

The Good Word

January, 2010

Dear Friends,

I am not going to beat around the bush in this newsletter article because this is an urgent request! **Will you resolve to establish a practice of reading Scripture in the New Year?** I am not asking you to read the Bible from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation. Rather, my hope is that all confirmed members of Madison Christian Community will read and ponder the thirteen letters written or attributed to the Apostle Paul. 2010 has been designated as the Year of St. Paul at MCC and you are being offered a variety of enriching opportunities to deepen your roots in faith.

The Year of St. Paul is being planned by the Book of Faith task force. Members serving on this task force are Kevin Hoag, Fran Grugel, Don Falkos, Gretchen Wahl, David Keesey-Berg, Nan Wild, and Ted Kalkwarf. This group is passionate about leading MCC into deeper engagement with Scripture. The Book of Faith initiative began several years ago as a grassroots movement in the ELCA. This movement is now being promoted by all 65 synods of the church. Task force members have attended past Book of Faith events in the synod, and I serve on the synod Book of Faith Committee. The vision of the Book of Faith Initiative is:

That the whole church become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

Those of us serving on the Book of Faith Task Force are cognizant that members of MCC are busy people, have different learning styles, run the gamut when it comes to biblical literacy, and may even be ambivalent about the Apostle's writings. For these reasons, a variety of learning and growth opportunities are being offered at different times of the day and days of the week in the coming year. You will find a synopsis of the opportunities below. Task force members will provide detailed information during the adult education hour on Sunday, January 10, 2010. Hopefully, your enthusiasm will be kindled and you will make an informed decision as to how you will participate in the Year of St. Paul at MCC. The adult education hour on Sunday, January 17 will provide us with an introduction to the apostle and his writings.

Jeff Wild

Of Special Interest:

- Habitat Houses Almost Ready, Adult Ed – p. 3
- Java for Justice; Dear MCC Parents; Middle High raises \$533 – p.4
- Big Questions Seminar – p.5
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- Praying with Paul; Spiritual Writing Group; Bible Study on Galatians; Theological Study of Paul– p. 7
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Fellowship Groups & Activities

MCC COMMUNITY GROUP

MCC Community Group Potluck - Sunday, January 10, downstairs, following church services. This is a loosely organized group—you can come to one event a year or all of them. We always have a good time together so if you are interested, please bring ideas for things to do the rest of winter into spring.

MCC FILM GROUP — 2010

Lois Komai, coordinator

We meet on the third Friday of the month at 7:00 pm. Let the host know if you are going to come/or can't come. Bring a treat to share and the host will provide the beverage.

DATE

Friday, January 15 Movie: *Strangers in Good Company*, host still needed.

Friday, February 19 Movie: *Spirited Away*, an animated Japanese film, Lois Komai host.

Friday, March 19 Movie: *The Castle*, an Australian Comedy, McNatts host.

Friday, April 16—Wisconsin Film Festival

Friday, May 21 Movie in a theater and out for dinner.

MCC Women's Lunch Bunch

Every Wednesday at 11:30 a. at the Prairie Cafe in Middleton, across from Copps Grocery Store. Good fellowship and no agenda.

Will the Real Apostle Paul Please Stand Up?

The First Paul: Reclaiming the Radical Visionary behind the Church's Conservative Icon by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan is the next selection for the **MCC Theological Discussion Group**.

“Paul is second only to Jesus as the most important person in the birth of Christianity, and yet he continues to be controversial, even among Christians. How could the letters of Paul be used both to inspire radical grace and to endorse systems of oppression—condoning slavery, subordinating women, condemning homosexual behavior? Borg and Crossan use the best of biblical and historical scholarship to explain the reasons for Paul's mixed reputation and to reveal to us what scholars have known for decades: that the later letters of Paul were created by the early church to dilute Paul's egalitarian message and transform him into something more "acceptable." They argue there are actually "Three Pauls" in the New Testament: "The Radical Paul" (of the seven genuine letters), "The Conservative Paul" (of the three disputed epistles), and "The Reactionary Paul" (of the three inauthentic letters).” (Front flap description)

Come for the discussion of the “Three Pauls”. We are an informal group interested in each other's reading perspectives. **We will meet Wednesday, January 20, 7 p., at MCC** we will discuss the first four chapters. For questions, contact Fran Grugel.

**Christmas Greetings:
from Craig and Alli Pierce and
Dale & Margit Rezabek.**

Their cards are posted on the bulletin board.

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MCC News

Three Habitat Houses Almost Ready for Families

Five short months ago, work began on 3 Habitat for Humanity homes just off Northport Drive. One of the families who will move in to their new home in the next month or so is the family of John and Aletta Boakai, who are members of Advent and the MCC. This is an exciting time for all who have worked in any way to bring this about, and we are all looking forward to celebrating the Boakai House Blessing on Saturday, January 16.

John and Aletta have nearly all the necessary furniture and household items for their home, as they and their friends have been able to obtain most basics at a very low cost at garage sales or because friends were leaving the country. However, they are still in need of a box spring for a double bed and a queen size frame, headboard, and footboard.

The other two Habitat families in the Apostles Build homes will likely have need for a number of basics, as they have been living in situations in which they were not able to retain or adequately store their furniture. Their homes will probably be ready for move-in day some time after the Boakais have moved—probably in February. Please keep the needs of these 2 families in mind if you (or your friends, family, or neighbors) have furniture or household items you might be able to donate. You may contact their future next door neighbors, John or Aletta, at 284 7253 or by email at alettamb@gmail.com or jboakai2006@yahoo.com.

Sometimes it is quite remarkable how the needs, situation and timing of the giver coincide very precisely with the needs of the recipient. Our pastor would remind us that such circumstances likely constitute a Godincidence. You are invited to participate in this very rewarding possibility.

Sunday Morning in the Covenant Room - January 2010

January 3: No Program

January 10 and 17 Book of Faith - Year of St. Paul This is the "Cover Story" Jeff has written about earlier in the Newsletter. On January 10th, a panel discussion will provide an overview of the 2010 Program. On January 17th, Kevin Hoag and Jeff Wild will begin with the first of many sessions.

January 24 and 31 Eastern Religions and Our Neighbor's Faith Michael Schuler is the well-spoken leader at the Unitarian Society church in Shorewood - one of the largest Unitarian congregations anywhere. Not surprisingly, he has become well-acquainted with Eastern Religions of India, China and other Asian cultures and will provide us with a great overview on January 24th. The next Sunday, January 31, Jeff Wild and Ken Streit will continue with this theme. While some recently popular books (for example, Karen Armstrong's History of God) have looked at the common sources of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, we will ask questions in the context of what we learned the prior Sunday with Rev. Schuler.

Recycle your non-working strings of Christmas lights instead of throwing them away!

If you bring your non-working strings to church, Doug Johnson will see that they get recycled. For comparison, visit Holiday LEDs at <http://www.holidayleds.com>. They accept strings by mail and offer a discount as well when you buy lights from them. (Go to the very bottom of the page and click on "Free Light Recycling" for instructions.)

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MCC News

JAVA FOR JUSTICE: Order your Mt Meru Coffee, Sunday, January 3.

Place your order on the form in the Shalom Room. The order is faxed to Milwaukee on the first Sunday of every month and will be ready for pick-up on the coffee cart by the second Sunday of every month. You can order 12oz bags (\$9.00) or 4# bags (\$40) in regular or decaf, bean, drip or perk. Building relationships and sustainability is what this project is all about. Justice never tasted so good.

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 accept these items.

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.

Dear MCC Parents,

Please be reminded that the nursery is intended for use by kids **pre-school age and under only**. Lately we have had older kids and siblings using the nursery as well, and it has gotten a little too crowded and doesn't make the best environment for the younger kids. Please help us to provide the best possible care in the nursery by remembering the age limit. Feel free to contact Julie Krbec if you have any questions. Thanks!

Way to Go Middle High - \$533!

The Middle High Candy Sale raised \$533 for the Lussier Food Pantry. We have requested the remaining 2009 matching funds of \$320 from Thrivent Funds for Lutherans. Confirmation youth shopped for the Food Pantry on Wednesday December 16.

To the Youth of Madison Christian Community

What a joy to see bag after bag after bag of food coming in to the Lussier Food Pantry. I just couldn't believe my eyes! You kids outdid yourselves and for that we are very very grateful. To know that we will have enough to serve any and everyone who comes to us is a blessing. Have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to working with you again!

In Christ's love, Bev Nelson, Lussier Food Pantry

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MCC News

Big Questions
A seminar offered by
Jean and Charles Pfeifer
Saturdays February 20 and 27,
March 6 and 13, 2010

“One sticks one's finger into the soil to tell by the smell in what land one is: I stick my finger in existence—it smells of nothing.”

“Where am I? Who am I? How came I here? What is this thing called the world? What does this world mean? Who is it that has lured me into the world? Why was I not consulted, why not made acquainted with its manners and customs instead of throwing me into the ranks, as if I had been bought by a kidnapper, a dealer in souls? How did I obtain an interest in this big enterprise they call reality? Why should I have an interest in it? Is it not a voluntary concern? And if I am to be compelled to take part in it, where is the director? I should like to make a remark to him.”

Big Questions by Soren Kierkegaard

Whether you are one seeking personal life direction or an activist seeking renewal, this seminar, **Big Questions**, offers a unique opportunity to engage the questions raised by Kierkegaard. The seminar focuses on the life and teachings of Jesus as portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. It incorporates dialogue and the insights of Jungian depth psychology complemented by art, sculpture, dance, and journaling. This is not a study of the Christ of Christianity. Rather it explores the humanity of Jesus as a means of exploring our own humanity and potential. Past participants state that the process is transformative. It provides a safe environment in which people from a variety of belief systems can struggle with profound personal and social issues while honoring the humanity and integrity of all present.

The seminar is offered on four Saturdays at Holy Wisdom Monastery. It's open to interested people from any religious tradition or from none. No previous psychological, Biblical, or religious knowledge is required. Noon meals are provided. Total Cost is \$225. To participate, send a registration fee of \$50 to Charles D. Pfeifer, 2154 West Lawn Avenue, Madison WI, 53711. For further information call 608.251.3125 or email <cdpfeifer@tds.net>.

Scholarship help is available.

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MCC News

Coming Events

January 1	New Years Day Labyrinth Walk, 1:00-4:00 p.
January 3	No Sunday School
January 3	Annual Reports are due to Sonja
January 15	Annual Reports are mailed
January 16	Winter Farmers' Market & Breakfast at MCC, 10a.-2p. Habitat for Humanity House Blessing, 10:00 a.
January 24	Annual Meeting Sunday

THE YEAR OF ST. PAUL

Guest Biblical Scholar

David Fredrickson, professor of New Testament Studies at Luther Seminary, has accepted our invitation to give three lectures, one on Friday and two on Saturday morning on February 12 and 13. The lectures are:

- Paul and Sappho (1 Corinthians 12-13)
- Paul, the Lover's Disappointment
(1 Thessalonians 4; Romans 1; and 1 Corinthians 5-7)
- Paul and His Lovesick Lord
(Philippians 2:5-11)

Fredrickson writes, "Lecture 1 situates Paul's discourse in the love poetry of the ancient world which owes much to the 7th century BCE poet Sappho, whose 'face to face' image for lovers equally, mutually and ecstatically in love reappears in 1 Corinthians 13:12. Lecture 2 treats Paul's Great Failure: allowing his speech about everyday love and marriage to be con-

trolled by the philosophic tradition rather than poetry. After having trashed Paul in lecture 2, I will seek to redeem him a bit by arguing that the Christ Hymn — counter to much, but not all, of the history of interpretation — ought to be read as the narrative of the second person of the Trinity longing for communion with humanity."

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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 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.

MCC News

Praying with Paul

This offering is intended to foster both a deeper prayer life through meditation on Scriptural passages from Paul's writings. Participants will be introduced to Lectio Divina and will be provided with a daily passage from Paul to dwell upon each day during the Lenten Season. The group will meet weekly either before or after Lenten worship services to check in, offer encouragement and support. Ted Kalkwarf has experience as a spiritual director and will be overseeing this group.

Spiritual Writing Group

A surprising number of people at MCC, youth as well as adults, have an interest in writing or are gifted writers. This group will cultivate the art of spiritual writing through the lens of St. Paul. Spiritual writing might include journaling, writing Psalms, devotional writings and poetry. The group will be facilitated by Peter Fribley. Peter has taught creative writing at the college level. Peter will meet with the participants at a time to be determined by the group. The purpose of these gatherings will be to gather for mutual support and encouragement. Writers will have the opportunity to share their creative work in a supportive environment.

Bible Study on Galatians

This four-session study will be offered in three different formats beginning on Tuesday, March 2. Each session will explore texts from Galatians from four different contexts- historical, literary, theological and devotional. These particular ways of exploring a text are not new, but used in combination they provide a fuller understanding of and experience with the text. Jeff Wild will lead the Tuesday at Twelve Group on four consecutive Tuesdays, beginning March 2. The other two Bible study sessions will be held in the homes of members and Tuesday, March 2 is also the target date for beginning. One group will meet every other Tuesday evening through March and April and the other group will meet four weeks in a row. The Bible study groups are being organized by Gretchen Wahl and Fran Grugel.

Theological Study of Paul

This group will meet every other week to discuss recent theological works pertaining to Paul. The study is being coordinated by Kevin Hoag, but will be self led, meaning no one will be identified as leading the discussion on any particular week. A short list of books will be prepared in advance. Examples include: The Corinthian Body by Dale Martin, Approaches to Paul by Magnus Zetterholm, The Theology of Paul the Apostle by James D.G. Dunn, The First Urban Christians by Wayne A. Meeks, In Search of Paul by John Dominic Crossan, and Paul by N.T. Wright.

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MCC News

Food Drive for Food Pantry—Sunday, January 17

Please make a special effort to bring food for the Lussier Food Pantry on the 3rd Sunday of the month. 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 Lussier Community Education Center and designated for the pantry.

Dobbin McNatt, Coordinator

Artistic Calligraphy by Kirsten Malcolm-Berry

Artistic calligraphy of Paul's most well-known passages will be displayed on the art wall in the Shalom Room in January and February. Our appreciation is extended to Fran Grugel for transporting the artwork from the artist's home in the Twin Cities to MCC.

Exploring the Book of Faith by Telling its Stories

This is an alternative offering to both the Year of St. Paul and the adult class that meets in the Covenant Room during the education hour. Don Falkos, storyteller and storytelling coach will lead a group for people interested in telling the Biblical story. This group will meet on seven Sundays beginning February 14 through March 28 and focus on the lectionary readings for each Sunday.

Winter Farmers Market and Brunch

The Harvest of Hope Fund is celebrating its 24th anniversary with a Winter Farmers Market and Brunch on January 16, 2010. The Winter Farmers Market will run from 10 AM to 2 PM and the Brunch will be held from 11 AM to 1 PM. Both events are at the MCC. Advance ticket prices are \$8 for adults and \$4 for kids 12 and over (kids under 12 are free); ticket prices at the door are \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids 12 and over.

The Harvest of Hope Fund began with a Pick and Glean Project (hand-picking corn for farmers who couldn't get into their fields due to deep snow) over the Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend in January, 1986. This Winter Farmers Market and Brunch is scheduled for MLK, Jr. weekend to celebrate our 24 years of providing financial help and hope to Wisconsin farm families. Over this period of time, we've given more than 1420 gifts totaling over \$850,000 to Wisconsin farm families in distress (97 gifts totaling \$67,662 in the first 10 months of 2009).

This is the third year we are hosting a market and brunch. The market will feature grass-fed meats, farm-fresh eggs, several varieties of cheese, yogurt, honey, sorghum, maple syrup, apples and apple cider, wool and wool products...all grown or produced on family farms in southern Wisconsin. The brunch will feature local farm products. Barbara Wright, owner of the Dardanelles Restaurant, will work with MCC volunteers to create this scrumptious brunch.

Funds from this event will support the work of the co-sponsoring organizations: Harvest of Hope Fund and Churches Center for Land and People. We'll need help with set-up, cooking, serving, and clean-up...watch for sign-up opportunities over the next few weeks. Come—enjoy the event—and support two good causes!

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MCC News

Poetry By Felicia Jones

JESUS:

You've bought me a mighty long way
 In my mind, body, heart and soul forever stay.
 I want to be a reflection of YOU.
 In word, deed and anything I do.
 LORD I thank YOU for bringing me so far
 I know YOU'RE not finished, until I am where YOU are.
 I can do anything and soar high above
 But only with YOUR guidance, mercy and love.
 I praise YOU, I thank YOU, YOU'VE set me free.
 Thanks for YOUR love and liberty.
 I love YOU with all my heart
 I thank YOU for loving me from my very start.
 YOU LORD have picked me up and allowed me to stand.
 YOU are mighty, wonderful, powerful, holding me in YOUR HAND.

THINE WILL BE DONE!

VICTORIOUSLY YOU have won.
 Bringing new life from the Father through HIS SON.
 YOUR majesty and glory
 YOU are constantly unfolding in my life story.
 You said in YOUR WORD; don't be afraid or worry
 YOU heard me when I called and responded in a hurry
 I thank YOU LORD with all that's in me
 YOU have captured my heart and set me free.

RESTORATION OF FELICIA JONES

I started off having a pretty good life.
 Being a dedicated mother and a devoted wife.
 Then I turned away from that familiar road.
 I never knew how my life would soon unfold.
 There was so much pain, misery and strife.
 All I tried then was to end my life.
 I soon found out that wouldn't be.
 God had something better in store for me.
 With God's grace, mercy and love I AM NOW FREE!
 To live my life filled with VICTORY!
 There are many things I have yet to do.
 One thing I know, God will see me through.
 I know HE watches from Heaven above,
 Constantly; showering me with HIS unending love.

Felicia Jones was a guest speaker on December 6 in the MCC Adult Education Forum. She shared some of her story of being a formerly incarcerated person and the support and encouragement she received from Chaplain Julia to build a new life in the community. Ms. Jones was invited to the MCC as part of a two-part series this fall on the Chaplaincy Ministry in the Dane County Jail supported primarily by the Madison Area Lutheran Council.

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Epiphany at Home -

By Heather Putnam, Children's Ministry

Christmas is over, but there is more to celebrate.

Now it is time to celebrate Epiphany!

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About Epiphany

Epiphany, also known as Three King's Day, lands on January 6, the twelfth day after Christmas. The Season of Epiphany extends from January 6 until Ash Wednesday, lasting 4-9 Sundays depending on when Easter lands.

The word epiphany means 'to show', 'to make known', or 'to reveal'. Within the context of the church year, Epiphany is the day that we celebrate the Wise Men bringing gifts to the Christ child.

Epiphany Activities

Consider one of the following possibilities as a way to celebrate Epiphany with your family this year:

- Party to clean up your home after Christmas and to put away your holiday decorations;
- Treasure hunt to find a figure of the Christ child;
- Bake and share a Kings' Cake with friends (see additional info below);
- Hold a family discussion (see suggested questions below);
- Share a Feast of Epiphany ritual (see suggestion below).

King's Cake

The tradition is thought to have begun with French settlers, continuing a custom dating back to 12th century France, when a similar cake was used to celebrate the coming of the three wise men. Though the cakes are baked in many shapes now, they were originally round in shape to portray the circular route taken by the Kings to confuse King Herod who was trying to follow the wise men so he could kill the Christ child.

The cakes usually contain a bean, pea, or a figurine symbolizing the baby Jesus. It is considered good luck to the person who gets the figure, and that person usually holds the next King Cake party.

For cake recipes, check out the following links:

<http://allrecipes.com/recipe/mardi-gras-king-cake/Detail.aspx>

<http://www.fabulousfoods.com/recipes/article/43/17835>

<http://southernfood.about.com/od/cajuncuisine/r/bl810104a.htm>

Epiphany Discussion Questions

1. What in your experience most convinces you that God exists and cares for you?
2. Where do you seek God?
3. What is the best gift you have ever received and why?
4. When have you made a long trip?
5. Why do the magi make such a long journey to find Jesus?
6. Who does your family welcome in your home?
7. Who do we welcome in church?
8. Who brings you gifts?
9. What is a gift you want to give to Jesus?

Feast of Epiphany Ritual

Sing

O Come All Ye Faithful
We Three Kings of Orient Are

Read

The Visit of the Wise Men (Matthew 2: 1-12)

Prayer

Dear celebrating God,
When Jesus was born, visitors from far away came to worship him.
Like the magi, we are all searchers and explorers.
Like the magi, we are searching for God in our lives.
Thank you for Epiphany, the day we celebrate the magi finding Jesus.
Thank you for the Jesus and the light that he shines in our lives. Amen

Additional Sources of Information about Epiphany

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/epiphany AND www.gospelforallages.com/10103.pdf

MCC Youth News

Wednesday nights: **Middle School Guitar Club** - 6:15 - 7p.
Advent Confirmation - 7p.

Sunday, January 10 Lunch at Noodles - HS after church
 Just fun! Bring money for what you will order.

Friday, January 15 Game Night - MS 6-9p

We'll do a little bit of volunteering first by helping to set up for the Harvest of Hope Winter Market (an annual tradition) and then it's all about the games - running games, board games, team games, individual games - a little something for everyone! Eat dinner first and bring a snack or beverage to share.

Saturday, January 16 Service Project - HS 1-3:30p

Join Ogden and Emily in helping the Harvest of Hope committee clean up from the Winter Market. We'll need the most help from 1-2:30p. Cleaning up is not always the most fun job, but together we'll make it a blast!

Sunday, January 17 Hope Confirmation

Saturday, January 30 Fast Food Progressive - MS 5-9p

Back by popular demand! Cast your votes by Evite. We will go to the top four winners for a tasty and fun 4-course fast-food dinner. Bring \$ for dinner.

Note: Scholarships are always available, and friends are always welcome! Jen & Dan can help co-ordinate rides, too. Call or email if you need anything! 232-0093 or mccyouth@tds.net

Confirmation Service Projects - for BOTH Community of Hope and Advent Confirmation students. Please save the following dates!

#2 Sunday, February 14: 11:30 - 3:30p, Valentine's Project, TBD by YOU

#3 Saturday, April 24: 9a - noon, Earth Day Project

Jen Streit, Youth Director
 Madison Christian Community:
 Advent Lutheran, ELCA
 Community of Hope, UCC

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Advent News continued

From Habitat for Humanity & the Apostles Build Program

Thank you for your payment of \$5,500 sponsorship commitment and additional \$4,500 donation to the 2009 Apostles Build for Habitat for Humanity of Dane County. Your commitment to our community and to our work is humbling and very exciting.

Since Habitat for Humanity of Dane County was established in 1987, we have partnered with over 154 families. Because of supporters like you, we are now providing homeownership opportunities to 15 new homeowners and their children each year. These families must meet stringent requirements including income within 30%-60% of county median income, a commendable job history, a demonstrated need, 300-350 hours of sweat equity building their home, and the capability of handling the rigors of homeownership.

Thank you again for your support of the Habitat model of affordable housing. You are truly making a difference. For an update on our program and activities, please visit www.habitatdane.org.

Sincerely yours,
Perry L Ecton, CEO

Guidelines for Announcements at Advent

Advent's Mission Statement and the Word About our Partnership statement found in our newsletter and in our bulletin reminds us that we are a sanctuary for all. Be mindful not to offend anyone present or not present.

Be respectful of time considerations by keeping announcements specific and brief.

Where appropriate, utilize the printed means available for making announcements through the Bulletin or Newsletter. Attempt not to be overly repetitive in terms of the numbers of weeks an announcement is made.

Announcements of a partisan political or "for profit" business nature are not appropriate for our worship setting.

Members listening to announcements are asked to do so with patient respect of the speaker, putting the best possible construction on the motives of the speaker, as Martin Luther advises us.

Anyone with concerns about announcements is encouraged to visit with our church council president or with Pastor Jeff.

From Brad Spencer – CDs for Soldiers

Jackie Bradley (a friend of Deborah Green) has given us (to send to soldiers in Iraq) 100 copies of a CD she created. I plan to send these 4 at a time in the small USPS Flat Rate box, which is free and can be sent for \$4.95. That means a total of \$124 will be needed for postage. I plan to send these a few boxes per week, with the number sent partly determined by how much has been donated to cover postage. Once again I request quarters, to be placed in the Advent Treasury of Love basket.

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Advent News continued

Advent Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on Thursday, January 14 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.

Treasury of Love 2009

Beg. Bal & Love Offerings	\$10,506.88
Rent & Eviction Prevention	5,933.00
Utility Assistance	1,107.00
Security Deposit	1,475.00
Postage-Box for Soldiers	273.04
Items for Boxes for Soldiers	20.97
Greyhound Bus Tickets	167.00
Gas Voucher	40.01
Clothing	80.86
Auto Repair	375.00
Lussier Food Pantry	151.00
Prescription	39.00
LSS Washer & Dryer	10.00
Badger Care Application	60.00
Registration Fee Trust	75.00
Haiti Partners	150.00
Soccer Balls	130.00
Groceries	50.00
Vets Memorial	125.00
MATC—books & tuition	145.00
Christmas for a family— given by an Advent Member	100.00
Expenditure	\$10,506.88
Balance as of 12/20/2009	\$0.00

Judith Circle

Judith Circle will meet on Tuesday, January 12, 9:30 a. at Hildy McGown's. Joanna Heggen will be the study leader. All are welcome for fellowship and study. If you need a ride or have any questions please call Jean Loichinger.

G.E.M.S meets every Tuesday morning at 10:30 a. in the lower level of the church.

We have started a new book for the Tuesday morning discussion. It is **The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity** by Eric Elnes. Any retired (or about to be retired) men interested in stimulating conversation, friendship, and a few goodies are welcome.

OPALS Book Discussion Group

OPALS meetings are held once a month in the afternoon at MCC. On Tuesday, January 26 we will meet at 1:30 p. to discuss the book *The Glass Castle* by Jeanette Wall, a memoir.

Call Mary Maxwell if you have questions or need a ride. New members always welcome.

Advent Women Thursday Breakfast Gathering

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!

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



Community of Hope News



Pastor Tisha Attending Pacific School of Religion's Earl Lectures

Spiritual but not Religious: Chasing the Divine

This year's Earl Lectures, January 26-28, will explore the increasingly popular phrase *spiritual, but not religious*. "Spiritual, but not religious" includes those who glean inspiration solely from nature and the physical world around them, as well as those who prefer to divorce themselves from institutional structures. The phrase also refers to some who are alienated from organized religion—refugees from a house of worship that has not accepted or affirmed them. "Spiritual but not religious" can also describe those who find church irrelevant or who prefer to worship in individual and private ways.

What is the essential difference between *spiritual* and *religious*? What can religious institutions learn from those who claim to be one and not the other? And what kind of critique can those who call themselves "religious" be asking about the description "spiritual, but not religious"? Join Earl Lecturers Matthew Fox, Scotty McLennan, Melissa Wilcox, and Donna Allen to explore these vital questions that affect all of us who "chase the divine."

Tisha will be gone from January 25-31 and will return to the MCC office on Tuesday February 2, 2010. On Sunday February 7 and 14 she will be leading the adult education sessions to share what she learned from this conference and from what she's been reading and exploring in preparation for her sabbatical.

Holy Communion – Some Changes for the Flu Season

In light of concerns over transmission of the H1N1 flu virus the Worship Team and Steering Team of Community of Hope have agreed on the following change to how we will serve Holy Communion: Communion preparers will slice or tear the communion bread into pieces. During Communion, the server will hand you a piece of bread. We will continue to offer the common cup but will add an additional tray of individual cups so that those who would rather choose an individual cup have that option.

Please, if you or any member of your family is feeling ill or has the flu, remain at home.

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Community of Hope News

Praying for our Community

Community of Hope is an ever more caring community that values prayer as a way of connecting to God, growing in faith and caring for one another. This month we pray for the following people and their families.

- 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, and especially those in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- College students in our community – Jamie Custer, Rose Gear, Hannah Hunter-Johnson, Quinn Kirkland-Clark, Sarah Hunter-Johnson (graduate studies) .
- These people and their families as we pray our way through the church directory:

Dec. 29-Jan. 5

Mary Bowman; Diane Eddings

Jan. 5-12

Dorothy Brar;
Lynn Breedlove & Evelyn Mazack

Jan. 12-19

Tisha Brown & Cindy Thiesenhusen;
Roger Buffett; Beth Campbell

Jan. 19-26

Kevin Clark & Joann Kirkland; Betty, Corkey & Jamie Custer; Arthur Dodd

Jan. 26-Feb. 2

Barbara & David Dueholm; Tina Eder; Pat Eddings

Important Dates to Remember!



Birthdays

Isaac Powell	1/06
Landon Williams	1/07
Aralee Derflinger	1/11
Jean Pfeifer	1/13
Genevieve Custer	1/14
Tyler Spindler	1/14
Phill Bloedow	1/16
Dianna Murphy	1/16
Bruce Jarvis	1/22
Kristin Meyer	1/22
Bill Putnam	1/26
Sandra Esrael	1/27
Bill Long	1/30

Anniversaries

No anniversaries in January!

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

New CoH Women's Breakfast Group

A new breakfast group is starting for the Community of Hope women. Please join us at 7:00 am on the first and third Wednesday of every month. We meet at the Hubbard Street Diner in Middleton. Come join us for coffee and conversation. Please contact Sandra Esrael if you have questions.

Email Sandra Esrael, sandraesrael@tds.net if you have questions.

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!

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

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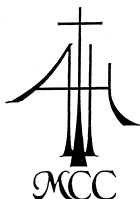
Beyond

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

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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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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Bill Long
Donna Leet, Moderator
Betty Custer
Sandie Esrael
Roger Williams

Advent Council

Bob Schneider
Julie M. Walsh,
President
Brian Kuhn
Edd Hellmer
John Malecki
Marilyn Crews-Nelson
Gretchen Wahl

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Phone: 608-836-1455

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, Chair
Donna Leet
Roger Williams,
Chair Elect
Julie M. Walsh
Tisha Brown
Jeff Wild