



The Good Word

MAY 2008

Nurturing Soil and Soul: MCC Kids Garden Ministry

Dear Friends,

I am jumping with joy to share information with you about a new ministry that will begin on Sunday, May 4, during the education hour. Annie Grugel will present her research, "Voices from the Garden: Ecological narratives of ideological becoming," and it will be my privilege to share our vision of Nurturing Soul and Soil: MCC Kids in the Garden. I believe that this new endeavor is the prompting of the Holy Spirit. We have learned that gardening forges an ecological identity for children. I am most curious to see how gardening, undergirded by Biblical stories, verses and parables, songs and prayers, fellowship and feasting will nurture our children in faith as they nurture the plants in the soil. I wonder if the rhythms of gardening on Sunday will counter our scheduled lives and move us closer to living the Sabbath. I have a hunch that the Holy Spirit will cultivate hilarity, deep gladness, as we join together in this ministry. Please join us in the Covenant Room on Sunday, May 4.
Jeff Wild

Mission:

The MCC Kids Garden Ministry will provide children of the Madison Christian Community a place to understand, embrace and develop a spiritual connection with nature and our food system through growing and eating plants and vegetables on the church's garden site while also nurturing their sense of community through forging relationships among their MCC peers and ministry leaders.

Goals:

1. To develop a sense of wonder and engage children in the wonders of God's creation that will help nurture spiritual growth in children.
2. To instill in children knowledge of healthy foods and sustainable gardening methods that will help them nurture their bodies and the environment.
3. To use songs, Bible stories or passages, activities and shared time in the garden to help nurture MCC and larger community connections.

Objectives:

1. Create a curriculum for a 13-week program with a theme of Nurturing Soil and Soul that will include custom songs and prayers, garden work, journaling, digital photography, preparing and eating garden snacks and other activities.
2. Meet with children each summer Sunday after services to work, play, sing, pray and eat from the garden.
3. Provide each child participant with a garden bag, garden toolkit and garden journal to enrich their experience.
4. Share with children Biblical parables that will help them make connections between nurturing soil and soul.
5. Teach children basic concepts in caring for the earth and themselves through gardening and preparing and eating fresh foods from the garden.
6. Invite preschool children with their parents and elementary school-aged

Of Special Interest:

- Growing in Sanctuary Pledges are Due; Prairie Opportunities—p.2
- Book Reviews – p.4-5
- JAVA for Justice: House Sitter Needed; Gardening with MCC youth; Wexford Ridge Food Drive; MCC celebrates 40th —p. 6
- Salad Supper a Success; Duck Doo, Sustainable Travel to Worship —p.7
- Plant Sale and Resale; AIDS Benefit Dinner—p.8
- Helping our friends in Haiti —p.9-10
- Adult Education ; Holden Village 2009 - p.10
- Iraq Update - p. 11
- Faith at Home —p.12
- Centering Prayer—p.20
- Larger Community—p.21-22
- May Calendar—p.23

Inside this issue:

Fellowship Activities	3
Coming Events	5
MCC News	2, 4-12
Youth News	13-14
Advent News	15-17
Hope News	18-19

MCC News

7. children to participate as many Sundays as they can.

8. Invite children over 12 to mentor younger children and help document the program with photos and through a blog.

9. Engage other members of the MCC community to support the program through prayer, volunteer participation, personal gifts and sharing of resources and ideas.

Invite ideas and participation from the larger community that will help build on the program.

Team:

Pastor Wild will direct a core team of about 5 to 10 MCC community members as well as other experts in the fields of youth education, nature education and ministry education. The broader MCC community will be invited to participate and share in the reaping and harvest of this program.

Evaluation:

The program will be evaluated each fall on meeting objectives and to make improvements for subsequent years. Parents and participants will be surveyed.

Year One Timeline:

The MCC Kids Garden Ministry will kick-off on May 4 when Annie Grugel will share her compelling research on children developing an eco-identity. Interested parents are invited to hear Annie speak and get information about signing up for the summer program.

The Sunday School ministry will start the 2008 season May 25 and run through August 31. The program will take the place of Vacation Bible School. Start time is after worship, approximately 10:30 a.

Growing in Sanctuary - Pledges Due

The three-year MCC Building Fund campaign to finance the renovation of the original sanctuary (the Covenant Room), the Second Chance Project, and other property improvements came to an end on March 31, 2008. Those members who have not completed their pledge giving should try to do so during May. Thank you.

PRAIRIE OPPORTUNITY

Help is needed on our wonderful MCC prairies and Pheasant Branch Conservancy (PBC) to keep invasive plants under control, collect seeds to continue to keep them healthy, and just general prairie management. As part of an on-going project, every first and second Monday evening May – September from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm, we will be helping to manage these two prairies. At Pheasant Branch we will be working with members of the Friends of Pheasant Branch who are part of the restoration team participating in the Adopt a Prairie. They will be training us to clear invasive plants, flag plants that need to be sprayed as well as teach us about prairies and the Conservancy.

Schedule for the coming months are:

Monday May 5 – MCC prairie

Monday May 12 – PBC prairie

Monday June 2 – MCC prairie

Monday June 9 – PBC prairie

Monday July 7 – MCC prairie

Monday July 14 – PBC prairie

Monday August 4 – MCC prairie

Monday August 11 – PBC prairie

Monday September 8 – PBC prairie

Here is your opportunity. Join us and let Lois Komai (238-2503) or Susan Gruber (836-3848) know your interest in helping with this adoption project.

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Fellowship Groups & Activities

MCC Community Group

Wednesday, May 21. - Free "Musical Memories" show at the Overture Center. Meet at the "alter" (large table) near the main entrance at 9:30a. Come even earlier for coffee & muffins.

Saturday, May 31— Meet at Maxwells (near Mt. Horeb) for a potluck and then take a hike in Donald Park. Carpool from MCC at 9:30a.

MCC Film Group

May 16 is Family Film Night at church. It is Community of Hope Invite-Friends-to-Church night with a film in the Covenant Room. The film is **UNSTRUNG HEROES**. "Sometimes you find your heroes in unlikely places. When a youngster needs a break from his parent's household he moves in with off-beat uncles. From this unlikely pair a family soon learns valuable lessons about life, love and pride."

Contact Lois Komai at 238-2503 if you would like to be on the email reminder list for the Film Group.

MCC Theological Discussion Group

[The Faith Club: a Muslim, a Christian, a Jew – Three Women Search for Understanding](#) (Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver, and Priscilla Warner)

"We're three mothers from three faiths who got together to write a picture book for our children that would highlight the connections between our religions. But no sooner had we started talking about our beliefs and how to explain them to our children than our differences led to misunderstandings. Our project nearly fell apart. We realized that before we could talk about what united us we had to confront what divided us in matters of faith, God, and religion. We had to reveal our own worst fears, prejudices, and stereotypes." (Preface)

The Theological Discussion Group, an informal group with a formal name, discusses this book on Wednesdays, May 21 and June 18, MCC at 7 P.M. Come. You will enjoy the company of readers who want to talk about this subject. No "membership" required.

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The Good Word

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MCC News - Two Book Reviews (pages 4 & 5)

The Shock Doctrine, by Naomi Klein— a Book Review by Roger Williams

Have you ever wondered why Salvador Allende, the democratically-elected President of Chile, was overthrown by the brutal dictator General Augusto Pinochet? Why promising democracy movements in such diverse countries as Poland and South Africa fizzled so badly and left millions of people in squalor? Why China chose a model of free markets combined with authoritarian political control and repression? Why the democratic revolution in Russia resulted in mega-millions for a select group of oligarchs and poverty for the vast majority of Russian people? Why the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have supported political and economic upheavals that have created huge rifts between the “haves” and “have-nots” throughout the world? Why the beleaguered residents of the Gulf Coast were left to fend for themselves following hurricane Katrina? Why billions of dollars for war and redevelopment efforts in Iraq have been outsourced to private contractors, effectively locking Iraqis out of involvement in the future of their own country? More important, have you ever wondered whether all of these disparate events are interconnected?

Naomi Klein has written a powerful and eye-opening account that weaves 60 years of world history, politics and economics into one book—[The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism](#). She provides answers to all of the questions outlined above and does it in a way that engages readers while repulsing them with the sordid details of what greed and power will drive people to do. It is an essential read for all thinking Americans...your view of the United States, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and international agreements designed to foster free trade and globalization will be unalterably changed.

The basic thesis behind the book is that

Milton Friedman, a Nobel Prize winning economist at the University of Chicago, has had a profound influence on the economies and politics of most countries in the world, dating back to his ascendancy in the 1950s. Friedman's book [Capitalism and Freedom](#) outlined three principles that are central to the evolving neoconservative movement: privatization, deregulation and dramatic cuts to social spending. This “free market trinity” has been at the heart of political and economic reforms in emerging “democracies” across the world, thanks to the power of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The “free market trinity” has also been at the heart of a host of free trade agreements that have sprung up in the past 15-20 years.

The problem is that the economic policies Friedman and neoconservatives promote are generally not accompanied by “democracy” or “freedom” as we understand these concepts. What the “free market trinity” promotes is freedom for large multi-national corporations to make megabillions as the assets of emerging “democracies” are privatized and deregulated by forces outside the control of citizens in those countries. The average citizen would never vote for these policies because everywhere they have been implemented they have resulted in huge gaps between the wealthy and those left in squalor. These policies are usually forced on people by brutal dictators (Chile and other countries in Latin America) or by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund when countries seek funds to shore-up economies in free-fall situations.

Thus, “the shock doctrine.” In 1982, Friedman developed a highly influential statement that best summarizes the shock doctrine: “Only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them

Continues on the next page

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Beyond

MCC News—

Continued from page 4
 alive and available until the politically impossible becomes politically inevitable." Right-wing radio commentators and think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, Cato Institute and American Enterprise Institute have helped to keep Friedman's ideas "lying around." It's just a matter of time until the next disaster appears and neo-conservatives respond with their shock doctrine.

Viewers of Bill Moyers Journal have identified this as one of ten recommended books for the next U.S. President. I repeat: The Shock Doctrine is an essential read for every thinking American.

Omnivore's Dilemma

by Michael Pollan

Reviewed by David Keesey-Berg

Michael Pollan is a longtime contributing writer at the New York Times and is the Knight Professor of Journalism at Berkeley. He has published five prize-winning books in which he examines our food system and how it effects our health and the economic well-being of our country. If

you attended the Faith, Food and Earth Day event, you know Cal DeWitt cited The Omnivore's Dilemma as an essential source of information on the food we consume. I can guarantee it will change the way you fill your shopping cart at the local supermarket.

Andrew Weil sums this book well when he writes: "With the skill of a professional detective, Michael Pollan explores the worlds of industrial farming, organic and sustainable agriculture, and even hunting and gathering to determine the links of the food chain; how food gets from its sources in nature to our plates. The findings he reports in this book are often unexpected, disturbing, even horrifying, but they are facts every eater should know." If you read the opening chapter on the all-encompassing presence of Corn in our food system, you will not be able to put this book down until you have followed the trail of food and greed to its sobering conclusion.

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Coming Events

- May 2 Benefit Dinner for AIDS – Sponsored by Amy Hoag
- May 3 Centering Prayer Workshop at MCC
- May 4 Sustainable Travel to Worship Day
- May 4 Community of Hope Congregational meeting at 11:30 a.
- May 5 Prairie Opportunity @ MCC, 5:00 p.
- May 9 Middle High Game Night
- May 9 – 10 Plant Sale and Resale Fund Raiser
- May 10 1:00-4:00 p. – *Pre-Season Canoeing*
- May 12 Prairie Opportunity @ Pheasant Branch Conservancy
- May 18 Senior High vs Middle High in Video Scavenger Hunt
- May 20 Summer Newsletter articles are due
- June 21 Farmers Market Pick-up for food pantries
- Oct 18 Farmers Market Pick-up for food pantries
- Future IHN Week for 2008: December 21-28, 2008.

MCC News —

House & Pet Sitter Needed

Once again, the Wahl's are looking for someone who would be willing to house and pet sit for 9 days in May. If you would be interested, please let us know as soon as possible! Believe it or not, May is just around the corner. We can be reached at 663-4928. Thanks!
Al and Gretchen

Sunday, May 4 Nurturing A Spiritual and Eco-Identity Among Youth Through Gardening With MCC Youth, led by Annie Grugel, Lisa Bauer, Heather Putnam and Jeff Wild.

Annie Grugel will present her research about forming an eco-identity in children through gardening. Annie's research was done in conjunction with the MCC Garden Ministry last summer. Jeff's presentation will focus upon how the Biblical word is activated within us as we engage in gardening. Lisa and Heather will explore the possibility of gardening with children from MCC following Sunday worship through the summer months. This gardening time will include gardening, Bible reflection, songs and of course, the enjoyment of eating produce from the garden. Parents, please plan to attend this gathering!

Food Drive for Wexford Ridge Food Pantry—Sunday, May 18

Again we are asking that members of Advent and Hope make a special effort to bring food for the pantry Sunday May 18. Suggested items include canned goods (fruit, vegetables, tuna, beef stew, fruit juice, etc.) peanut butter, jelly, cereal. We can especially use any large grocery bags. We do not have facilities to handle fresh produce. For those who prefer to donate money, checks can be made out to the Wexford Ridge Neighborhood Center and designated for the pantry. Dobbin McNatt, Coordinator

JAVA FOR JUSTICE –

Place your May order for Mt. Meru Coffee by May 4th, ready to be picked up on May 11th. To the coffee growers in Tanzania, the Project is not about coffee. It is about HOPE, the hope that, with a better income, their children can go to school, they can receive better healthcare, and they can improve their living conditions. When you buy (or drink) Mt. Meru Coffee, think about more than the cup of coffee. Think about the hope that the Project brings. It is this hope and a faith that sustains the small coffee growers in the Meru Diocese, and our consumer-buying decisions that sustain the Mt. Meru Coffee Project.

Write your checks out to Mt. Meru Coffee Project and place it in the envelope at the time of order. Price is \$8/small bag and \$38 for 4# bag. Consider ordering for Iraq as well.

MCC's 40th Birthday Celebration(s)

This year, 2008, is the year the MCC is 40 years old. We want to celebrate this birthday anniversary (let's face it, we only have one birthday, the rest are anniversaries of that natal date) in 2008 with special event(s).

If you are interested in working with the group of people planning for these event(s), please contact Ann Bolger. Once we have a core group of folks we will arrange our first party-planning brainstorming session.

Also, you can be involved in planning a whole year of events or planning just one event or you can just send your amazing celebration idea(s) to Ann and the group can follow up on the planning if they want to use your idea(s).

Celebrating this amazing entity named the MCC is the key here. Happy Birthday MCC!

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Beyond

MCC NEWS

WOA Spring Salad Supper a 'Blooming' Success!

Women from Advent, Community of Hope and their guests shared conversation and friendship as they ate tasty salads, breads, and treats at the Women of Advent's Spring Salad Supper the evening of April 16. Invited for coffee and desserts, the men of MCC joined the ladies in enjoying the Norwegian jokes, stories and music of Ole and Sven who kept us laughing, singing and clapping throughout their program. It was a fun evening....and even better, it benefitted LSS Immigration and Refugee program. The evening's entire free-will offering, as well as the generous donations of Ole and Sven and Thrivent, all totaling \$1050, will be sent to help Wisconsin LSS in the resettlement of 29 immigrants and refugees, who are expected to arrive soon. *Thank you!*

Father Dom's Duck's Doo Compost

Consider purchasing this award-winning soil conditioner which is organic, recycled, weed/seed free and odorless! It's a natural blend of pressed cranberries, rice hulls, duck manure, wood shavings, pickles and vanilla bean waste products; wonderful for all of your garden and planting needs. This organic compost breaks up clay, adds nutrients to the soil and can be used as mulch.

They are ready for pick-up at MCC until all the bags have disappeared and are enriching the earth. Make your check made out to MCC-Duck's Doo.

How much to use: One 20 quart bag will cover the following area:

- 1" – 8 square feet
- 2" – 4 square feet
- 3" – 3 square feet
- 4" – 2 square feet

(When applying Father Dom's Duck's Doo Compost as mulch to eliminate the need to

weed, 2-3 inches of compost is suggested.)

Order some for your indoor plants as well as to mix with your potting soil or to place in the holes when planting new plants.

Price per bag is \$7 for one, or 3 for \$18 (\$6/bag over 3 bags). All our profits benefit the MCC summer garden program and other environmental projects.

Thanks for caring about the planet, our lakes and water supply, MCC's garden project as well as Father Dom's gifts to helping people with special needs.

The Environmental Task Force – Working for the good of the planet!

Celebrate May With "Sustainable Travel to Worship" Sunday, May 4, 2008 (Rain Date: May 25)

Here is something we can do to reduce Global Warming. Since driving cars can cause more damage to the environment than any other consumer behavior, houses of faith throughout Wisconsin are honoring the Earth by participating in Sustainable Travel to Worship in May again this year. So, on Sunday, May 4, you are encouraged to use a sustainable mode of travel such as walking, bicycling, using mass transit, car pooling or some other fuel-efficient means (hybrids are given partial credit since they burn less fuel per mile than regular automobiles) to come to church. Our rain date will be Sunday, May 25. When you arrive at church be sure to register your participation by stopping at a small table that will be set up in the Shalom room to sign the tally sheet. Groups only need sign once for everyone but be sure to mark down the number in your party. Get counted! This is a friendly competition among congregations across the state of Wisconsin. The congregation with the greatest participation will receive small awards of recognition.

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Serve at MCC &
Beyond

MCC News Continued

Please mark your calendars for a Plant Sale and Resale

On May 9 and 10 (Friday, 8 am to 4 pm and Saturday, 8 am to noon), there will be a Plant Sale and a Resale at the MCC. The Plant Sale will feature a wide variety of perennials and garden plants and will be held outdoors, weather permitting, near the upper level main entrance. Proceeds will go toward the German exchange trip for MCC youth this summer.

The Resale will benefit MCC youth as well as the new community center serving the Wexford Ridge area, the Lussier Community Education Center. The resale is tentatively planned for the Shalom Room area.

Plant sale: As you plan for dividing your perennials in the weeks ahead, please set some aside for the sale. Also save/recycle cartons and cans to be used for donated plants.

Resale: The sale will be somewhat limited in scope: We will focus on: Books, CD's, videos, toys, and games for all ages.

Housewares, kitchen items, art/decorative items, bedding, and linens
Jewelry, purses/totes

Sporting goods
Children's clothing, baby items/accessories

Note: We will not be accepting donations of adult clothing, shoes, furniture, large appliances, or electronics, including TV's and computers. If you have single items in these categories you would like to donate, please take a photo of the item, write a description, and we will post the information on a bulletin board.

More information will be provided as plans progress. There will be many opportunities for your support and participation. Thank you for keeping these projects in mind as you begin your spring activities.

Plant Sale is for everyone!

While you are here shopping for treasures at the Resale, we invite you to stop by the Perennial Sale for some bargains for your garden. Proceeds from the perennial sale will go towards the Youth Germany exchange trip this summer.

MCC Youth Need Community Service Opportunities

MCC Youth participating in the Germany Exchange Program this summer are providing community service hours as part of the requirement for receiving grant money from the Mission Investment Fund. If you have spring home or yard work that you could use the help of one or more youthful workers, please sign up on the sheet posted in the Shalom Room or contact Paul Schneider. Any donations generated from this work will be turned into the Mission Investment Fund for future outreach.

AIDS Benefit Dinner, May 2, 7:00 PM

Come for traditional South African food, and learn about the ELCA's partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa, and a new camp and AIDS clinic. After a meal in which you can sample various southern African foods there will be a brief video presentation on the South African ministries. Bethany Hoag, daughter of Advent members Kevin & Chris, will then lead a program on her first-hand experience with AIDS education in South Africa. Bethany lived in South Africa and Swaziland for several years, and spent time with a community theater group doing AIDS education. A suggested donation of \$10 per adult and \$5 per child is encouraged.

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Worship Regularly

Study God's Word

Respond as Stewards

Serve at MCC &

Beyond

Cultivate Spiritual

Friendship

MCC News Continued

Helping our Friends in Haiti

As we watched people in Haiti eating mud cookies, due to the food crisis, many of us had a lump in our throats and stomachs. How were the ones we care about there, as well as total strangers, faring in such a terrible situation?

The Haiti Partners task force wants to remind long-term and newer members about the projects we are a part of in our mission there, as well as welcoming some of our new members who might not know about this effort to join us.

Haiti Partners has three projects and two goals. Our short-term goal is feeding hungry people. Our long-term goal is education to get people out of poverty. Our first project is SPARE: Sponsorship Program Aiding Relationships and Education. Sponsors pair up with a student to provide money for the students and write letters or email to build a relationship. Partners have pledged \$800/year which provides food, housing, transportation to the school, uniforms, books and homework supervision. This is done by the Director of SPARE in Haiti, Guy Moreles. For the past 6-7 years we have been involved in this partnership. The program has a total of 25 students from a shanty town in Port au Prince called Site Soley. Of these, 10 have been sponsored by MCC folks, either individually or as a group. A second project is feeding children in the St. Thomas School, an elementary school grades K-7 in Site Soley. It is one of the poorest neighborhoods and made the news when teachers and students took back the school during political trouble, by dressing up in their school uniforms, and respectfully and nonviolently confronting the UN troops that had taken over their school. And the troops gave in and returned the school. Before the trouble, about 200 students daily received a hot plate of rice, beans and veggies, because of the belief that kids couldn't learn when they are hungry. Currently about 100

students still attend, but the numbers are growing as the school is once again under parent and teacher control. We need money for this too, and much smaller amounts of money will be helpful. Harvest-time, an organization that grew out of a Washington D.C. church, started the elementary school project, much as we started Harvest of Hope at the MCC.

One difficulty also making the news is the drastic rise of food prices making more resources necessary to feed the same number of students. Food costs have nearly doubled in recent weeks, increasing all our programs costs significantly.

A third project with a rural focus is connected to adult literacy. We have supported several different rural ministries over the years, and are now exploring the possibility of trying to work more closely with a project connected to the Southeast Association of the UCC in Wisconsin. This could involve a number of things, including helping to raise money for a rural center which would provide food, education, including VoTech, seminary training for rural pastors, worship space and a medical clinic. They have completed the 1st floor and will celebrate in August. They plan to add additional floors as money becomes available. Food is not quite the critical problem in the rural areas as in the city since they can often grow some subsistence crops. But malnutrition and lack of sustainable work still drives many from the rural areas move to the cities where they wind up even worse off. They have lost top soil due to poor farming. Heifer project is working on reforestation among other things, and one of our initial efforts to support a rural project was in conjunction with Heifer.

What can we do: Give money, any amount, to help fund our students.

We need people to write to the students to maintain a relationship with them. We
Continues on the next page

Pray Daily

Worship Regularly

Study God's Word

Respond as Stewards

Serve at MCC &

Beyond

Cultivate Spiritual

Friendship

MCC News Continued

Continues from page 9.

are in the process of seeing if any of our current sponsors need to end their participation in the program at this point, and we may need a few new sponsors from the MCC to take over the letter writing commitments from those who are ready to take a break from this responsibility.

We would welcome any size financial gifts to help fund the 4 of our 10 MCC students who are sponsored by MCC at large and not by any one individual, and we need to have funds for the '08-'09 school year by July 1. We also need to raise funds to support our connection to a rural project this year. Contributions to this ministry can be designated by dropping a note in our Sunday morning offering plates to let us know of your interest, or contributions can be made to "Haiti Partners" and sent directly to Bryan Sirchio at PO Box 45236, Madison, WI 53744-5236.

As you did it for the least of these, you did it for ME. --Jesus (Matt. 25:31)

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

Please give Sonja a call or send her an email if you are interested. Those interested will put their calendars together and see if we can find a week in common.

ADULT EDUCATION

Biology and Belief: Conversations in Faith and Science

This four-week mini-series will examine modern issues that confront the realms of both science and faith. We will watch segments of a DVD by this same title. Members from the congregation who have backgrounds in science, theology and ethics will facilitate the discussions. Two of the four-week sessions are planned for April and May, respectively, and are as follows:

Sunday, May 4 Nurturing A Spiritual and Eco-Identity Among Youth Through Gardening and Gardening With MCC Youth, led by Annie Grugel, Lisa Bauer, Heather Putnam and Jeff Wild

Sunday, May 11, (Part Two) The Automobile and the Environment. This session will be led by Advent member, Kevin Hoag. Kevin serves as Associate Director of the Engine Research Center at the University of Wisconsin. Kevin writes, "There are many misconceptions concerning automobiles and the environment such as fuel economy, emissions, etc. With the best of intentions the media and environmentalists often reinforce bad information, making it hard to make informed choices."

Sunday, May 18, High school youth will lead a poverty simulation based on their experience at the Urban Immersion Service Retreat in Minneapolis. The simulation will provide insight into the challenges and decisions faced by families living in poverty in the Madison area.

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Serve at MCC &
Beyond
Cultivate Spiritual
Friendship

MCC News—Iraq Update

Iraq Update from Brad Spencer

– we have an individual to send to.

Alice Ohlrogge has a neighbor with a family member in Iraq. The family member in Iraq particularly requests (in no particular order) Dentyne Ice chewing gum, Wintermint gum, packets (not cans) of StarKist tuna (the whole tuna seems far better than the chunk style these days), sugar wafer cookies, crackers, protein bars, and a toothbrush. As with most in Iraq anything is welcome (much of the benefit comes from the person in Iraq knowing someone cares.) If the recipient can't use an item then it's virtually certain that he will know someone who can use it. To that list I'd add DVD's, CDs of current music, Mt. Meru coffee (drip grind), microwave popcorn, disposable razors, beef

jerky, and Old Wisconsin beef sausage links. For now I suggest holding off on the ramen soups: those were appropriate for large parcels of low-density material and right now we aren't sending that kind of box. (It's a matter of making best use of the postage: denser articles can be sent in the flat-rate boxes at a cost lower than regular parcel post. If we send low-density items we need to send a somewhat larger quantity of them to make efficient use of the postage.)

Pray Daily
Worship Regularly
Study God's Word

Respond as

Stewards

Cultivate Spiritual

Friendship

Serve at MCC &

Beyond

Larger Community News

The Lubar Institute for the Abrahamic Religions Conference in Madison

Dear friends of the Lubar Institute, faculty and students at UW-Madison, and members of the larger Madison community:

The Lubar Institute for the Abrahamic Religions is delighted to announce its third annual conference, "Perspectives on the Abrahamic Traditions: Leadership, Commonalities, and Critical Reflection." The conference takes place on May 8, 8:30-4:30, at the Pyle Center, 702 Langdon Street. For a full schedule, see: <http://lisar.lss.wisc.edu/events/Perspectives.html>

The conference includes public lectures in the chapel at Pres House, 731 State Street Mall, UW-Madison campus, by

Rabbi Bradley Hirschfield of CLAL, on May 7, 7:30, and Ingrid Mattson on May 8, 7:30. Professor, Hartford Seminary; President, Islamic Society of North America.

The lectures are free and open to the public. Attendance at the conference is free but registration is necessary. Seating is limited, so please register promptly.

To register please click the following link:

http://www.ohrd.wisc.edu/reg/catalog_course.aspx?groupcoursekey=20279

Please pass this message on to anyone who may be interested.

Thank you. We hope to see you at these events.

MCC NEWS

All MCC Campers!!

The MCC will once again be camping June 13-15 at Bethel Horizons Camp-ground! Please join us for 1 night or both or for the day Saturday and a potluck Saturday night in the shelter at the camp-ground. It's a great time for kids to run around together, adults to relax and connect with one another and families to enjoy some time together!! Any questions contact Karen Kuhn.

Summer Camp for your kids

Any MCC Families interested in summer camp for their children entering 1st grade-HS the week of July 6-11 there will be some MCC kids going to Sugar Creek Bible Camp in Ferryville, WI. Check out their website @ www.SugarCreekBibleCamp.org for more info.

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. Chuck Pils reports that Ace Hardware in Waukegan, Menards and Home Depot does it for FREE.

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.

Food and Faith Event

Thank you to all the MCC members who helped with the set-up for the Food and Faith event, served the meal, and assisted with the clean-up. It was great that many of us attended Cal DeWitt's keynote address, visited the exhibitors and participated in a workshop. The feedback from the event has been very positive. The offering of \$1,489.00 and the proceeds from the meal will be divided between Harvest of Hope and the Center for Land and People.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
The Lord has done great things for them.
—Psalm 126:2

Come share in the fun and fellowship of *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 on the following Sundays: May 25th & June 29th.

For more information contact Michelle Erschen (575-1975) or Nancy Greenwald (235-1461) or email us at youarelouther@yahoo.com.

More information about Laughter Yoga can be found at: www.laughinglutherans.com, www.laughteryoga.org and www.laughangeles.com.

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Faith at Home

by Heather Putnam, Children's Ministry

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MCC YOUTH NEWS

Middle High

Friday, May 9 – **Game Night** – 6 – 9 pm – We had so much fun running around outside, playing quiet games inside, and chowing down on pizza, that we wanted to do it again! Bring your favorite game to share or come and learn something new. Oh, yeah, and everything's better with pizza, so bring \$5 and a good appetite.

Sunday, May 18 – **Video Scavenger Hunt** – after church until 3pm. Middle High takes on the Senior High to do and find zany things around Madison AND capture it all on video. Prizes will be awarded! Adult drivers and video cameras needed.

July 10-13 – **Rafting Trip**

Senior High

Sunday, May 11 1:00-4:00 p. (date change) – **Pre-Season Canoeing** – Those kids going to the Boundary Waters in June can use this event to take a practice paddle and get excited about the trip. Those who won't be able to go on the trip can use this fun day to have a little taste of the canoe trip. *Adult drivers needed*

Wednesday, May 14 – **Senior High Hangout**
7:00 – 8:30 p. @ _____ (Host needed!)

Sunday, May 18 – MH vs. SH – **Video Scavenger Hunt** – after church until 3pm. Middle High takes on the Senior High to do and find zany things around Madison AND capture it all on video. Prizes will be awarded! Adult drivers and video cameras needed.

June 17-24– Boundary Waters Trip

July – Germany Trip

July/August – *Milwaukee service trip*

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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.
- COH 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.

Contact the Website Committee at office@madisonchristiancommunity.org.

Advent News

The ARC Sets Sail: Advent Relational Campaign Begins

The Advent Relational Campaign or ARC, began officially on Wednesday night, February 19th at an informal dinner meeting in the Shalom room. The meeting was begun by Jeff Wild who spoke of the biblical context of relationships, Matt Morland Gross discussed "How to Make a Relational Visit", the logistics part of these visits was presented by Linda Pils.

The goals of the Advent Relational Campaign are twofold. The first is creating a closer community.

Twelve members of the congregation will be meeting with 12 different families during the course of this year and ending by January 2009, spending time together in order to get to know one another better. This in itself is a worthy goal in a congregation that has had a 40% turnover since the year 2000. We still have the same numbers in our congregation, but there are lots of new names in our 2008 directories. We hope to learn some of the stories behind the names.

The other goal is to listen - listen to reflections on the involvement of members both old and new. What has that experience been like for each of our families?

How are we intentional about creating those friendships, those connections towards common goals?

The members of the group who have so graciously donated their time for the coming year are:

Dave & Kathy Mack, Kathy & Doug Johnson, Fred Loichinger, Gretchen Wahl, Alice & Ted Kalkwarf, Myrna McNatt, Solveig Carlson, Steve Young, Julie Ambrecht, Joanne Streit, Linda Pils and Emily

Wixson. Continues top of next column. We hope that all of our members will be open for a visit, it could be at your home, at a coffee shop or at a nearby park. This is a time for sharing your valued ideas and insights and it is a time for us to listen.

Linda Pils, Coordinator

The Lutheran

The May issue of The Lutheran is not one you will want to immediately place in the recyclable container. Debra Greene and Annie Grugel, through their gift for writing and photography, share the story of the MCC Gardens. MCC has mentored several congregations in their efforts to begin a garden ministry and we are delighted to share our story with congregations across the country. Jeff Wild and Annie Grugel also look forward to hosting an online forum May 13-20 on The Lutheran website. Your contributions to the conversation will be appreciated. Addition copies of the article have been requested to share with members of Community of Hope.

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Advent News—continued

Advent Giving Goal

The usual method of calculating the monthly giving goal broke down because Easter was in March this year, not April as it was the past three years. The most important piece of information to share is that after four months of 2008 members of Advent have generously contributed \$113,667.00 to fully support the financial commitments of the Advent and MCC mission. Thank you.

New Member Sunday—June 1

The Advent congregation will welcome new members to the community on Sunday, June 1. Two sessions are planned leading up to new member Sunday. First, Jeff Wild will lead a session during the Sunday School hour 9:00-10:00 am on Sunday, May 18. on the top ten things you need to know about becoming a member of Advent. Second, Sunday, May 25 is not a mandatory session, but a time set aside for people who have questions about theology, the Bible, or why we do things the way we do. A third gathering will be scheduled according to the best time that works for the most people because it will include a meal. If you wish to become a member and have not received a letter in the mail with this information, please contact Jeff Wild at 824-1761.

South Central Wisconsin Synodical Women's Spring Retreat at Bishop O'Connor Center, May 16-17.

Called to Obey God: It's not easy being Jonah probes the book of Jonah for help in learning how to discern our role in carrying out God's vision for the whole of creation. The facilitator is Joann Fabie.

This retreat is for spiritual growth and renewal and an opportunity to connect with other women of faith close to home.

To register, please send registration fee, payable to South Central Wisconsin Synodical Women's Organization, to:
Donna Robey, Treasurer
South Central Wisconsin Synodical Women's Organization
3039 Nessling Street
Madison WI 53719

The full retreat registration fee is \$50 and includes lodging (two to a room), meals and program.

Retreat registration begins on Friday, May 16 at 4:30 p. with dinner at 6:00 p. The retreat begins at 7:00 p. and concludes on Saturday, May 17 by 4:00 p.

There are some flyers on the bulletin board in the Shalom Room at MCC.

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Advent News continued

Advent Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on May 8 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 Margaret Smith for directions.

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 are currently studying a book called *This I Believe*, the personal philosophies of remarkable men and women. Ed Murrow introduced this assembly of voices on National Public Radio, All Things Considered, Morning Edition. We enjoy coffee, sweets and discussion with intensity, humor and camaraderie.

They are anything but grumpy! All Grumpy Elderly Men are welcome!

Judith Circle

We will be meeting on the second Tuesday of May, the 13th at church at 9:00 a. to car pool for a spring flower display. It will be an outing to see a bloom extravaganza. We will then have our study and treats around a picnic table. Please bring a Thermos of coffee and or juice. Fruit and or a snack of muffins or fruit bread to be shared. See you then!!

June we will meet at Solveig Carlson's in Mt Horeb, more info later.

Treasury of Love 2008

Beg. Bal & Love Offerings	4369.12
Rent & Eviction Prevention	2834.00
Security Deposit	705.00
Utility Payment	350.00
Iraq Postage	72.75
Iraq Food Purchased	11.88
Scholarship	85.00
Auto Repair	180.00
Haiti Partners	20.00
Prescription/Medical Equip	<u>100.49</u>
Expenditure	\$4359.12
Balance as of 04/21/2008	\$10.00

OPALS Book Discussion Group

OPALS book discussion group is going to continue to meet at members' homes. Our meetings will now be held in afternoons. On May 20 at 1:30 p. we will discuss *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortinson and David Relin at Mary Maxwell's on Mt Horeb. This is an adventure story about building schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. New women are encouraged to attend. Call Mary Maxwell if you have questions or need a ride. New members always welcome.

Advent Women Thursday Coffee, 7:00 a.

Advent women are meeting at the new PASQUAL'S IN HILLDALE SHOPPING CENTER, directly across from Metcalfe's Sentry. Pasqual's is owned by Ben and Christy Roberts, members of Advent, and we are told that Christy bakes all the wonderful treats that we are looking forward to sampling. 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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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 have 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 all over the world but especially those in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Kurt, son-in-law of Harry and Donna Fisker, who is in Afghanistan
- Our college students – Jamie Custer, Ian Jarvis, Sarah Hunter-Johnson, Emma Cattlett-Sirchio, Rose Gear, Tristan Breedlove (graduate studies)
- The people from First Baptist Church in Oconomowoc whose church home was destroyed by an explosion and Phill Bloedow and Lucetta Kanetzke whose father served that church. Howard and Lucetta were also married there.
- Our friends and neighbors who are impacted by Famous Footwear's decision to move from Madison to St. Louis
- Kristie Williams' cousin Ann Rosalie and Roger's cousin Dan both suffering from brain cancer.
- These people and their families as we pray our way through the church directory:
 - April 29-May 6 Bill Putnam;
 - Bill Rettig/Jean Gilbertson
 - May 6-13 Heather Putnam; Wilma Sanks;
 - Mary Schmelzer/Bill Grout
 - May 13-20 Rob/Jill Schuettpelez;
 - Bob/Chris Sessions
 - May 20-27 Beth Simmons; Bryan Sirchio; Bonnie/Gene Spindler
 - May 27-June 3 Jan Summers; Petra Streiff/Larry Stuessy; Bonnie Trudell

Invite a Friend To Family Movie Night— May 16, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

The Steering Team has decided to try a movie night as a way of encouraging members of Community of Hope to invite friends to get to know us in a more relaxed setting. The MCC movie group has graciously agreed to make their movie night available for this purpose. Mark your calendars, invite a friend and come to the MCC to see UNSTRUNG HEROES. "Sometimes you find your heroes in unlikely places. When a youngster needs a break from his parent's household he moves in with off-beat uncles. From this unlikely pair a family soon learns valuable lessons about life, love and pride."

All ages are welcome. Child care will be available and a Disney movie will be shown as well. Please bring snacks and/or beverages to share and stay tuned for more information.

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 –

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Community of Hope News

Wisconsin Conference Annual Meeting — June 6-8, 2008 at Green Lake Conference Center

The theme for the Forty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Conference, UCC is Transforming Conflict in the Church with its biblical reflection from I Corinthians 12:31: "I will show you a still more excellent way." There is nothing so common in our churches – or so painful and destructive – as conflict. Conflict saps the energy of congregations and distracts them from their real ministry and mission. Churches need help in working through conflict in creative ways.

Mr. Bob Williamson from the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center in Lombard, Illinois, will help us to understand conflict, and provide us with resources to handle conflict creatively while treating each other with respect and love.

During the three days of the meeting there will be times of worship, fellowship, a performance from the Conference's 2008 German Exchange Choir, exhibits, a bookstore and occasions to enjoy the Center's beautiful setting on the shores of Green Lake.

Tisha Brown and Larry Stuessy will be our delegates this year. If you are interested in attending this meeting or would like more information, see Tisha for a packet.

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.

Important Dates to Remember!



Birthdays

Barb Bickford	5/13
Twyla Clark	5/16
Bryan Sirchio	5/18
Michelle Erschen	5/22
Katelyn Grout	5/25
Mary Bowman	5/30

Anniversaries

Kevin & Tim Baird	5/12
Steve & Theresa Haffner-Stearns	5/31
Betty & Corkey Custer	5/31

Please tell us your date(s) so we won't miss your special day.

Being a Liturgist by Ann Bolger

"Being Liturgist is one of my favorite things to do at church. I like to prepare the words and get the inflections just right.

But best of all I love to read those words out loud to the community. I wait for that perfect moment that starts after I begin reading and the sanctuary is completely quiet except for the word of God being fed to the faithful. Everyone is absorbed in attending to the word and I feel empowered by being able to provide it for them. It is more than just the absence of sound, it is the sound of focused attention and quieter than the absence of sound. God's gifts are often subtle but when we recognize them for what they are, they rock our worlds.

I have felt this power for a long time--it is especially loud when reading for the gathered MCC in a joint service. More people means more/stronger focus. I appreciate a congregation that allows lay people to feel this empowerment, not just the ordained clergy."

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An Introductory Workshop on
Centering Prayer

Saturday, May 3, 2008

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

--With 6 follow-up prayer sessions on Mondays,
 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., beginning May 5, 2008--

Where: Advent Lutheran Church, 7118 Old Sauk Road, Madison, WI 53717

What: An opportunity to learn about and experience a simple form of silent prayer which helps us to be aware of the presence of God. Open to newcomers and experienced Centering Prayers.

The workshop covers the basics of Centering Prayer. It is designed for anyone who senses a call to be with God in all dimensions of one's life. The workshop includes opportunities for Centering Prayer & presentations on:

- Prayer as Relationship
- Thoughts and Centering Prayer
- The Method of Centering Prayer
- Fruits of Centering Prayer and its Benefits in Daily Life

The six follow-up sessions support participants as they establish a daily commitment to the practice of Centering Prayer.

Cost: \$30 person, \$50 couple. Includes Monday night sessions. Scholarships available.

On Saturday, beverages, light breakfast, and simple lunch will be provided.

Complete this registration form and return it with check payable to *Contemplative Outreach Madison*. Mail to Madison Christian Community, 7118 Old Sauk Rd, Madison, WI 53717-1013

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Check Enclosed: _____

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Larger Community News

19th Annual Energy Fair—June 20-22, 2008, Custer, Wisconsin

Join the Midwest Renewable Energy Association for the premier energy education event in the nation. Learn about clean energy and sustainable living, connect with experts, and return home ready to act!

Energy Fair features:

- ◆ Hundreds of workshops for the beginner to advanced
- ◆ Hundreds of exhibits to connect with experts and products
- ◆ Entertainment, keynote speakers, and great food
- ◆ Activities and fun for the whole family

Don't miss specific sustainable living areas:

- ◆ 4th Annual Clean Energy Car Show
- ◆ Green Home Pavilion—new for 2008!
- ◆ Sustainable Tables Workshop Area and Farmers Market

Details and advance tickets at: www.the-mrea.org or call 715-592-6593.

Speaking on the Marriage of Science & Religion – May 7

You are invited to hear Michael Dowd speak about his new book: [Thank God for Evolution: How the Marriage of Science and Religion Will Transform Your Life and Our World](#) at Covenant Presbyterian Church (326 S. Segoe Rd) at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7. All are welcome.

Walk with us!
Run with us!
Heck, skip and jump with us
if you like!

Memorial High School's Spartan Youth Service Team is organizing the first annual Better Life 5k Run/Walk <http://www.ctfwebservices.com/better5k/> on Saturday, May 17.

We are working to raise \$10,000 to help build the Lussier Community Education Center www.LCECmadison.org. Once it is complete, the LCEC will provide a place for students to participate in service and service-learning projects right on our own campus.

If you would like to participate in the Run/Walk, you can get more information and download registration forms at <http://www.ctfwebservices.com/better5k/>. Note that early registration closes on April 18!

If you would like to make an online donation to the Lussier Community Education Center, you can do so at www.lcecmadison.org/gift/index.php.

If you would like to get information about volunteering on the day of the walk or your business would like to sponsor the event, you can contact us at better5k@ctfwebservices.com.

Thank you for helping us make a difference in our community!

Spartan Youth Service Team

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Larger Community News

Women's Full Moon Dance

Dates: June 20, July 18 and August 16, 2008.

Venue: Madison Christian Community In the Labyrinth sanctuary. Suggested Donation \$15-\$25 (sliding scale).

This is a series of dance benefits for the women experiencing abuse and suffering all over the Earth. All proceeds will be sent to Women for Women International, a nonprofit charity with the highest ranking available. Check out the website: <http://www.womenforwomen.org/>

For more information, or questions, please email or phone Irene Spencer: Irene@netconcepts.com (608) 873-3536 or Dianne Brakarsh: dbrakarsh@ameritech.net (608) 233-4391.

National Women's Music Festival in Madison, June 19-22

Featuring four days of women's music, comedy, drag kings, a marketplace, and other special events, the 32nd annual National Women's Music Festival will be held at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wisconsin, on June 19-22. The longest-running women's music festival in the U.S., the NWMF welcomes people of all genders to celebrate the creative talents and technical skills of women in the visual, performing, and fine arts. Work-exchange and volunteer opportunities abound for those who need financial assistance to attend. Lodging is available at hotels next to the Center, or you can camp right on the Center's grounds, with showers and electric hook-ups available.

For more information, check out the festival's website at <http://wiaonline.org/home.htm>

MEDICINE DROP-OFF IN MADISON!

The Madison Patient Safety Collaborative is sponsoring a drug disposal drop off day on June 7.

Bring your unwanted medications to the Madison Transfer Station, 121 E. Olin Ave. Organizers have not set a time for the collection. To learn more, visit www.med-dropdane.org.

(To date, I have not found a pharmacy that will take unused drugs so they don't go into the ground and water systems. Start gathering those outdated and unused medicines/prescriptions/drugs. Take advantage of this opportunity.)

Madison Vets for Peace will be recreating the Memorial Mile along Atwood Ave in Olbrich Park of 4500 white tombstones to mark the dead in the Iraq-Afghanistan wars, the week of Memorial Day (install May 25- remove May 31). We would like to invite your community to provide volunteers to help install the gravestones, but most importantly to staff 2-hour shifts day and night over the week the memorial will be up. We are planning 3 months in advance, so we have time to involve anyone who wishes to get involved. Contact Paul McMahon, heartlandphoto@tds.net, 233-1997 or John Fournelle, cell 438-7480 or johnf@geology.wisc.edu.

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Study God's Word
Respond as Stewards
Serve at MCC &
Beyond
Cultivate Spiritual
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Calendar Page

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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Kristi Williams
Bruce Jarvis
Bill Long
Donna Leet

Advent Council
Bob Schneider
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.



Non-Profit Org.
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Madison, WI
Permit #1928

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