought". Many of these gifts--comfort, joy, peace, hope, among others--are mentioned in the traditional carols of the season. I have found a number of new arrangements of carols focusing on these gifts that will include parts for choir, instruments and the congregation.

I hope this message reaches all MCC singers. However, if you know someone who sings and is a new member, please invite them to join this merry band of music-makers.

I look forward to the rehearsals and hope you will enjoy them. I hope to keep each rehearsal fairly brief, depending upon how quickly we can gather to begin.

Come and join the music, the gift we have been given, returned with joy to God and the MCC.

December Adult Education – Faith and Public Life

Sundays, December 2, 9 and 16 will feature DVD presentations from Lynn Redgrave and Peter Gomes. Each of these well known people addressed the General Synod of the United Church of Christ at its gathering in June of this year. Adult Education will take a break on December 23 and December 30 and resume again in January.

December 2 – Lynn Redgrave's presentation to General Synod focused on her experience as a breast cancer survivor and the role her faith and her church played during her cancer treatments.

December 9 - Rev. Dr. Peter Gomes is Plummer Professor of Christian Morals at Harvard College and author of "The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart." His presentation to General Synod focused on faith and public life.

December 16 –
Rev. Dr. Peter Gomes, continued

The MCC will host a "Blue Christmas" service at 5 p. Sunday, December 16th.

This service provides an opportunity for those who may be grieving, distressed, lonely, in pain, or simply not connected with the public joy of the Advent and Christmas seasons, to come together in a nurturing service and realize that they are not alone.

The intensity of this season can magnify all our emotions, making painful ones feel all the more extreme. And people who experience them often feel alienated or even guilty for having such feelings, in what is often presented as a time of unbridled joy. Through this service, we are owning that Christ brings His gifts into a real world, full of all manner of feelings and situations, and that nothing can separate us from God's love.

People from outside the MCC are also welcome at this service of Scripture, music, prayer, and light.

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An alternative to the Malls: SERRV at MCC , Now Through December 2

Once again we will be offering gifts of food and other items to help support 3rd world countries and also low income people in this country. The SERRV and Greater Gift items for sale will include olive oil, jams, bean soup mix, fair trade chocolates and candle holders. We will also have catalogs to order from. We get 20% of the profit margin of the sale items, excluding the chocolates. This amount is given to Harvest of Hope. We will also have the Heifer Project catalog if you wish to give a gift of an animal for those who have everything to those who have nothing. Give the Gift that makes a difference in the world.

Thanks for your past support and look for us in the Shalom Room before and after church.

Comfort Kumeah is a teacher, cocoa farmer and national secretary for the Kuapa Kokoo growers' cooperative in Ghana (owners and growers of Divine Chocolate). She says, "Before fair trade, we growers were cheated. People adjusted the scales. We got little money from the government purchasing clerks. I joined Kuapa Kokoo, and I have been able to send all of my children to school." Your support of Divine Chocolate and fair trade helps make stories like Comfort's possible.

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MCC News—Coming Events

December 2	Youth Candy Sale AND Order Mt Meru Coffee
December 2	COH preparations for Advent, 11:15 a.
December 6	MCC Staffs the Men's Shelter
December 9	Indoor labyrinth is open to the public, 1:00-2:30 p.
December 9	Parents Night Out at 3:00 p
December 9 & 16	Youth Candy Sale
December 11	Advent Council, 5:30 p.
December 11	MCC Leadership Team Meeting, 7:00 p.
December 12	Senior High Hangout @ Todd's, 7:00 p.
December 15	Christmas Program Practice, 10:00 a.
December 16	MCC Christmas Program with our youth, 10:15 a.
December 16	"Blue Christmas" 5:00 p.
December 20	January newsletter items are due!
December 22	Winter Solstice labyrinth walk with HarpSinger Rolliana Scheckler, 6:00 p.
December 23,30	No Sunday School
December 24	5:00 p. Christmas Eve Worship 9:00 p. Christmas Eve Worship with communion
December 27	Senior High Winter Play Day
January 26	Women and Girls Event at MCC, 7:00-9:00 p.

IHN Weeks for 2008: January 13-20, April 13-20 and December 21-28.

MCC News —

The Meaning of Life by Doug Crews-Nelson

When I'm at Madison Christian Community, I look around me. I see my parents (Marj and Wayne Nelson), daughter, spouse, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, cousins, nieces and nephews. Not all of these people are my relatives. But all are represented by the community of MCC.

I've been thinking about death on and off for the past year or so. Once in a while, conclusions come to me, but nothing complete. So I take it upon myself to put some of these pieces together and frame a general structure for the purpose of defining our life on this earth!

Before I get to the moment you have all been waiting for, I would just like to list a few important points for review and consideration. These thoughts are directly related to the conclusion. But in many ways, they are more important than the meaning of life itself.

First, as I get older, I am realizing just how short a lifetime really is. Even someone who lives a "long" and natural life generally live less than one hundred years. Geologic time is often measured in the thousands, millions and billions of years. These numbers may seem impossible for us to imagine until we look around. Go into the country and look up at the stars on a clear night. Here's a good one, look at the back of your hand as you write across the page. Imagine the composition of cells working together to move the pen. How many electrical impulses does it take to motivate? We experience numbers in the billions moment by moment through our entire lives. Our life-span in relation to creation is less than a spark. In fact, one could say it's the idea of a spark, if that. So knowing the passage of time our natural lives should help encourage us to prioritize our activities to improve the quality of our short lives.

But wait! Many of us experience what is referred to as an untimely death. This could happen to anyone at any time, and include anything from accident to illness (I include suicide in the illness category), and extend from instant to a period of years. So knowing that any of us can go at any time is probably an even better reason to set our affairs in order to build a quality life.

Time out! I'll go back to our community as a family for a moment. Years ago, when I taught senior high Sunday school, I looked at each student and said, "Each of you is unique. Like a snowflake, no two are alike. But remember, you are all snowflakes." I related that concept to the kids to create a connection for them with the greater community and a commonality with humanity. The concept was further expanded in discussion with someone more recently, who said that snowflakes have more meaning with accumulation. I think what he was getting at was that inches of snow can have more of an impact and sustainability than a dusting or scattering. Convert that to a community scenario, if you will.

All right, I've been sitting on my hands long enough! I've talked about time and community a wee bit. Perhaps too much for some, not enough for others. But here it goes! It is a wonderful surprise...perhaps. Some may believe, some have moved beyond this idea on to other concepts.

Before I let you in on the mystery, I have often thought about the Christian Bible as reflecting, in a broad sense, a human life. We all have our Genesis. We move through turbulent periods of youth. We fight personal battles. Many of us have an "age of enlightenment" as we bridge between childhood and adulthood. Sometimes our idealisms are killed off by what we see as society or "the way it

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is" (which I define as negative complacency). Then the rest of our lives we try to incorporate our idealisms with our accepted places in society. We finally reach the revelation of life. The End of our days is the transition to the next world.

Now, here is the MEANING OF LIFE!

Our lives are given meaning through our actions, our teaching and our learning. This world, this Universe, is a womb. Our purpose is to go through this developmental stage in the most healthy way possible so as to attain our goal. That goal is to reach Real Life. Real Life is Heaven, and cannot be understood in this life. How could it be with our small brains? My challenge is living in the moment within the context of living for the future.

With my limited knowledge of the Bible, Jesus' teachings boil down to two basic concepts: Be good to God; and Be good to each other. Jesus said it best when he said the only commandment is Love. That doesn't seem too hard to remember. If we act on these thoughts *everything will work as it should*. Not to be confused with *everything will work out the way we want it*.

We are responsible for our own spiritual health. We are also responsible for the health of our community.

I've noticed that kids who become involved in Sunday school, especially into Middle and Senior High, tend to do well serving the world as adults. Some of them come back (as I did) to serve the community. I think this is due to the generosity of the people of MCC. We are good to God and each other. We are an ideal family in many ways. Of course we are not perfect, that's nature. We help each other out in uncertain times.

Money, illness and death present unique challenges. But, I'd like to think my attitudes toward death are evolving in a posi-

tive direction. When I look around the room at all my aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters, brothers, nephews and nieces (you my friends) and of course, my parents, daughter and spouse, I like to remember the immediacy of the need for kindness, for the good of your lives and those around you. But also, life is short -- Take advantage of our time here!!!

Two Advent Opportunities from Benedictine Women of Madison

Women's Wednesday Advent Lunches
December 5, 12, 19, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Come together to explore the many ways we can give the non-material gifts of forgiveness, compassion and hospitality. Includes Midday Prayer, lunch and an hour of reflection and sharing. Cost is \$66 for the series when you register by November 28. To attend single luncheons for \$24 each, register by the preceding Thursday.

Advent Day of Prayer

Saturday, December 8, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

During the rush of the holiday season, enjoy a day of prayer and reflection. Come together with others seeking to become more aware of God's presence in our lives. Women and men are welcome. Cost is \$50 and includes lunch. Registrations requested by December 3.

Register for either opportunity by downloading a registration form from our website, www.benedictinewomen.org and sending it to Holy Wisdom Monastery, Box 5070, Madison, WI 53705-0070 or call Jerianne Bland at 836-1631 ext. 158.

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QUILTER WRAP-UP

Once again the Quilter Ladies are grateful to the MCC for supporting our ornament sale. We exceeded our goal of realizing \$800 from the sale and have received an additional \$300 from Thrivent Financial. Beverly Brekke Bailey, who is both a quilter and a potter, donated all her time and materials that went into the creation of the candle ornament and so all proceeds will be directed to Lutheran World Relief for shipping costs and toward the cost of batting which we purchase from a firm in Minnesota. Lisa Korf once again personalized ornaments upon request and we thank her!

Thanks also to Oliversens and Rowes for loading and delivering the 171 quilts we made in 2006-2007 to the railyard on October 13th.

On November 6 we marked the beginning of our 13th year of quilting for Lutheran World Relief, and on that day we also turned out our 2,000th quilt!

Dane County United Update From Tisha Brown

Are you interested in the future of Dane County's public schools?

Would you like to support an effort to revitalize a program that addresses drop-out rates?

If so, you're invited to attend an Action to Support Youth and Schools sponsored by Dane County United.

When?

Thursday, December 13th, 7pm to 8:30

Where?

SS Morris AME Church, 3511 Milwaukee St.

Why Come?

- To learn more about the African Centered Pedagogy Project: why it is needed and its impact on students, teachers and the community.

- To show broad community support for this specific program/approach to supporting our most vulnerable youth. To take specific concrete steps towards reinstating this program in the Madison Metropolitan School District.

While this action is aimed primarily at MMSD, other districts throughout Dane County could benefit from learning about this approach to teaching and considering its implementation within their schools. In addition, DCU is working on developing a broader schools campaign that will hopefully reach beyond MMSD.

A delegation of MCC members, including Keith Johnson, Bill Rettig, Ellen Lindgren, Jeff Wild, Margaret Helming, Roger Williams, Art and Mary Nack and Tisha Brown attended the last DCU delegate's assembly on November 15 and learned enough about this program to want to support it further. We promised to bring at least 15 MCC members to this public action in support of this program. If you have any questions or would like more information, you may contact any of the people listed above. All we are asking you to do is help us show support for this effort by attending a 90 minute meeting, learning about a successful approach and having a little fun.

A sign up sheet for those interested in attending will be in the Shalom Room starting on December 2.

DROP-IN SHELTER

The date is Thursday, December 6. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Shalom Room. Four people are needed from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. and two people are needed from 5:00 - 8:00 a.m. If you have any questions, please call Ken Johnson.

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MCC NEWS Continued

"PEACE BEGINS AT HOME" (DAIS slogan)

Dear MCC Members and Friends,
I know you are bombarded with requests for financial help at this time of year, and, yes, this is another, with desperate needs: Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, DAIS, (formerly the Battered Women's Shelter). Here are some of the dire needs for financial support: (I urge you to also peruse www.abuseintervention.org for more information.)

Why Support DAIS?

One out of every four police calls to the Madison Police Department involves domestic violence and for the past five years, over 3000 cases each year have been presented to the Dane County District Attorney for prosecution. Each case, reported or unreported, endangers its victim and diminishes us as a community. In addition, in 2000, five out of the six homicides in Dane County were the result of domestic violence.

Victims of abuse come from every walk of life, every race, creed, religion, age, sexual orientation and income level. Abuse victims live in fear for their well-being and even their lives.

By supporting DAIS, you can help bring hope and safety to these survivors of abuse. Private donations give us the flexibility we need to provide services to victims and their families and to plan for the future. Thank you for helping build a non-violent community where "*peace begins at home*".

I am asking for your tax-deductible financial contributions to Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, "direct aid", which provides rent assistance, prescription refills, court costs, house wares, lock changes, bus passes and other items which are immediate needs. Please

make your check payable to Community of Hope with "DAIS" in the memo line.

(Deadline: 12/23)

If you feel you want to do more, please call the business office at (608) 251-1237 during business hours. DAIS also has a [wish list](#) of items needed by the safe house and the office, and a [grocery list](#) for the safe house pantry. Sincere thanks and blessings from Lucetta

Pfeifers Offer Seminar on the Historic Jesus – A Seminar for Seekers

February 2, 9, 23 & March 1 from
8:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m.
@ Holy Wisdom Monastery

Seekers are: excited by new spiritual experiences, questioning past religious understandings, engaging complex life experiences (abuse, death, divorce, declining health, loss of a job, burn-out), moving into activism in the society, making career transitions, looking for greater meaning in life. If you are a seeker, we invite you to participate in a seminar on the historic Jesus. Jesus, like others of his time, experienced a messianic calling to free his people from the domination of the Roman Empire. Why did Jesus' approach differ so radically from the strategies of other revolutionaries? The seminar uses dialogue, complemented by exercises in art, sculpture, dance, and journaling, to engage this man's story and the issues it presents. The process provides a safe environment in which participants can struggle with profound personal and social issues while honoring the humanity and integrity of all present. (Cost: \$200 - scholarships available. Contact Chuck & Jean Pfeifer, for further information.) You can also find a page of more detailed information on the bulletin board in the Shalom Room.

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Cure Diabetes!



(not StickerPox)

Dear Karen Kuhn,

Will you please pass on my family's deep appreciation and sincerest thank you for contributing so generously to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's Walk for a Cure.

MCC contributed \$409 toward our team total of \$9484, which helped achieve the Madison walk total exceeding \$400,000 and went into the nationwide walk total of \$86 million. That's a huge amount of money which gives us a very real reason to hope for a cure for diabetes. Here's a list of what JDRF does with the money raised:

FY 2007 JDRF Research Funding
 Autoimmunity: \$38.5 million
 Complications: \$29.6 million
 Metabolic Control: \$7.6 million
 Regeneration: \$14.6 million
 Replacement: \$47.6 million

Stella was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes this past Memorial Day weekend. She was not quite 20 months old and we are not quite 6 months past diagnosis. Medical research and technology has made huge strides in just the past few years. Stella

uses an insulin that was introduced just 7 years ago. As soon as she's ready, she'll wear an insulin pump and use a continuous glucose monitor.

These devices will make living with diabetes much easier (and may allow her parents to sleep through the night again). But they are not a cure. These devices do not change the fact that diabetes remains the leading cause of blindness in America.

No matter how hard we struggle to regulate Stella's blood sugars, no matter how good we hope to get at managing her disease, we will never know a day without fear of complications -- until there is a cure.

Thank you so much for helping find that cure. And for giving us hope that a cure is in our very near future.

Most sincerely,
 Jennifer, Peter & Stella Wickman

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MCC YOUTH NEWS

Senior High

Candy Sale

Sundays, December 2, 9 and 16—Sell candy at MCC. Time to turn the gooey goodness that we made a couple days earlier into money for a good cause.

December 9—Parents Night Out, 3:00—6:00 p.

Help give parents of small children an opportunity to have some time to themselves during the busy Advent season by providing fun and action-packed child care for their little ones.

December 12 Hangout at Kelly and Connor Todd's house.

December 27 Winter Play Day

Ski/Snowboard/Sled for the day at an area ski hill.

MCC Confirmation

7th and 8th grade confirmation classes will be held each Wednesday evening from 7:00-8:00 p.m. The pastors of both congregations will be co-teachers and assisted by Adam Schneider, a high school student.

Middle High

Candy Sale

Sundays, December 2, 9 and 16—Sell candy at MCC. Time to turn the gooey goodness that we made a couple days earlier into money for a good cause.

December 9—Parents Night Out, 3:00—6:00 p.

Help give parents of small children an opportunity to have some time to themselves during the busy Advent season by providing fun and action-packed child care for their little ones.

MCC Youth Exchange Trip to Germany

High School youth and their parents are invited to an informational meeting following worship on Sunday, December 9. The best air fare from Chicago to Dusseldorf for students is \$1150.00. The tentative departure date is Friday, July 11 and the return date is Monday, July 21, 2008. Information regarding costs and fund raising for the trip will be provided at the meeting.

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Our Website: www.madisonchristiancommunity.org.

- *Read or Listen* to Pastor Jeff and Pastor Tisha 's Sunday sermons on the web!
- * Sunday texts are on the monthly calendar.



On the Home Page find Weekly Announcements and the Newsletter. If you decide that you no longer need the newsletter delivered in the mail, please call the church office to let us know.

Contact the Website Committee at office@madisonchristiancommunity.org.

Advent News

Advent Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on December 13 at 7:00 p. in the Tower Apartments-Party/Meeting Room on the third floor at Oakwood west campus.

We are a group of women who meet two hours each month at Oakwood to study and discuss a Bible study, as well as exchange friendship and support one another. We meet on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p. You are very welcome to visit us. Call Margaret Smith for directions.

Treasury of Love September 2007

Beg. Balance & Love Offerings 10167.61

Rent & Eviction Prevention	3545.00
Security Deposit	515.00
Utility Assistance	2522.69
Iraq Postage	318.14
Car repairs /payments	1040.00
Wexford Food Pantry	202.61
St Vincent de Paul Blankets	50.00
Car Battery	79.11
Mortgage payment	222.00
Storage Fee	160.00
Haiti Partners	200.00
Moving families into housing	465.00
Wexford Summer Camp	105.00
Iraq Medical Relief	200.00
Iraq Shopping	109.49
Greyhound Bus Tickets	102.00
DMV	183.00
City Municipal Court	87.20
Checks In The Mail	<u>61.37</u>
Expenditure	\$10167.61

Balance as of 11/26/2007 \$0.00

Judith Circle

Judith Circle will meet at 9:30 a. on Tuesday, December 11 at MCC, downstairs Youth Room. Jeanette Krahn & Jean Loichinger will be co hostesses. Please note that we have changed our starting time to **nine thirty**. All our welcome for fellowship and study.

If you need a ride or have any questions please call Jean Loichinger.

OPALS Book Discussion Group

OPALS meets the third Thursdays of the month all year. We meet at 7:00 p. in members' homes. New members are welcome. OPALS will meet on Thursday, December 6 at Jan Robertson's. The book that will be discussed is *We Are all the Same*, by Jim Wooten.

GEMS – Grumpy Elderly Men!

Join a great group of men (retired and alive) on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the lower level of MCC. We will be discussing *Praying the Psalms: Engaging Scripture and the Life of the Spirit* by Walter Brueggemann. We enjoy coffee, sweets and discussion with intensity, humor and camaraderie.

Advent Women:

Come for Thursday Coffee!

A lively group of "church ladies" meets on Thursday mornings at 7:00 a. at Panera Bread, 3416 University Ave.

The only agenda is sharing friendship, and there is always laughter. We do service projects several times a year, pray for one another's concerns, and celebrate joys. If you can be an early bird at least once a week, please drop by!

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Advent News continued

Sunday Morning Liturgies during the *Advent Season*

The liturgies will be from a resource called *Cloth for the Cradle*. This is a resource from the Iona Community and published by GIA Publishing.

The services of the Advent Season will include lighting the Advent candle and Communion.

Sunday, December 16 will be Christmas with our Sunday School Youth at 10:15 a.

WOMEN AND GIRLS EVENT: A WINTER EVENING OF STORIES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26

7:00-9:00 PM

LOCATION: MCC

Women of MCC and middle school and high school girls, please join us for a cozy winter evening of stories. Professional story teller Sue Black will present of program of stories, followed by snacks and a fun activity to share your own stories.

Please bring your friends!

A free will donation will be collected to offset the cost of the presenter.

Please bring a dessert or snack to share.

See you there!

Questions? Contact Beth Falkos

Women of Advent — from Carol Korf

The Women of Advent have arrived again at the time for the changing of the guard. Our president for 2008 will be Rita Olson. We welcome her and look forward to her leadership. We thank Marily Crews-Nelson, out-going president, for her service.

Women of Advent is composed of these groups: Elizabeth and Judith Circles, Advent Breakfast Group, OPALS (book club), and the Quilters. All Advent women are warmly invited to participate in any of these groups on an occasional or ongoing basis. Try us, you'll like us!

Advent Giving Goal and 2008 Pledges

The giving goal for November was \$23,700.00 and members of Advent generously contributed \$26,331.00.

Thanks to all who have returned their renewal of membership and financial commitment for 2008. At this time just over half of our members have returned their commitments. Your commitment information helps Advent Council members to plan responsibly for the year ahead. **If you have not returned your commitment forms, please do so no later than Sunday, December 2.**

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Community of Hope News

Praying for our Community

Please pray for the people and situations listed below, as well as our entire community in the coming months. If you have prayer requests you'd like to be included in the next newsletter please contact Tisha at the church office.

- Those who are unable, for health reasons, to join us in worship on a regular basis but whom we love: Mary Beth and Steve Udvari, Kathy Alexander and Wilma Sanks
- All military personnel and their families. Especially those in Iraq, and Afghanistan
- Our college students – Jamie Custer, Ian Jarvis, Sarah Hunter-Johnson, Emma Catlett-Sirchio and Rose Gear.
- People for whom the holidays are not always happy, joy-filled times.

These people and their families as we pray our way through the church directory:

Nov. 27-Dec. 4	Bonnie Trudell; Mary Beth/Steve Udvari
Dec. 4-11	Julia Weaver; Roger/Kristi Williams
Dec. 11-18	Nancy Zabel; Margie Zamora and Rebecca Green
Dec. 18-25	Kathy/Robin Alexander; Rajai/Chickee Atalla;
Dec. 25-Jan. 1	Tim, Kevin, Joshua and Caleb Baird; Phill/Candi Bloedow;

Hope Men's Breakfast Group

The men of Hope meet for breakfast on the first and third Wednesdays of every month at 6:30 a. at The Original Pancake House, 5518 University Ave. where we enjoy good food, good fellowship and good conversation.

Community of Hope Anchors

The Anchors are a small group of Community of Hope members who are specifically entrusted with a ministry of Christian friendship and support for members and friends of Community of Hope. Anchors are available to listen, pray and provide support as needed and desired. Feel free to contact any of the Anchors listed here or Pastor Tisha at any time.

Avis Elson
Margaret Helming
Roger Buffett
Larry Stuessy
Bonnie Spindler
Roger Williams

i.UCC.org

A Virtual Community for seekers and Members of the UCC

i.UCC is a virtual Christian community for members of the United Church of Christ and for seekers considering membership in our church. On i.UCC, members and seekers connect with the help of online experiences that strengthen relationship and build community. Features of i.UCC include:

- Real-time daily prayer in our virtual Prayer Chapel
- Weekly Seeds – a Bible reading and spiritual message sent directly to your email inbox
- A multi-media introduction to UCC history and values
- Music videos for reflection and prayer
- Interactive blogs by UCC pastors across the country
- Forums for Bible study, spiritual formation and friendly conversation.

All are welcome at i.UCC.org!

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Community of Hope News

Bulletin Covers

For a year, ending this fall, we purchased art and text material from the UCC national office for our bulletin covers. The COH Worship Team decided to save some money and make use of the wealth of talent and creativity in our congregation by assuming responsibility for our own bulletin covers. We won't be doing all the covers in colors; sometimes the cover will just be text; other times it may include black-and-white art.

What we'd like from you (adults AND youth) are submissions of art, poetry, prayers, favorite readings or writings, original writings -- anything that would be appropriate to share on a bulletin cover. The art can be any medium, including digital.

If you have something you'd like to see on a bulletin cover at some point, send or give it to Tisha. She's willing to figure out a file/retrieval system and promises to use as many different submissions as possible.

Christmas Fund 2007

The Christmas Fund Offering (formerly the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross), one of four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ (UCC), is an important way of sharing our joy at God's renewing and life-giving grace. The Offering, which is administered by the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance of the Pension Boards on behalf of the UCC, is an expression of joy and gratitude to, and for, those who serve the church.

Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees and Christmas Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants.

In 2006 the Christmas Fund received \$1,438,000 and nearly 1,500 families

were assisted. Our goal is to be able to provide at least \$1,500,000 in assistance from the 2007 appeal.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.

Community of Hope will receive your gift for the Christmas Fund in worship on Sunday, December 9. Donations can also be made online at www.christmasfund.org.

Important Dates to Remember!



Birthdays	
Ben Bougie	12/13
David Manion	12/19
Marcus Murphy	12/26
Erika Ono	12/29
Zoe Meyer	12/31

Anniversaries	
Kathy Alexander (Robin)	12/26

Please let us know if we have missed your special day.

WOMEN AND GIRLS EVENT: A WINTER EVENING OF STORIES

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7:00-9:00 PM

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A Word About Our Partnership— *Madison Christian Community*

Advent Lutheran (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and Community of Hope (United Church of Christ) are partners in Christ. Together we are the *Madison Christian Community* (MCC). We share education for all ages, youth activities, building space, fellowship groups and efforts to preserve the land. We worship together about 8–12 times a year. Community of Hope is an Open and Affirming congregation and Advent is a Reconciled in Christ congregation. We welcome people of all ages, denominational backgrounds, races, gender and sexual orientation. May our church be a sanctuary for all!

The Good Word

Monthly Newsletter of the
Madison Christian Community
*An Ecumenical Partnership of
Advent Lutheran Church – ELCA
and Community of Hope – UCC*

Staff:
Tisha Brown, Pastor
Community of Hope,
UCC
hope@madisonchristiancommunity.org

Jeff Wild, Pastor
Advent Lutheran
Church, ELCA
advent@madisonchristiancommunity.org

Dan & Jen Streit,
Youth Ministry

Sonja Keesey-Berg,
MCC Administrative
Secretary
office@madisonchristiancommunity.org

MCC Logo Design by
Lucetta Kanetzke

Tom Matthews, Secretarial Assistant AND
MCC Maintenance
mcctom@tds.net

Bruce Burns and
Jean Oliveresen
MCC Custodians

Community of Hope
Steering Committee

Ann Bolger
Barbara Dueholm,
Corkey Custer,
Moderator

Marcus Murphy
Bruce Jarvis
Bill Long
Donna Leet

Advent Council
Doug Johnson
Sarah Zutz
Jim Muehl
Joanna McDonald,
President

JoAnne Streit
Brian Kuhn
Edd Hellmer

Office Hours:
Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

If you call our office and there is no answer, please leave a message. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Are you still interested in receiving our newsletter?

If you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please contact the church office and let us know.

MCC Executive
Committee:
Doug Johnson, Chair
Bill Long
Joanna McDonald
Corkey Custer
Tisha Brown
Jeff Wild

MCC Mission Statement
We affirm our unity through Christ and commit to share a journey grounded in faith practices and to serve as part of Christ's presence in our world.



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Madison Christian Community
7118 Old Sauk Road
Madison WI 53717-1099

Phone: 608-836-1455
Fax: 608-836-7658
Email:
office@madisonchristiancommunity.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED