



# Church Women United in Madison, Wisconsin

C.W.U. Newsletter April, 2012 No. 9

## May Celebration

### Sights and Sounds of Harmony

#### Listening to My Sisters

#### May Friendship Day Luncheon

Friday, May 4, 2012

10:30 am Annual Meeting

11:30 am Luncheon (catered)

12:15 pm Celebration

Asbury United Methodist Church  
6109 University Avenue

Luncheon: \$7

Send check to Marlene Lippert

6329 Scandia Lane

McFarland 53558, by April 30

## May Friendship Day Celebration

Our luncheon will celebrate **May Friendship Day** on Friday, May 4, at Asbury United Methodist Church, 6109 University Avenue. At 10:30 am we will gather for our annual meeting. After a catered lunch at 11:30, we will join in celebration at 12:15 pm. Our theme for this year is *Sights & Sounds of Harmony, Listening to My Sisters*. We have a long history of inviting women of diverse races, cultures, and traditions to draw together into a Christian fellowship. In this service, CWU asks you to share

insights into our how heritage as we recognize how God brings us together from many places, generations, cultures, and faiths to become One in Christ's Love. When we love each other in our differences, we can serve in a spirit of oneness.

Cost is \$7 a person. Please make your reservations by sending your check to Marlene Lippert, 6329 Scandia Lane, McFarland 53558, by April 30. If you are mailing close to the deadline, give Marlene a call on April 30 to reserve the number of places you are paying for. Marlene's number is 838-3563

## April Forum: The Crossing

We met Saturday morning, April 14, at The Crossing, 1127 University Avenue. Our number was smaller than usual, but everyone was eager to learn more about The Crossing, which aims to provide a Christian community at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where students are free to explore and affirm their relationship with God, each other, and the world. They are a progressive, theologically open ministry focused on the life of Jesus Christ, and seek to offer opportunities for students to be embraced by indiscriminate love of God while living out the teachings of the gospel. The Crossing community celebrates the rich history of many Christian traditions yet exists emphatically in the present. The students are grounded in worship, maintained by fellowship, and seriously engaged with the problems and possibilities of the world.

Our program concentrated on their Quest trips. Nikki Bown, Quest Coordinator, gave us a look at these trips and how they have a transformational effect on those who go on them. She pointed to Romans 12:2, 2 Peter 1:5, and Philippians 1:9 for the necessity of transforming information into understanding and empathy with others in our world. Nikki had her first Quest experience when she went with the

Crossing to Israel-Palestine upon her 2009 graduation from UW-Madison. There they visited Mar Elias, an educational institution that integrates Moslem, Jewish, and Christian youth. Quest trips have gone to Kenya to provide camps for students of the Jirani Project, to Costa Rica to work on an organic farm, and to Cambodia to work at an orphanage, where students are learning how to go into business for themselves. They take their trips during winter break in January and in May after school is done. Students pay their own way, and part of Nikki's job is to help them raise money by them writing to their relatives and friends to raise funds. Even if people can't provide cash, they often volunteer prayer support and follow the blogs describing the experiences.

Nikki compared experiencing the world in this way to learning about places by googling the information and images--these trips produce an emotional impact, an appreciation for the hardships of others, and quite a few blisters when wielding machetes on that farm. Putting their knowledge and faith into practice has a transformational impact that these students carry with them into their student lives here and their aspirations for their lives after Madison.

This student center is sponsored by American Baptists, United Methodists, and UCC. For more information, go to the web site: [www.crossingministries.org](http://www.crossingministries.org)

## Upcoming Events

The *Diyar Dance Theatre* will perform a free program at Edgewood College Anderson auditorium (100 Edgewood College Drive) in Madison on Monday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m. and Tuesday, May 8 at West High Shooed Auditorium (30 Ash Street )at 9 a.m. A free will offering will be taken. Madison contact: Bonnie van Overbeke 608-274-1859 or [bonnievano@aol.com](mailto:bonnievano@aol.com). The Diyar Dance Theatre from Bethlehem in Palestine, is a volunteer, Palestinian, coed youth dance troupe that is comprised of 60 talented, enthusiastic and committed dancers. The dancers are motivated by the vision of creating a forum for young adults to celebrate Palestinian culture and history through traditional dances. The group uses Dabka, modern theatre and contemporary dance, as a way of promoting creativity, imagination and freedom of expression as critical ingredients of cultural and social development.. Bright Stars of

Bethlehem, a 501(c) (3) u.S. charity, supports the Diyar Dance Theatre. Go to [brightstarsbethlehem.org](http://brightstarsbethlehem.org) or call 815-315-0682 to learn about Bright Stars mission in the Holy Land.

***Azusa Pacific University Men's Chorale*** On May 14 at 7 p.m. the 'Azusa Pacific University Men's Chorale will perform in concert at 'Christ Presbyterian Church, 944 E. Gorham Street n Madison. Celebrating their 40th anniversary the 100 -voce chorale, currently under the direction of Harold Clouning, performs regularly at churches, schools and civic organizations. The repertoire represents many musical styles, including traditional men's choral music, spirituals, jazz arrangements, hymns, folk songs and contemporary 'Christian music. Go to [cpcmainson.org](http://cpcmainson.org) for details. All are welcome!.

### **Interfaith "Coalition for Worker Justice**

Madison CWU has been a member of the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice (ICWJ) since it began over 10 years ago. Clergy and labor advocates work together for justice for workers, based on the principles set down in their faith traditions.

The following came recently from ICWJ. May they give us pause for thought and action.

### **A Time of Reflection**

As the sun sets this evening the Jewish holiday of Passover begins and on Sunday the Christian holiday of Easter is celebrated. At this sacred time we, at ICWJ, are remembering our actions during this season last year. Over the course of six weeks from when the anti-union bill passed and Easter weekend, ICWJ and Madison Urban Ministry organized daily faith vigils outside the Capitol. It was a powerful symbol to have faithful presence outside the Capitol for such an extended period. We have heard from organizers and workers that they remember these vigils and felt supported by our presence. We continue to raise the faith voice for justice as we organize the second annual labor seder and begin to build support for a state constitutional amendment to protect collective bargaining rights.

We wish our Jewish and Christian supporters meaningful and joyous celebrations. Please enjoy the reflections below from ICWJ clergy about the connection between Passover and Easter and economic and worker justice. Let us know how you would like to

be involved with our work.

### **Happy Passover to Our Jewish Supporters!**

The following is a reflection written by Rabbi Joshua Ben-Gideon, from Beth Israel Center, connecting worker justice and Passover.

As we approach the Jewish holiday of Passover, it is appropriate to reflect upon the lessons of the holiday and what they might teach us in our own day. When Moses seeks to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, he says to Pharaoh: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Let my people go that they may celebrate a festival for me in the wilderness." Ex. 5:1. The Israelites worshipping God is said to be the reason for why they need to leave Egypt. Interestingly, the first thing they do once they are free is not worship, but grumble about not having enough food and water. Within God's response to them, with manna and sweet water, God teaches them about Shabbat, the Sabbath.

The rabbinic imagination frames the Exodus with the introduction of the idea of Shabbat. One of my favorite midrashim (rabbinic stories that adds depth to the Hebrew bible) tells a story about Moses going to his adopted father, Pharaoh, before he flees from his adopted home. He makes the case to Pharaoh that the Israelite slaves would be more productive if they were given one day off per week (a Shabbat/Sabbath). Pharaoh rejects this idea, and the rest of the story unfolds. It would seem then that being properly sustained and being able to work with the dignity that a day of rest entails, is at least as important a reason for the Exodus as the Israelites going into the wilderness to worship God.

In our own day, may we each remember that good working conditions are at least equal to worship in defining our relationship with God.

### **Happy Easter to our Christian Supporters!**

The following reflection is written by one of ICWJ's board members Pastor Marianne Cotter, from Trinity United Methodist Church in Madison, connecting worker justice and Easter.

"As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be

alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; his is not here." Mark 16:5-6

On Saturday, March 10th, 2012 thousands rallied at the state Capitol in Madison for the 1<sup>st</sup> year anniversary of the **Wisconsin uprising**. One year ago, the world witnessed day after day of citizens protesting the threat to end collective bargaining rights of public sector workers. How proud I was of Wisconsin during that uprising! It was so inspiring to see teachers, farmers, firefighters, carpenters, nurses' aides, police officers, students, retirees, clergy and many others standing in support of the rights of all workers to help determine their working conditions.

Easter celebrates an **ancient uprising** of a different kind: the raising of Jesus from the grave. For followers of Jesus Christ, this is an uprising of cosmic proportions. Easter celebrates that in raising Jesus from the dead, God defeated every enemy known to humankind. Christians believe that through faith in Christ, all people can have victory over whatever threatens to destroy, degrade or demean them.

This is my Easter hope: that people of faith and goodwill everywhere will continue to believe that there are more good surprises in store for all of us. We can all have hope because we have witnessed people coming together in solidarity to effectively challenge injustice here in Wisconsin. May the "uprising" of Jesus Christ reminds all of us that nothing is impossible. As people of all faiths working together, let us continue our commitment to solidarity with workers in Wisconsin throughout this Easter season.

## **Ecumenical Choir Rehearsal**

All singing women welcome. We practice at Bethany United Methodist Church, 3910 Mineral Point Road, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the third floor choir room. Our last rehearsal is April 20, and we will sing at the May Friendship Day celebration on May 4. Make sure you get your lunch reservations in by April 30.