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## Harvest of Hope Committee

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## Our challenge

“ ... it is still God’s policy to work through the embarrassingly insignificant to change the world and create the future. Just as Jesus invited that first unlikely bunch of fishermen, God invites us to drop our nets and abandon our boats and join in the adventure of changing the world.”

*Tom Sine, The Mustard  
Seed Conspiracy, Waco, Texas.  
World Books, 1981*

“We view the deterioration of the family farm system with alarm and pain. It alienates ordinary people from the land, which is God’s gift to all. It saps the strength of rural communities. And it creates a situation where control of food production could be concentrated in the hands of a few. We cannot stand by and see this happen. “

*Interfaith Statement on Public Policy  
and the Structure of Agriculture*

Harvest of Hope Fund  
Madison Christian Community  
7118 Old Sauk Road  
Madison, WI 53717

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# HARVEST OF HOPE FUND

*A Wisconsin Family Farm Crisis Fund*



Sponsored by the Madison Christian Community, Madison, Wisconsin

Program partners include:

- Wisconsin Conference, United Church of Christ
- Wisconsin Conference, United Methodist Church
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Madison
- Churches Center for Land and People

## THE FARM AND RURAL CRISIS

Many Wisconsin farm families are experiencing a financial crisis due to several factors: low commodity prices; high costs of fuel, machinery, fertilizer and other inputs; rising property taxes; shifting global markets; and drought, flooding and other climatic conditions.

Yet it is more than a farm crisis. It has also become a rural crisis, dislocating farm and non-farm families, creating shifts away from family farm agriculture, causing tensions within rural communities and shattering people's values, beliefs and hopes for the future.

## HARVEST OF HOPE FUND

To assist farm families in getting through these tough times, the Madison Christian Community created the Harvest of Hope Fund. The Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Madison and the Churches Center for Land and people are partners in this project.

## OUR GOAL

Our goal is to provide financial help and hope to Wisconsin farm families in difficult situations. The Harvest of Hope Fund provides gifts to farm families who need financial assistance in any of the following areas: to meet emergency needs for food, home heating fuel, medical or veterinary expenses, electric power cut-offs, climatic conditions (drought, floods, frost, hail), feed for cattle, machinery repair, retraining, or other emergency situations. Funding is also available to purchase seed, fertilizer, fuel and other supplies for spring planting.

Wisconsin farm families with needs in any of these areas are encouraged to apply for funds. Persons or families of any faith may apply.

## IF YOU CAN HELP

The Harvest of Hope Fund allows you to be involved in a special project that demonstrates sharing and caring. Financial gifts from the Harvest of Hope Fund make a tremendous difference by offering hope to farm families in need.

**Contributions in any amount are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible.** If you can contribute, send your check to the address below, making the check payable to the Harvest of Hope Fund. Contributions are accepted anytime.

Please consider getting your church involved in this effort to help our rural neighbors: Encourage your members to make individual contributions ... hold a special offering over several weeks ... initiate a special fundraising drive to benefit the fund ... or decide on a sum of money to be contributed from your church's treasury.

For United Methodist contributions, this is an approved Advance Special Offering.

### TO CONTRIBUTE OR APPLY FOR FUNDS CONTACT:

Harvest of Hope Fund  
Madison Christian Community  
7118 Old Sauk Road  
Madison, WI 53717  
(608) 836-4633

Your phone call will probably be answered by an answering machine. This helps reduce costs and allows you to call anytime ... day or night. Please provide your complete name, address and phone number so we can respond in a timely manner.

## IF YOU NEED HELP

If you are a farm family in need of financial help to meet emergency needs, please contact us at the address listed at the bottom of the previous column. You will be sent additional information, including brief application forms to be completed and returned.

To assure the full and lasting benefit of a Harvest of Hope gift, applicants are asked to seek financial planning and management assistance from one of the following: UW-Extension agent, farm specialist with a technical college, or a volunteer farm credit advisor working with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

The maximum gift is \$1,000, but our limited funds will go further if gifts are for lesser amounts. Applicants can receive two gifts from the fund over time.

## REVIEW AND SELECTION

The Harvest of Hope Committee reviews all applications on the basis of need and the probability that the gift could be helpful. Checks from the Fund are sent directly to the farm family. Our goal is to respond quickly; let us know if your need is urgent.

## COVENANT OF HOPE

Families receiving gifts from the Harvest of Hope Fund are asked to sign a non-binding "covenant" stating their hope to contribute to the fund if and when their circumstances permit.

