

# The Good Word

March, 2010

“The pastor is the resident theologian in the congregation she/he serves.” I’ve heard this statement spoken by bishops, pastors and lay members of congregations. I resonate with the idea of being the resident theologian much more than I resonate with the expectation that the pastor is a chaplain whose is supposed to be flattered when asked to offer the invocation at the annual bowling banquet. I enjoy theological study and will continue in the pursuit of growing in theological wisdom and knowledge as long as my wheels are turning. However, I’ve come to the conclusion that designating a pastor or any individual for that matter is not great theology. The best theology is grounded in a community whose members are engaged in dialog that is Biblically informed, shaped by tradition, honors life experiences, is willing to take people of other races, nations and creeds, and the environment into account, and is guided by the Holy Spirit.

Although I haven’t heard anyone describe it as such, I am impressed and excited by how many of us at MCC have been engaged in theological discussions since the first of the year. We devoted two adult sessions each to exploring eastern religions and the cultural phenomenon of being spiritual, but not religious. We attended lectures on Paul presented by David Fredrickson, a gifted Biblical teacher. We have had lively conversations, struggled with questions and expressed differences of opinion. Personally, I think it is healthy to belong to a community of faith where theological tensions arise and can be openly discussed. If you have ever felt that the theology you are hearing expressed by another person in the room is either too orthodox or too liberal and you wonder if you fit in at MCC, I hear you! Sometimes I wonder if I fit in, too. Perhaps

it is most helpful to respect and celebrate the diversity of theology that is expressed at MCC rather than expecting everything to fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. Allow me to reflect upon some of the topics that we have discussed recently.

## Eastern Religions

The week after Michael Schuler shared a wonderful presentation on the eastern religions, I shared the findings from a recent Pew Research Study reporting that 22% of people who identify themselves as Christians have incorporated eastern beliefs and practices into their Christian ideology. I went on to quote a sociologist who commented that people in the United States are very religious, but their convictions seem to be a mile wide and an inch deep. After a time of reflection I realize that even though I was quoting a sociologist and the words were not my own, these words reflected my judgmental impulse toward people dabbling in the teachings of eastern religions. I have little patience for the shallow consumerist eclecticism that chooses a little from several different traditions and never undertakes the serious discipline of any. However, I am wrong to dismiss serious-minded people who are attracted by teachings and find meaning in the tenants of eastern religions as shallow. My sincere hope is that people exploring eastern religions will be as devoted to going deeper into Christian theology and the study of scripture.

## Spiritual, But Not Religious

I recalled that Tisha was planning to attend a conference on the subject “spiritual, but not religious,” when this topic was discussed by the adult education committee this past November. I appreciated Tisha’s willingness to lead these

## Of Special Interest:

- Winter Farmers Market Thanks –p.2
- Palm Sunday Choir, Thank You MCC, DCU, Salad Supper –p. 4
- Java for Justice, Drop-In Shelter, Food Pantry, MALC Benefit-p.5
- Lenten Soup Supper & Worship –p.7
- Calendar and Lussier Community Education Center Events—Insert

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## MCC News

sessions because it is difficult to have a discussion on this topic without it becoming polarizing. Being spiritual, but not religious suggests that people are one or the other, but not both. I wish I felt differently but when someone tells me that they are spiritual, but not religious, it feels much the same as being told the church is full of hypocrites. My impulse is to go on the defensive. I pray that God's Spirit will free me from defensiveness and lead me into meaningful dialog with those who claim to be spiritual, but not religious. I also pray for the courage to express my deeply held convictions about the necessity of Christ centered community to be sustained and rooted in my spiritual life.

### Lectures on Paul

David's interpretation of the Christ hymn from Philippians counters the conventional understanding of about the past 1500 years and puts God and Christ in a whole new light. His explanation of the text from I Corinthians 6, used by those who condemn committed same-sex relationships, takes the debate right off the table. He said he could do the same with the English translation in Romans and I'm sure that he could.

What do you do when a Biblical scholar translates the text from the Greek and is well informed about other usages of key words in poetry, philosophy and early Christian interpretations that run contrary not only to the conventional understanding of the text, but is clearly different from the English translation in the Bible you have been reading from for the past thirty years? I think we can do several things: First, I am not promoting the Lutheran Study Bible, but the notes in the margin (Fredrickson wrote the notes for Corinthians) are helpful in casting light on the texts where we can easily get tripped up. Second, there is new scholarship on Paul that is emerging and we will be looking at some of this material in the theological reading group. Third, we should never settle for scripture as we have always known it, but search for deeper

meaning in the texts.

Many of us have been engaged in theological discussion in the past month. The discussions will veer in different directions, but will continue into the future. I feel privileged to share this venture with you and thank you for sharing your journeys with me. Jeff

### Winter Farmers Market Thanks!

A warm thank you to everyone who participated in our Winter Farmers Market and Brunch on January 16, 2010: set-up people, food preparers, food servers, clean-up staff, ticket sellers, brunch eaters and farmers market shoppers! It was a successful event with over 125 people enjoying a brunch of egg, cheese and sausage strata (some vegetarian and some gluten-free servings for those who wanted them), potato pancakes, elephant ears, sorghum cookies, apple cider, coffee and tea.

While the primary focus was on encouraging people to taste, buy and use local foods that are sustainably grown, the Harvest of Hope Fund did benefit financially from the event: farm vendors contributed \$351 (10% of their sales) and we received \$391.30 in profit from the brunch (half of the profits; the other half went to our co-sponsor, the Churches' Center for Land and People).

Barbara Wright, owner of The Dardanelles Restaurant, donated her time as chef for the event; food preparers and servers enjoyed working side-by-side with this community-minded restaurateur. If you enjoyed the food at this event, you could thank Barbara by patronizing The Dardanelles Restaurant at 1851 Monroe Street in Madison.

Thanks again for your support!

### Pray Daily

Worship Regularly  
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## Fellowship Groups & Activities

### MCC COMMUNITY GROUP

Want to learn more about polar bears?? Join us **Sunday, March 14**, for a potluck after church at the Johnsons, 5701 Anchorage Ave., Beverly Brekke Bailey will give a PowerPoint presentation followed by a DVD. All are welcome.

### Thank You Lori DeMeuse

On the 26th of February the MCC Community Group toured the Chasen Art Museum. 13 of us enjoyed a docent-lead tour of magnificent artwork. We all want to thank Laurie DeMeuse, a member of Advent who works at the Chasen, for arranging this very special morning.

### An Invitation to Knit or Crochet a Prayer Shawl

Candice Schneider said receiving a prayer shawl from a group of women she didn't know was powerful, "Just the best gift and I feel warmed, wrapped in its love and prayers!" Karen Kuhn felt called to knit prayer shawls for favorite aunts and "stitched prayers for them" as she knit.

**Thursday, March 11 at 7 PM** anyone interested in making prayer shawls is encouraged to come to the MCC. Everyone—any experience level—whether you knit, crochet, weave or sew is invited to gather and share the experience. Bring patterns if you have them; if not, don't worry, we will work together to develop a plan.

The most familiar handknit prayer shawl pattern involves the "Moss" stitch for the ecologists among us—translated, that is knit three, purl three. For more information go to [www.shawlministry.com](http://www.shawlministry.com) They recommend size 11 or 13 knitting needles, M, N or P crochet hooks and 555 yards of yarn. Please bring yarn and needles if you have them.

If you have questions, call Karen Kuhn or Kristi Williams.

### 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 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 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 a discussion of the "Three Pauls". The Theological Discussion Group is an informal group interested in each other's reading perspectives. During Lent, we will meet after the Lenten service on March 17. For further information, contact Fran Grugel.

### 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, 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 News

## Palm Sunday Choir

If you like to sing, but do not have a lot of time to devote to a choir, then join this year's Palm Sunday Choir! We will meet Sundays March 14 & 21 for 20 minutes after church and Palm Sunday March 28 we will meet at 9:15a. Please plan to attend at least 2 rehearsals. This will be short, sweet, and fun! Contact Howard Kanetzke or Jen Streit for more info.

**THANK YOU, MCC,** for all the financial support you have given to our youth collecting money for HAITI and for the LUSSIER CENTER FOOD PANTRY during the past month. Over \$1,000 was collected for Haiti and around \$700 was collected for our neighbors at the Lussier Center. Thank you for supporting the youth's efforts to make a difference in the world. To put our SOUPER BOWL fundraising into the perspective of a Super Bowl ad...We raised enough money to purchase ONLY 0.008 second of a Super Bowl ad! While \$700 will fill many hungry tummies in our local community, it couldn't buy the blink of an eye in a Super Bowl ad! Imagine how much good we could do with all the money that goes into the Super Bowl...Anyway...THANK YOU for sharing your many blessings with the youth and all our neighbors. You are wonderful examples for us all.

**All MCC Women  
Save the Date**

**Tuesday, April 20, 6:00 p.**

**Salad Supper**

**Program information coming soon!**

## Dane County United Update –

### Announcing DCU's Spring Listening Campaign:

Between now and April 2010, Dane County United will listen to more than 500 residents of Dane County in 50 or more house meetings where people will tell stories about how the current economic situation is impacting them and the people they love. House meeting leaders were trained by Mark Fraley, Lead Organizer of Common Ground, in Milwaukee on Thursday, February 18, at the Lussier Community Education Center. Through these house meetings Dane County United will identify the issues upon which they will be working for the rest of 2010 and the citizens and leaders who will join together to research and identify action items on those issues. A Public Assembly will take place in May 2010 to share the results of the listening campaign and announce the issues that will guide the work of Dane County United in the coming year.

MCC will do its listening sessions during the Adult Education hour on April 25. Mark your calendars and plan to join us to share your stories about how the economy is impacting you and the people you love.

**Fundraising Update:** Leaders within DCU have been working diligently for the past year on a fundraising campaign and are proud to announce that they've raised \$70,000 to date. The final goal is \$125,000, which will give us more than three years of operating expenses and enable us to hire an organizer to begin this summer.

**Common Ground of Milwaukee:** DCU's sister organization in Milwaukee, launched a campaign in February aimed at addressing the issue of foreclosure in the Milwaukee area. For more information go to [www.facesofforeclosure.com](http://www.facesofforeclosure.com)

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# MCC News

## Food Drive for Food Pantry—Sunday, March 21

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

## JAVA FOR JUSTICE: Order your Mt Meru Coffee, Sunday, March 7.

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.

## DROP-IN SHELTER

The date is Thursday, April 1. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Shalom Room. Four people are needed from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. and two people are needed from 5:00 - 8:00 a.m. If you have any questions, please call Ken Johnson.

## Madison Area Lutheran Council Seeking Donations of Quilts, Pies and Aprons

Donations will be auctioned off on Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup> to benefit the Chaplaincy Ministry at the Dane County Jail. Our very own Julia Weaver and John Mix are the two chaplains whose ministry is supported through this fundraising effort.

Donations can be made by contacting Anne Staniforth at 846-3352 or Beth Krey at 846-3621

## Save the Date for these Upcoming Events in April

Saturday, April 17, at 12:00 p.m. - 4<sup>th</sup> Annual MALC Quilt Auction and Pie Sale at Christ Lutheran Church, 200 S. Main St., DeForest.

Sunday, April 25, 2:00 to 6:30 p.m. – Food Faith and Earth Day at First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, Madison.

## 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.

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### The Good Word

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# MCC News

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## Coming Events

### Wednesdays in Lent

March 3, March 10, March 17, March 24  
 5:30 p. Soup and Discussion led by members of the GEMS  
 7:00 p. Lenten Service

March 1, 3 & 5 The Road Home Family Shelter

March 14 Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 20 Spring Equinox Labyrinth Walk, 6:00-8:00 p.

March 28 Palm Sunday

April 1 Maundy Thursday, service at 7:00 p.

April 2 Good Friday, service at 12:00 p

April 4 Easter Sunday  
 6:00 a. Easter morning fire  
 7:00 a. Easter Sunrise Worship  
 8:00–9:30 a. Breakfast served by our youth  
 10:15 a. Advent worships in the Blessing Room, with communion  
 10:15 a. Community of Hope worships in the Covenant Room

### Help Increase the Peace March 18 & 19, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lussier Community Education Ctr

The Youth Resource Network, Edgewood College and the Lussier Community Education Center are proud to bring this low-cost, two-day training to Madison!

“Help Increase the Peace” is a highly interactive workshop that teaches activities that can be used by anyone working with youth to help maintain a peaceful, respectful environment in any setting.

The two-day training on Madison’s west side costs only \$20 per person, and includes a copy of the manual with hundreds of exercises and interactive games. Continental breakfast provided; lunch available each day for only \$5. REGISTER EARLY as space is limited!

More information about the presenting organization can be found on their website at <http://www.peacelearningcenter.org/index.asp?p=49>

### Our Website: [www.madisonchristiancommunity.org](http://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

**Senior high youth answer the age old question: which came first, the chicken or the egg? The answer is—THE EGG!** The eggs have to come first, or the MCC Chicken Initiative will simply not happen. Senior high youth, with the help of Beverly Brekke Bailey, have crafted egg ornaments that they will be selling before Easter. These \$5 ornaments will support two things: the construction of the MCC chicken coop, and flocks of chickens through Heifer Project. While we become chicken owners, we also support this in areas of the world that will benefit from the addition of chickens into their communities. Thanks in advance for your support of Lucas Schmeider's Eagle Scout project!

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### **Lenten Soup Suppers and Worship - The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity. By Eric Elnes Wednesday evenings, February 24-March 24**

Soup is served at 5:30 Discussion begins at 6:00 Worship is at 7:00

What core beliefs about our faith do we affirm as Progressive Christians? During Lent, come and explore over soup and in worship some of the affirmations proposed by Eric Elnes, share your own perspective and hear what some of our own community members have to say. Soup supper discussions will be led by members of the MCC GEMS group.

**March 3 – Hollis Rudiger**, Affirmation 1: Progressive Christians walk fully in the Path of Jesus without denying the legitimacy of other paths that God may provide humanity.

**March 10 – Kim Eighmy**, Affirmation 12: Progressive Christians act on the faith that we are born with a meaning and purpose, a vocation and ministry that serve to strengthen and extend God's realm of love.

**March 17 – Mark Geistlinger**, Affirmation 3: Progressive Christians Celebrate the God whose Spirit pervades and whose glory is reflected in all of God's Creation, including the earth and its eco-systems, the sacred and secular, the Christian and non-Christian, the human and non-human.

**March 24 – Dan or Jen Streit**, Affirmation 6: Progressive Christians Stand, as Jesus does, with the outcast and oppressed, the denigrated and afflicted, seeking peace and justice with or without the support of others.

Copies of The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity. By Eric Elnes are available for \$10.00 in the Shalom Room.

## MCC Youth News

**Saturday, March 13 Mt. Olympus Fun Day! - MS/HS 11a-6p**

Escape this yucky spinter weather (is it spring or winter?) to full-fledged summer! Mt. Olympus has 9 indoor water slides and an indoor amusement park (Aspen says it has an awesome roller coaster!). Bring a bag lunch (to eat in the car), swim suit, towel. Cost is \$6 + money for food (no carry-in food allowed). Please RSVP by Evite. Looking for adult drivers/chaperones (it would be okay to bring younger children to play together separately).

**Saturday, March 20 BWCA Deposits Due**

If you plan on going on the Boundary Waters Canoe trip, please return your permission slip and \$50 deposit. We have a special scholarship fund for BWCA trips, so please speak up is money is at all an issue.

**Saturday, March 20 Atlas Improv @ Electric Earth Café - MS 7:30-10p**

Have you ever heard of TheaterSports? It is the sport of comedy improv. This is a funny, clean show that will have us roaring hysterically. We'll meet & pick up at MCC. Cost is \$3 + money for "coffee" or dessert (if you want). Adult drivers needed.

**Friday, March 26 Hang Out - HS 6-10p**

Come do whatever you feel like doing - Capture the Flag, movie, foosball, and more! Bring a drink or munchie to share as well as any movies you might want to watch or games you might want to play. We'll provide pizza.

**Sunday, April 4 - Easter Breakfast - MS/HS**

**Sunday, April 19 - Talent Show - MS/HS (Show @ 6:30p)**

**Saturday, April 24 - Confirmation Service Project #3 - 9am - noon**

**Looking ahead...**

BWCA Trip - HS - June 14-21

Rafting Trip - MS - June 24-27

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**Children's Ministry** Heather Putnam

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## Advent News

### Guess Who's Coming to Visit?

Bruce Burnside, bishop of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, will be joining us on Sunday, March 14. Bishop Burnside will lead the adult education hour and preach the sermon during worship. Bruce has traveled numerous times to Israel and has fostered caring relationships with Palestinian Christians in the area. He is well informed about matters in the mid-east and has testified in senate and congressional hearings on behalf of the ELCA. We can look forward to an informative education hour and hearing a meaningful proclamation of the Gospel on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

### Advent's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Advent Council wants to get the ball rolling to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation. You are invited to be involved in two ways: First, if you have any ideas as to how we best commemorate the anniversary, please share them with a council member. Second, if you would like to serve on the anniversary task force to plan a celebration please contact a council member or Jeff Wild. The council hopes to recruit a task force of members that represents each decade.

### Advent Giving Goal for February

The giving goal for February was \$29,182 and members of Advent gave a whopping \$36,954. This amount includes the offering from the fifth Sunday of January that was deposited on February 1. Thank you for making it possible to faithfully carry forth our mission.

### New Member Sunday

What's the difference between a bishop and a new member? The bishop is more like a church hopper than a church shopper because a bishop visits many of the congregations on this synod. A new member is someone who has visited and keeps coming back because they want to live out their Christian vocation in relationship to a community of faith. New members will be welcomed into the congregation on Sunday, March 14 during worship. A reception will be held in their honor following worship. Please introduce yourself to the new members, make an effort to get to know them, and invite them into arenas of fellowship and service.

### LEAD 2010 We Are An Offering

Leadership Education and Development "LEAD" is a day of inspiring presentations and informative, engaging workshops designed for congregational lay leaders and pastors. This year's event will be held Saturday, March 13, 8:30-3:15 at St. Luke's Lutheran in Middleton. The registration fee is \$20 per person and is due by March 6. Please contact Jeff Wild if you are interested in attending or would like more information.

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## Advent News continued

### Advent Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on Thursday, March 11, at 7:00 p. in the **Tower Apartments- Party/Meeting Room** on the third floor at Oakwood west campus.

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

### G.E.M.S.

GEMS continues to meet at the church on Tuesday mornings from 10:30 to noon. GEMS welcomes men who are retired, about to be retired, or who wish they were retired and who are looking for stimulating conversation and friendship. We will be starting a new book, *Broken: My Story of Addiction and Redemption*, by William Kopp Moyers. The book is a memoir a terrible disease and one man's journey through it. If you have any questions, call Al Heggen .

### Treasury of Love 2010

Beg. Bal & Love Offerings	<b>3234.80</b>
Rent & Eviction Prevention	780.00
Utility Assistance	471.05
Haiti Relief/Thrivent Matching	1310.00
Postages for pkgs. to soldiers	83.65
ELCA Disaster Relief	250.00
Security Deposit	250.00
Moving Expense	75.00
Haiti Partners/Relief	15.00

**Expenditure** **\$3234.70**

Balance as of 3/02/2010 \$0.10

### Judith Circle

Judith Circle will meet on Tuesday, March 9, 9:30 a. at MCC. Ellen Roberts is the hostess. All are welcome for fellowship and study. If you need a ride or have any questions please call Jean Loichinger.

Please mark your calendars for April 20th for the salad supper. Also remember that Judith Circle has the important honor of being in charge of clean up this year!

### OPALS Book Discussion Group

OPALS meetings are held once a month in the afternoon at MCC. On Tuesday, March 23, we will meet at 1:30 p. to discuss the book *In Defense of Food* by Michael Pollan. Eat food, not too much, mostly plants.

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!

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## Community of Hope News

Dear Friends:

Christine and I wanted to extend our utmost appreciation and thanks for all of the prayers and help we have received from the members of Community of Hope. Your outpouring of love, care and concern has touched our lives in a way that we will never forget. We have received wonderful home-cooked meals, delivered right to our door in Oregon, carefully and wonderfully prepared by the people who came to visit us. We have been blessed with "Dog-Walkers" who have taken care of our pets as if they were their own. Most especially, we have been touched by the message of God's love demonstrated by our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The past year has been full of blessings and challenges for myself and Christine. We were married on February 27, 2009, in a very small ceremony at Community of Hope, officiated by Tisha. Then on June 27, 2009, we renewed our vows with family and friends in a chapel in Madison called "Gates of Heaven." The following day we held our "Pot Luck" reception in Hoyt Park on the west side, on a very beautiful and sunny day. Our guests came from China, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

In November of 2009 I received word that my father in Michigan was being taken to his lake front home to die peacefully with family and friends present. I was blessed to spend an entire week with my dad before he died. My six brothers and one sister were all there to say our last good-byes. In all, Christine and I traveled more than 2,000 miles by car in a span of ten days.

On December 1, 2009, I had surgery for a double hernia, where two mesh screens were inserted over the muscle areas which were torn. I was off work for three weeks. Unfortunately, on January 9, 2010, I slipped on the ice and broke my ankle which required another surgery, in which a plate and six screws were inserted to mend the fibula. I am healing well from both surgeries and my ankle continues to improve! I am extremely blessed and fortunate to have extended medical benefits and insurance through St. Mary's Hospital .

In closing, I do have a request that you pray for my wife Christine. I know that I will heal, but I am more concerned about Christine's health as she is diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. She has been my source of help throughout these months but she is burning out.

I wish to give praise and glory to God! We thank him for all the blessing we have received and ask for courage and strength to guide us during the "Not-So-Good" times in our lives.

Thank you again for your prayers and support,

God Bless

Dan Luch (husband of Christine Hartelt)

A postscript from Christine:

I wanted to echo Dan's thanks and to share a quote from *Voices of Multiple Sclerosis 2010* that spoke directly to my deep feelings of gratitude toward all those who helped us in pragmatic ways and who prayed for us. A woman with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) wrote about her experience during a particularly bad episode: "I did ask a rabbi that very question (Where is God when it hurts?) during this time, and he replied with wisdom that still gives me peace. He told me that God is in your family and your friends. Life is full of events that are not handpicked for us, they just happen. Our family and friends are there to help us through these times, he explained. I'm still not sure, but maybe that is when I changed my habit of holding in my bad news."

Dan's ankle is healing well. On Ash Wednesday he was given permission to put weight on the healing ankle. He's still wearing a boot-like cast and using crutches for stability, but an end is in sight. Thank you all!

Christine Hartelt

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**Beyond**

## Community of Hope News

**Thank you from David Moyer, Conference Minister** To Churches in the Wisconsin Conference (excerpts)

Friends and partners in ministry:

“Grace, mercy and peace be with you all in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your faithful support of OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission) in 2009.

As the year closed the giving from all of you, our 230 churches, exceeded expectations. More churches than usual gave gifts greater than their goals and churches who had alerted us to the need for significant reductions were, in some cases, able to provide OCWM gifts beyond their projections. Your generosity enabled the Conference to send an additional \$5,000 to the national UCC for basic support and also to send another \$5,000 to United Church Camps, Inc. to support our terrific outdoor ministry program.

Thank you all! ... Your faith in these difficult economic times gives great hope that the Holy Spirit is at work in each and all of us to bring from what may seem to be scarcity, the great gift of abundance. ...”  
Sincerely,

Rev. David Moyer  
Conference Minister

### One Great Hour of Sharing Offering March 14, 2010

The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, administered by Wider Church Ministries, is the refugee, relief and development fund of the United Church of Christ. It provides support to people in more than eighty countries.

The 2010 OGHS theme is inspired by John 21:15-17 when Jesus asks Peter, “Do you love me?” If you are familiar with this scrip-

ture, you may know that after Peter confesses to loving Jesus, Jesus tells him, “Feed my sheep.” We too are called to care for all who are in need, just as God cares for each of us.

The most recent situation in which we can see OGHS dollars at work is through our partners in Haiti. Through CONASPEH (The National Spiritual Council of Protestant Churches in Haiti), the Haitian partner to Global Ministries, OGHS is responding to the needs of Haitians in the wake of January’s earthquake and providing much needed support as the leaders of CONASPEH discern the new direction of their ministry.

Please consider a generous gift to One Great Hour of Sharing in the coming weeks and share your gift in worship on Sunday, March 14, 2010.

### Pray Daily

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

## Community of Hope News

### Sabbatical Preparation and Update

Since the January update, I've been working on putting together a schedule for the summer. So far, I've managed to connect with three communities whose pastors I met or heard about at the Christianity21 Conference I attended in October. There are three other communities I'm hoping to visit, two in Chicago and one in Denver, CO

Here's where I'll be in June:

June 3 – 11 - Brooklyn, NY - Resurrection Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, [www.resurrectionwilliamsburg.com](http://www.resurrectionwilliamsburg.com). This is a community in the Williamsburg area of Brooklyn with a demographic that is roughly one third artsy, creative or entrepreneurial types, one third Latino/a and one third Hasidic Jew. The current membership is primarily under the age of 35 and primarily from the artsy, creative, entrepreneurial demographic. I'll be staying with my sister Heather and niece Caitlin while in Brooklyn and also visiting with some friends from seminary.

June 19-28 – Twin Cities MN - Solomon's Porch, [www.solomonsporch.com](http://www.solomonsporch.com) and House of Mercy, [www.houseofmercy.org](http://www.houseofmercy.org).

On their website, Solomon's Porch describes themselves in this way: "We are seeking to be a redemptive, transformative community living as a blessing of God in all the world. The people of our community are from varied backgrounds and perspectives, but find unity and commonality in seeking the things of God in this world, "as they are in heaven", in the generous Orthodox expressions of Christianity."

House of Mercy says this on its website: "Founded in the spring of 1996, House of Mercy offers a discriminating blend of high church and low, of tradition and innovation, sincere worship and healthy skepticism. The Vision - To build a church through the

recovery of grace-based theology, the practice of liturgical eclecticism, and active service in the world."

Since most of these congregations worship in the evenings, I'm also thinking of finding interesting communities with morning worship times so that I can experience worship in as wide a diversity of congregations as possible. There's a community in the Twin Cities called Spirit Garage that I will probably also check in on when I'm in Minnesota.

It is really fun and exciting to see the plan coming together.

### **SAVE THE DATE – Community of Hope Congregational Retreat, October 15-17, 2010 featuring our own Bryan Sirchio**

This will be a time for us to have fun together, to share our experiences of the sabbatical period using a wonderful stepping stones exercise, and to begin thinking about and planning for our future. It's going to be awesome. Don't miss it!

Those who are able and who know they will be attending the retreat, please consider registering and paying a \$100 deposit by March 14. Contact Mary Schmelzer to register and get more information.

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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 to connect with God, grow in faith and care for one another. This month we pray for the following people and their families.

- Dan Luch recovering from a broken ankle and Christine Hartelt as she cares for him and lives with MS
- The people of Haiti as they continue to recover and all the people in the world who are responding with compassion and caring.
- Nancy Greenwald as she recovers from surgery on her hand.
- Kathy and Robin Alexander as they celebrate the birth of grandson Jacob Andrew Devine, born on February 16.
- 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. Especially those in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Everyone who's lost a job, is struggling to find work, has lost a home or is in foreclosure, or who has inadequate health care coverage.
- College students from 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:

**Feb. 23-March 2** Mark & Luke Geistlinger, Kristin, Zoe and Eliza Meyer; Theresa & Steve Haffner-Stearns

**Mar. 2-9** Christine Hartelt; Margaret Helming; Julie James

**Mar. 9-16** Keith Johnson & Julie Hunter; Howard & Lucetta Kanetzke; Rolf Killingstad

**Mar. 16-23** Lois & Hirochika Komai; Laura Komai; Sachi Komai

**Mar. 23-30** Donna Leet; Bill Long

**Mar. 30-Apr. 6** Jan Manser; Tom & Joan Matthews

## Important Dates to Remember!



### Birthdays

Roger Williams	3/3
Chuck Pfeifer	3/4
Josephine Putnam	3/4
Tisha Brown	3/6
Theresa Haffner-Stearns	3/8
Dorothy Brar	3/8
Nancy Zabel	3/12
Heather Putnam	3/13
Ken Ono	3/20
Eliza Meyer	3/20
Lucetta Kanetzke	3/23

### Anniversaries

Martha McCurdy	3/18
Barbara & David Dueholm	3/24

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

### 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.

Call Sandra Esrael 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 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

Pray Daily

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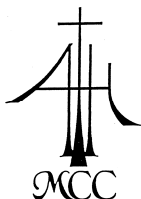
Beyond

**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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**Advent Council**

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Julie M. Walsh  
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President

Rolf Nervig  
Dean Ryerson

**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:**

Donna Leet  
Roger Williams, Chair  
Gretchen Wahl

Tisha Brown  
Jeff Wild