



The Good Word

December 2008

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I find the four Sundays of Advent a welcome relief after the twenty-seven Sundays of Pentecost. I cherish the mood of Advent worship, marvel at the beauty of the sanctuary, enjoy the Children's Christmas Worship. I cherish Christmas Eve worship. Believe it or not, the Advent, Community of Hope and MCC worship committees have planned these special services and have their reindeer in order.

But to be honest, at time of writing this article, I am as enthusiastic about Advent and Christmas as I am about the coming of winter. I'm not ready to shift gears because I need to celebrate Thanksgiving first, and then turn the page on the calendar from November to December. Even though it is not so much a holy day as it is a national holiday, I am focused on Thanksgiving partly because I am scheduled to preach at our worship on Thanksgiving Eve and partly because I have been thinking about all that I am thankful for as a pastor of this community of faith.

I am thankful for members of MCC who serve on committees, task forces and the leadership team and are responsible about attending meetings. I appreciate their commitment, thoughtfulness and dedication. I am not crazy about going to meetings, especially when they are scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday for weeks or months at a time. I leave some meetings excited, others frustrated, but I always leave knowing that I am among a cadre of people who care and share the responsibility about a respective area of mission, or they would not be sacrificing an evening to participate in the meeting.

I am thankful for your presence at worship on Sunday mornings. Most of you are post-confirmation age and are not forced to attend worship. You come because you actually want to rub shoulders with fellow members, pray, sing, hear God's word and offer yourself to God. I consider it a great privilege to preach the sermon on Sunday mornings and I work diligently to craft something for you to take home. Often when I am preaching, I am struck by this awareness, "they are actually listening to the words I am speaking". I am both humbled by and thankful for the "air time" you allow me and for your attentiveness.

I am thankful for the children and adults who served in the garden ministry this past summer. I appreciated and enjoyed working with middle and high school youth, adults of all ages who participated as leaders in the garden. I especially enjoyed garden time with the children after worship on Sunday mornings. It was a great pleasure to share the enthusiasm, excitement and joy with these children.

Nan and I are thankful for the exchange trip we took to Germany with ten of our high school youth in July. It was a privilege to accompany this group. Every person was mature, responsible, uncomplaining, considerate and punctual. To be honest, it was much easier hopping a flight to Germany than planning and implementing a trip to the Boundary Waters. And this reminds me, I am grateful to Jim Gern and Susan Gruber for accompanying the youth to the Boundary Waters while I enjoyed a backpacking trip with my son in northern California.

Jeff

MCC News

ATTENTION PARENTS! Need a break from your adorable little children this holiday season to do some special shopping or just to have some time to yourselves? Bring your kids, ages 3 - 5th grade to the MCC for **Parents Night Out** on Sunday, December 14 from 3-6 pm. Activities like crafts, games, and stories will be provided by youth and adult volunteers. Please bring a labeled snack for your child.

The Power of Forgiveness

Please join the Sunday morning Adult Forum for a discussion of The Power of Forgiveness. This is a film that was named the best documentary as the 2007 Sun Valley Spiritual Film Festival. We will meet for three Sunday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on December 7, 14, and 21.

Featured in the film are Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh, and Bishop Desmond Tutu. The film examines situations like Northern Ireland, the murder of Amish school children in Pennsylvania, and the aftermath of 9/11. Also included are stories of individuals who have been called to forgive and be forgiven in difficult personal situations.

A woman from Beirut, Lebanon, is shown saying, "We need to walk over the bridge of forgiveness to find the place of peace." What do you think? Have you had experiences of forgiveness that have led to peace? Or not? Our hope is that the film will lead participants to share their own experiences with forgiveness.

The leader of these sessions will be Dave Mack from Advent. Dave has had experience with The Forgiveness Project led by Dr. Robert Enright at the University of Wisconsin. Dave is currently working in a pilot program for teens and parents in recovery focusing on the power of forgiveness.

MaD KÜT !

Why MAD KÜT (mad cute)? Because Kids Under Three generally are! This is a new playgroup at the MCC for Mommies And Daddies, Kids Under Three. We will meet the 1st Sunday of every month from 3-4:30pm @ MCC beginning January 4. Drop in when you can!

There are so many MAD KÜT kids at the MCC right now – let's get together & play!

Contact Jen Streit with questions.

A big **THANK YOU** to all those who helped make this year's **Coffeehouse** event a success! Thanks to those who performed, to those who worked behind the scenes, and to those who attended. It was a very enjoyable evening.

MCC Choir Rehearses For Sunday-After-Christmas Service

All interested MCC singers are invited to attend choir practices in the Blessing Room beginning promptly at 11:30 on Sundays following services during the Advent Season: Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14 and 21. There will be a final rehearsal on Saturday, Dec.27 at 9:30 a.

There will be music for choir, instrumentalists and congregational participation. Plan to join us in celebrating the birth of Jesus with music in worship. Questions? Contact Howard Kanetzke.

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Fellowship Groups & Activities

Theological Discussion Group

On That Day Everybody Ate: One Woman's Story of Hope and Possibility in Haiti by Margaret Trost (Koa Books, 2008)

The Theological Discussion Group will discuss this book on Wednesday, December 17 at 7 P.M. at MCC.

While living in Stoughton with her husband and son, Trost's husband died suddenly from an asthma attack. Struggling to find her way through grief, she accepted an invitation from Bryan Sirchio, a Community of Hope member, to go to Haiti in the spring of 1999. Bryan travels to Haiti several times a year and sometimes takes people with him. He told her "it would be a two-week 'pilgrimage of reverse mission' to Port-au-Prince"; reverse because it is designed to be transformational for the participant. For Margaret, this journey began a partnership with a local community where they develop a program that now serves thousands of meals a week to those in need, the What If? Foundation.

Did you know that the annual per capita income in Haiti is less than \$400 per year; most Haitians live on less than \$2 a day and more than half live on less than \$1 a day? The literacy rate is about 15%. Did you know that when the U.S. has provided "food aid" to Haiti, it has been highly profitable for U.S. agribusinesses and shipping companies since U.S. law requires that "food Aid" be purchased from U.S. farmers, processed and bagged in the U. S. shipped on U.S. vessels? Thus, only 50 % of the dollars spent actually reach hungry people and the other 50% of the monies go to cover the cost of U.S. rice, processing and shipping. A simple change in U.S. law to allow local purchases of commodities would feed more people and support farmers in local or regional markets.

Come for a discussion of Trost's 'pilgrimage of reverse mission'. Her testimony may be transformational for you.

ACTIVITIES FOR MCC COMMUNITY GROUP

Sunday, Dec. 7 – Christmas tour of the Governor's Mansion. Go for lunch after church at University Ave. Panera Bread & then carpool to the Governor's Mansion for the Christmas tour.

Sunday, Dec. 14 – 7 pm, Bring a wrapped "White Elephant" gift to the 7:00 p. party at Loichinger's, 6642 Maywood Av., Middleton. Bring a treat to share also, if you wish.

Wednesday, Dec. 31 – Watch for a sign-up at church for the New Years Eve progressive dinner.

Sunday, Jan. 11 - Save this date for the Badger Women's Basketball game!

MCC Film Group

Dec. 19 *Ladies in Lavender*
Host: Freddie Feeny

Jan. 16 *Bicycle Thieves*
Youth Room at Church

Make note of these on your calendar. Hope you can join us.

Contact Lois Komai if you would like to be on the email reminder list for the Film Group.

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MCC News -

Dane County United Announces Upcoming Organizing Training

Real change in society arises from the concerns and the commitment of citizens. But we all need skills to make this change happen. Dane County United is offering training on Saturday December 6, 2008, that will help answer the question, "How do we achieve the change we are hoping for?"

Mark Fraley, Lead Organizer with Southeast Wisconsin Common Ground, will facilitate a program that teaches the fundamental skills for organizing around issues important to you and your community.

Where: Lussier Community Ed. Ctr.,
55 S. Gammon Road, Madison

When: Saturday, December 6, from
9:00 am to 3:30 p.m. (registration begins at 8:30 a.m.)

Cost: \$5.00, including lunch. Participants are encouraged to read Michael Gecan's *Going Public*, available for \$7.00.

Please talk with Tisha Brown if you are interested in registering for this training event or learning more about the MCC's work with Dane County United.

DROP-IN SHELTER—December 4

We're in need of two volunteers to work MCC's dinner shift at the men's homeless shelter at Grace Episcopal Church on Thursday December 4 from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. Volunteers from other organizations provide and cook the food. MCC volunteers help prepare salads, pour beverages and serve the meal. There's always shelter staff and other volunteers to show you the ropes. This can be a nice way for a high schooler and a parent to do some service together. See the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board or give Ken Johnson a call if you have questions. Thanks!

Bring Your Recyclable Light Bulbs and Batteries to MCC

The place to deposit your recyclables is to the left of the library counter and Sonja's basket. There is a sign posted letting you know the cost of recycling the items. Please put your donation in the small container labeled *Donations*. There is a list of places in the Madison area that also accepts these items.

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MCC News

JAVA FOR JUSTICE – Place your December coffee order by Dec. 7th ready for pick-up on Dec. 14th. Don't forget all of the people on your Christmas gift list that 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. (\$9) or 4# (\$40) 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 family in Tanzania, a partnership program with the ELCA synod in Milwaukee and the ELCA Meru diocese.

Pastor Tisha's Sabbatical

Pastor Tisha and Community of Hope are sad to report that we did not receive a National Clergy Renewal Grant from the Lilly Endowment to fund Pastor Tisha's sabbatical in 2009. Based on this decision and on some new opportunities on the horizon, Pastor Tisha has decided to postpone taking her sabbatical until the summer of 2010. We will consider reapplying for 2010 as well as considering other options. Thank you to all who prayed for and contributed to this effort.

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Coming Events

Nov 30	MCC Choir, 11:30 a. Blessing Room
Dec 3	MCC Drumming Circle, 6:30 p.
Dec 3	Deck the Church, 6:00-9:30 p.
Dec 4	MCC Staffs the Drop-In Shelter-sign up on the bulletin board
Dec 7, 12, 21	MCC Choir, 11:30 a. Blessing Room
Dec 10	Indoor Labyrinth is open to the public, 9:00 a.—6:00 p.
Dec 14	Indoor Labyrinth is open to the public, 1:00-2:30 P.
Dec 14	Parents Night Out, 3:00-6:00 p.
Dec 16	MCC Executive Committee, 7:00 p.
Dec 20	Christmas Program practice at 10:00 a.
Dec 21	Christmas Program, 10:15 a.
Dec 21	Blue Christmas, 5:00 p.
Dec 21	Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk, 6:00-8:00 p. This walk is accompanied by live harp music provided by Alice Kissling.
Dec 21-28	IHN Week—sign up will be available in the Shalom Room
Dec 24	5:00 and 9:00 p. MCC Christmas Eve Worship Communion at 9:00 p. Special Prelude Music for each service.
Dec 27	MCC Choir, Saturday, 9:30 a. Blessing Room
Dec 28	No Sunday School, MCC Service of Music at 10:15 a.
Jan 1	New Year's Day Labyrinth Walk, 1:00-4:00 p.
Jan 4	MaD KÜT!, 3:00-4:30 p. at MCC

MCC News —

Christmas boxes mailed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan From Brad Spencer

Several boxes were sent to Iraq this last week - the MCC has been very generous. There were 3 large boxes and 5 Priority Mail flat-rate boxes. Included in the material sent were close to 50 boxes of Christmas cards, two bags of Mt. Meru coffee, well over two dozen decks of playing cards, three cribbage boards and some other games and quite an assortment of food and personal hygiene products.

If you want to give but have not yet we can plan for a 2nd round of mailings the week of Dec 7-13. Both items and postage are appropriate gifts. That will probably be too late for the timely delivery of blank Christmas cards but gift items for the troops should arrive just about exactly on time. You can use your imagination for what they might want or go to AnySoldier.com for ideas. Age-appropriate music CDs or DVDs surely would be welcomed, as would just about anything else that would help make time off more enjoyable (such as the playing cards and games just sent.) Above all, the care and attention shown to those serving is what matters.

IHN - Interfaith Hospitality Network – December 21st – 28th.

We know that Christmas is a time for families and we hope that you will consider sharing your time with families that have nowhere else to go. During each IHN week, we partner with Orchard Ridge UCC to provide shelter, food and activities for 4 or 5 homeless families. It's easy and fun to volunteer. We are seeking volunteers to help with our upcoming IHN week to serve dinners, play with kids and spend the night. Our nights are Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Please see Mark Geistlinger or Aaron Anding with questions or to volunteer.

Laughter Yoga!

Laughter Yoga is a wellness ministry that combines laughter and yoga breathing exercises. Some benefits of Laughter Yoga reported by medical experts are: It helps to reduce high blood pressure, stress, anxiety, and depression. It also helps to strengthen the immune system, increase blood circulation, and oxygen levels. The amazing benefits are too many to list. Come experience the benefits for yourself and enjoy the fun and fellowship created through the gift of laughter!

We will meet in the Covenant Room right after our morning church services. We will meet on December 14 and not December 7. You are encouraged to go caroling on December 7.

For more information contact Michelle Erschen or Nancy Greenwald.

The MCC will host a "Blue Christmas" service at 5 p. Sunday, December 21st.

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 experience 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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MCC News

Common Recycling Errors

(from <http://www.cityofmadison.com/streets/RecyclingProblems.cfm>)

On average 8.3% of the material that is put in Madison's green recycling carts cannot be recycled. This material is removed at the recycling plant and sent to the landfill. This misplaced trash cost Madison taxpayers \$89,000 to toss out in 2006.

The Streets Division recently sorted through recyclables we collected looking for some of the common mistakes Madison recyclers make. Here are the most common items that residents put in their recycling carts that should have been put in the trash.

Material That Cannot Be Recycled

Glass

Broken glasses, light bulbs, mirrors and windows should go directly into your tan refuse cart.

Metal

Scrap metal, shelving, and automobile

parts should not be placed in your recycling cart. They can be brought to a drop off site for recycling.

Styrofoam

STYROFOAM CANNOT BE RECYCLED. All Styrofoam should be placed in your tan refuse cart.

Plastic Packaging

Plastic blister packaging cannot be recycled. It should go directly into your tan refuse cart.

Rigid Plastics

Hard, rigid plastic should not be put in your green recycling cart. You can recycle it at our drop off sites. Always look for the recycling symbol and know what numbers you can place in your recycling.

Plastic Bags and Film

Plastic bags, sheet plastic and plastic film should be placed in your tan refuse cart.

Cups

All cups, paper or plastic cannot be recycled. They should be put in your tan refuse cart.

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.
- COH and Advent members find Worship Assistant's Schedule and Task Descriptions.

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.



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UPDATE: Jeff has sent the application for teaching at Holden Village next summer! Typically the theme for the coming summer is determined in January and the schedule will be in place. As soon as we have the date we will meet on a Sunday morning after worship. Stay tuned!

Is anyone Interested in spending a week at Holden Village in the Cascade Mountains with others from MCC during the summer of 2009?

Holden Village is a center for renewal, welcoming all people into the wilderness to be called, equipped and sent by God.

Please give Sonja a call or send her an email (mcc@chorus.net) if you are interested. Those interested will put their calendars together and see if we can find some common weeks to choose from. So far there are twelve people interested.

Holden Village does have a group program. To participate in the group program we register on January 1st, 2009, a group of 15 to 55 for a minimal deposit of \$250. Then by March 1st, we would need a firm number of guests and balance of the deposit, the cost of the first night's lodgings. They also require that a group arrive and depart on the same day. Groups may register as individuals or families using the on-line system and noting that they are part of a specific group. The reservations for individuals/families also opens January 1st, 2009.

SERRV Sale

Once again we will be offering an alternative to the Malls. SERRV is a fair trade store and network for 95 co-ops in 35 countries including the USA. All items are fair trade meaning that fair wages and prices for goods are given. This is helping people fish, rather than giving them a fish. Sales at the MCC will be held November 30th and December 7th and 14th. Because we are working with the store on Monroe Street this year, we will also accept credit cards for the first time. Cash and Checks will also be accepted for payment. Look for the table in the Shalom Room.

Need Help with Raking, Snow Removal, etc. – call Bemis

If you are in need of extra hands to rake leaves and clean snow contact me whenever possible. Call Bemis Gorvego.

OPEN STUDIO Dec. 6-7
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Landscapes and Portrait sketches In Oil and Pastel
by John Mix

1002 N. Sunnyvale Ln #B
Madison

Meeting Minutes are available in the book on the library counter in the Shalom Room.

If you are interested in minutes from Community of Hope, Advent and MCC meetings, you can find them in the large black book on the library counter in the Shalom Room.

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Winter Gardening?

By Heather Putnam, Children's Ministry

The MCC outside garden has been put to bed for the winter. Now it is time for **cyber gardening**. The materials we produced to accompany each week's lesson during our summer garden ministry are now available on the MCC website. So, as the temperatures drop outside, you can curl up with your family and nurture your souls while you explore these biblical garden lessons together.

Each of the 14 lessons includes four sections.

- **Growing Point:** a Bible story and a reflection about it.
- **Soul Water:** a prayer for families to share.
- **Earth Explorations:** activities, websites to check out, or fun facts.
- **Seeds for Thought:** questions for families to ponder and discuss or other suggested activities to further nurture soil and soul.

Whether you participated in the garden program this summer or not, or whether or not you even have kids, you will find these materials a useful resource for nurturing your connections to soil and soul. Check it out at madisonchristiancommunity.org/garden.

Drawn to the Rhythm a Huge Success

By Heather Putnam, Children's Ministry

An audible pulse emanated from the MCC building on Nov. 1. The source? Not lost goblins from Halloween. But rather 40 drums all being enthusiastically played at the same time during the Drawn to the Rhythm drumming workshop.

Final participation count was 39! We were kids (8) and adults (31). We were from Advent and Hope (evenly divided). A few were experienced drummers, but most had very little or no drumming experience. We were a diverse group, but the drums brought us together as a unified community.

The workshop was expertly led by Judy Piazza, a music educator, performer, and music therapist with over thirty years of experience. The mix of simply drumming, specific directed learning, thought provoking words, and inspirational demonstrations was perfect.

Thanks to all who lent their drums and to all who so enthusiastically participated to make the workshop such a huge success.

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MCC YOUTH ADVENTURES

Every Wednesday at 6:30pm - Guitar Club
Every Wednesday at 7pm – Advent Confirmation

Wednesday, 12/3, 8pm \$75 non-refundable deposit due for YOUTH
QUAKE retreat (Feb. 6-8) - Middle School

Saturday, 12/6 Candy Making – Get up to your elbows in sugar and
butter, making candy to be sold during Advent as a fundraiser for the
food pantry at Wexford Ridge (6:30 – 9pm @ MCC) - Middle & High
School

Sundays, 12/7, 14, 21 Sell Candy @ Church – Time to turn the gooey
goodness that we made into money for a good cause. Middle & High
School

DATE CHANGE!!

Sunday, 12/14 Parents' Night Out – It's like an afternoon of summer
camp in the winter for the kids, and a much needed break for their
parents! We need High Schoolers to be counselors and Middle School-
ers to be activity assistants. Come help to provide fun and action-
packed child care for the little ones. (3:00 – 6:00 pm @ MCC)

Sunday, 12/14 – Hope Confirmation

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Advent News

Move Over and Up For Hospitality!

There are usually plenty of seats in the Blessing Room for everyone to worship, but sometimes it doesn't look that way to those who arrive right before the service and they end up having to set up folding chairs in the back. Now, we know that many Lutherans claim to have allergies to the front rows, and we also have a tendency to "keep a respectful distance" by leaving an empty chair or two between us and the next person when we sit down. The problem is, one or two seats in the middle of a row are not easily accessible, and not much help to a family of 3 or 4. Let's each do our part to bring our church community "closer" together -- scootch in and take the seat right next to your neighbor. Take the big step out of your comfort zone and take a seat in the front rows. That will open up more empty seats together and make everyone feel welcome!

Treasury of Love 2008

Beg. Bal & Love Offerings	10,262.93
Rent & Eviction Prevention	4,271.00
Utility Payment	1,719.92
Security Deposit	1,923.00
Prescription	267.58
Iraq Postage	149.83
Iraq Food Purchased	11.88
Scholarship	85.00
Auto Repair	455.00
Haiti Partners	20.00
Crossways—Aids Benefit	552.00
Bus Pass	47.00
Overdraft charge	14.75
Repay Advent	114.75
Auto Registration	30.00
Storage Fee	50.00
Wexford Food Pantry	85.00
Moving Expenses	175.00
Wexford Backpacks	55.00
IDs x two	48.00
St John Emergency Fund	55.00
Vital Records	20.00
Groceries & Gas	<u>100.00</u>
Expenditure	\$10,249.71
Balance as of 11/18/2008	\$13.25
Iraq postage—\$3.22	

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Advent News continued

Advent Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on December 11 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 read 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 Phyllis Ermer with questions.

Judith Circle

Judith Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 9, 9:30 a. at Joanne Heggen's. All are welcome for fellowship and study. Our study leader will be Joanne Heggen.

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

Deck the church!

On Wednesday, December 3, from 6-9:30 PM we will be preparing the Blessing Room and Shalom Room for the Advent season. Many hands are needed because there is much to do: re-set the chairs, iron and hang yards and yards of blue fabric, wrap thousands of lights onto trees, hang ever-green roping, vacuum up needles, etc. etc. etc. It is joyful chaos for awhile and eventuallybeauty!

If you have some time that evening, come and lend a hand! There will be hot cider and snacks are always welcome. This event is enjoyed by all who join in. If you have questions, call Candice and Paul Schneider, 849-3084.

Fa la la la la, la la, la, laaaaaa!

OPALS Book Discussion Group

OPALS book discussion group is not meeting in December.

GEMS – The 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 Christianity for the Rest of Us by Diana Butler Bass. We enjoy coffee, sweets and discussion with intensity, humor and camaraderie. The group will take a break between the holidays.

Advent Women Thursday Breakfast Gathering in December

Advent women are invited for coffee each Thursday at 7 AM at PASQUAL'S in Hilldale Shopping Center, directly across from Metcalfe's Sentry. 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 when your schedule allows!

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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 month. 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 Ardie Manser
- All military personnel and their families all over the world but especially those in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Our college students – Jamie Custer, Ian Jarvis, Hannah Hunter-Johnson, Rose Gear, Josh Ryan, Tristan Breedlove (graduate studies), Sarah Hunter-Johnson (graduate studies)
- The family and friends of Wilma Sanks who passed away on Thursday, November 13, 2008. These people and their families as we pray our way through the church directory:

Nov. 25-Dec. 2 Petra Streiff/Larry Stuessy; Jan Summers; Bonnie Trudell

Dec. 2-9 Mary Beth/Steve Udvari; Julia Weaver; Steve/Aly Van Der Weide

Dec. 9-16 Roger/Kristi Williams; Nancy Zabel

Dec. 16-23 Kathy/Robin Alexander; Rajai/Chickee Atalla

Dec. 23-30 Barb Bickford; Phill/Candi Bloedow

Dec. 30-Jan. 6, 2009
Mary Bowman;
Diane Bougie

Important Dates to Remember!



Birthdays

Ben Bougie	12/13
Rose Gear	12/18
David Manion	12/19
Mary Schmelzer	12/22
Marcus Murphy	12/26
Erika Ono	12/29
Zoe Meyer	12/31

Anniversaries

Kathy Alexander (Robin)	12/26
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Please let us know if we have missed your special day.

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 –

Pray Daily
Worship Regularly
Study God's Word
Respond as Stewards
Cultivate Spiritual
Friendship
Serve at MCC &
Beyond

Community of Hope News

The Christmas Fund Offering Sunday, December 14, 2008

Our joy at Christmas is a response to God's promise of new life through the birth of Jesus. It is a joy we are called to share widely, through our witness and gifts, both to loved ones and to distant neighbors.

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.

The theme for the 2008 Offering is: "Don't Be Afraid, Shout!" We are commissioned to boldly proclaim Good News, that the incarnation of God in the Christ Child has happened – Good News that a new day, God's day, is about to dawn. The church today is the incarnate presence of the Christ. We are called to be the presence of the Christ in the lives of those who have served the church so faithfully, as well as to usher in a new day for God's whole earth.

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.

Let's go Caroling!

Join the fun on Sunday, December 7 following worship when we will go Christmas Caroling for members of Community of Hope who find it difficult to come to church. We'll carpool from church by noon and return no later than 1:30. Please let Tisha know if you're planning to sing and if you're willing to be a driver.

Thank You from Julia Weaver

Dear friends,
I want to thank you for making it possible for me to attend the Preaching Worship this fall. It came at the perfect time and has truly provided me with the new tools and a renewed confidence in my ministry.

Peace & Gratitude.
Julia Weaver

Hope Men: Pancakes, Puns, Proverbs and Politics - those are just a few of the things you will miss if you don't get to the Hope men's breakfast at the Original Pancake House on University Avenue, at 6:30 a. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month. You have promised yourself for a long time now. Mark your calendar, set your alarm, and make it! This is a practice. It was easier to start in the summer, when it was already light by 6:30 a. Now you will say, "I don't care how deep the snow will be, I'm going!"

The group is called "Hope Men," but we welcome visitors. Just ask Tisha.

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Larger Community News

The Hunger Site was founded to focus the power of the Internet on a specific humanitarian need: the eradication of world hunger. Since its launch in June 1999, the site has established itself as a leader in online activism, helping to feed the world's hungry. On average, over 220,000 individuals from around the world visit the site each day to click the yellow "Click Here to Give - it's FREE" button. To date, more than 300 million visitors have given more than 500 million cups of staple food.

The staple food funded by clicks at The Hunger Site is paid for by site sponsors and distributed to those in need by [Mercy Corps](#) and [Feeding America \(formerly America's Second Harvest\)](#). 100% of sponsor advertising fees go to our charitable partners. Funds are split between these organizations and go to the aid of hungry people in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and North America.

All of us here at The Hunger Site are also deeply moved by the humanitarian [crisis in Darfur](#). Learn how you can help: go to thehungersite.com!

Hunger: Do You Know The Facts?

It is estimated that one billion people in the world suffer from hunger and malnutrition. That's roughly 100 times as many as those who actually die from these causes each year. About 24,000 people die every day from hunger or hunger-related causes. This is down from 35,000 ten years ago, and 41,000 twenty years ago. *Three-fourths of the deaths are children under the age of five.*

Famine and wars cause about 10% of hunger deaths, although these tend to be the ones you hear about most often. The majority of hunger deaths are caused by chronic malnutrition. Families facing extreme poverty are simply unable to get enough food to eat.

The Hunger Site began on June 1, 1999. In 1999, a year marked by good economic news, yet 31 million Americans were "food insecure", meaning they were either hungry or unsure of where their next meal would come from. Of these Americans, *12 million were children.*

Plan Commission Meeting – 7 p. December 2 at Fitchburg City Hall
Come and support language in the Southdale neighborhood plan that will preserve Drumlin Community Farm & Gardens. Come help save the farm!
Learn more: www.drumlingarden.org

Church Women United in Madison December 5 Forum

WORLD HUNGER

Dr. Florence Chenoweth
Managing Director

The University of Wisconsin Human
Rights Initiative
9:00 a. Coffee

9:30 a. Welcome, Prayer,
Announcements
10:00 a. Program
At MCC

Gifts for Domestic Abuse Intervention Services

As in years past, the MCC will support Domestic Abuse Intervention Services with our monetary gifts. *Checks can be made to Community of Hope, with D.A.I.S. in the memo line.* The deadline is Dec. 14. Last year's MCC gift (doubled by a Walgreen's coupon) supplied telephone cards so people in shelter could keep in contact with families and also connect with legal services, residential sites and many other needs. Questions? Contact Lucetta or Howard Kanetzke.

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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*

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Julie M. Walsh
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:

Brian Kuhn
Bill Long, Chair
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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