



Church Women United in Madison, Wisconsin

C.W.U. Newsletter December, 2011 No 5.

Human Rights Celebration Sights and Sounds of Harmony Embracing Our Oneness Saturday January 7, 2012

9:00 am Breakfast
Courtesy of CWU Board
10:00 am Celebration

Fitchburg Memorial
United Church of Christ
5705 Lacy Road, Fitchburg

Human Rights Celebration

Our Human Rights Celebration begins our new year focusing on Church Women United's dedication to human rights and a celebration of the people who work to ensure that human rights are realized. The theme this year is Sights and Sounds of Harmony: Embracing Our Oneness. We will meet on Saturday, January 7, 2012, at Fitchburg Memorial United Church of Christ, 5705 Lacy Road, in Fitchburg, complementary breakfast at 9 with the celebration to follow at 10.

During the morning, Jacqueline Rodman, President of Church Women United--Madison, and a member of the state CWU Board, will present the 2012 Human Rights Award to Christine Beatty, Director of the Madison Downtown Senior Center. The award

supports the growing evidence that in America and around the world, aging with dignity and vitality is a human right. We have invited all Dane County senior centers and programs on aging to be special guests. Child care can be arranged on site by calling 273-3738. The building is accessible with ample parking.

December Forum

We met in the community room of Meadow Grove Community, beginning with a time of greeting and fellowship over coffee and delightful goodies, courtesy of Marleen Lippert and other board members. A good turnout included several men in addition to CWU members.

Carla Fears gave us an overview of Ecumenical Housing, which began out of a concern at the low number of affordable senior housing units. In 1979, Bill Kaler, Pastor of Lake Edge United Church of Christ, saw the need, especially on the east side, for affordable housing for the 55 and better age group. In 1980, Ecumenical Housing incorporated as a non-profit dedicated to quality affordable housing, with the support of nine different faith communities and congregations. A joint venture with Ecumenical Retirement of California supported Monona Meadows for Section 8 subsidized housing. They have taken part in several other projects. They began Meadow Grove in 1989--60 apartment homes of 1 and 2 bedrooms using Section 42 Affordable Housing. Apartments have complete kitchens, a stackable washer/dryer, and other amenities include a beauty salon, exercise area, underground parking, transportation, a regular grocery run, with individual runs for bank and medicine. An important feature is that all bedrooms and bathrooms have an emergency pull cord that notifies the emergency squad, and also alerts staff to a

problem. They don't have medical staff, but they can notify family and stay with the distressed person until EMTs arrive. Taylor Ridge, their other community, appeared in two phases, in 1993 and 1995. More housing is in planning stages.

Now 15 faith communities participate in Ecumenical Housing. They take turns providing worship services and they nominate people for the governing board. They do not have financial or legal ties as a church, though they often provide good-will offerings to support the non-profit.

Community is the operable word for these projects, and they now have some children who live with their families there. Churches can make a true difference.

