



# Church Women United in Madison, Wisconsin

C.W.U. Newsletter January, 2014 No. 6

**February Forum  
Friday, February 7, 2014**

## **Stories from the Holy Land Today**

**Bonnie Van Overbeke  
Presenter**

9:00 am Gathering and Coffee  
9:30 am Welcome and announcements  
10:00 am Program

**Memorial United Church of Christ  
5705 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI 53711**

## **February Forum**

Note that this is a change from the program and location listed in your directory.

Bonnie Van Overbeke will present *Stories from the Holy Land Today*, based on the experiences of the 2013 delegation to Bethlehem from Memorial UCC and accompanied by slides of their trip. Bonnie was coordinator of this trip, as she has been of Memorial's previous trips. For several years, Memorial and also Covenant Presbyterian Church, have had a relationship with Christmas Lutheran Church of Bethlehem, and its leaders and members. Their focus has been on understanding and assisting with the health, educational, and spiritual development of the Christian community in Israel. They are also concerned with the well-being of the people there of every faith, and on political aspects of conditions in Israel.

January Human Rights Celebration

Weather did not deter a good turnout for our Human Rights Celebration at Oakwood Village University Woods. Some thirty people came out for a time of fellowship and celebration of progress in this vital area of human relationships. Our subject, *Through God Our Hands Can Protect*, fit well into CWU's 2014 theme: We are in God's hands and we are God's hands. The program included this introduction: "Church Women United members have always combined study, fellowship, service and activism. We recognize that there are many of God's children in our world who are not able to enjoy life free of oppression and fear. Through our study we become knowledgeable about the persecution and exploitation with which many live. Through our fellowship we find ways we can network together. Through our service we can provide tangible relief. Through our activism we can bring to bear influence on legislation that can provide equality to the oppressed."

The opening prayer guided our worship. "Dear God, by your hand we are wonderfully made. You have designed our bodies with ears to hear, eyes to see and hands to work. Remind us, on this day, of your great hope for us. Help our ears to hear the cries of others. Clear our eyes to see the systems of injustice in this world. Direct our hands to do whatever we can to redress injustice and share your perfect love throughout our community, nation and world. By your wonderful design, loving God, may we use our ears, eyes and hands to heal your creation. Amen."

We made note of giving the Human Rights Award to Beverly Davison at our December meeting, and introduced her again at the celebration. Her biography as submitted to national is included in this newsletter.

We thank the women of Oakwood for hosting us and for the bountiful breakfast array that greeted us this wintry day. Key women also added treats to the array.

## Ecumenical Action

Gloria Carter noted the CWU Action Alert that calls attention to the unemployment benefits cut for 1.3 million long-term unemployed. CWU sends out these alerts on a regular basis. If you would like to receive them, Gloria will forward them to you. Just send her your e-mail address. Gloria's address is [carter53597@tds.net](mailto:carter53597@tds.net) The alerts contain attachments and other information as well as the alert itself.

Susan Becker noted that January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Slave-Free Madison is sponsoring events that emphasize Fair Trade opportunities. A Film Festival is set for January 25 at Madison Central Library and February at Fitchburg Library. They will show three films each time, on sex trafficking, child trafficking, and labor trafficking. Posters are available from Slave-Free Madison. Financial Matters

Our treasurer, Marleen Lippert, noted that we are entering a new year and that contributions from churches, groups, and individuals are welcome. She reported on the success of the ARC Book Project. This Christmas donation of books, tapes, and picture went to the ARC houses, which are halfway houses for women returning to society. Each woman and each child received a new book, geared to their individual requests and preferences, funded by \$1000 from your gifts for this to CWU, and supplemented by Audrey Hinger, who spent days selecting and purchasing them. Thank you Audrey, and thanks also to University Bookstore, which gave us a 10% discount. Marleen also noted that memorial gifts have helped pay for CWU expenses. Memorial money has supported our web site as well as paid for celebrations materials, the excellent programs and supporting items.

Ann Sowaske reminded us of the excellent work of those who produce the MEC directory, the major project of our CWU unit. It began in 1972 and represents years of work, revised extensively each

year. For the area of social services available, it is a Bible to pastors and is key to jail entry for any pastor who wishes to visit inmates. No listing in MEC, no entry.

Fellowship of the Least Coin is an amazing collaboration of women from at least 4 continents who collect least coins and use them to support women's education, training, and specific projects for and run by women. People submit grants, and an International Committee of women selects recipients. The US has been a recipient on several occasions. Our National CWU is part of that committee. Biography in support of Nomination of Beverly Davison for CWU's Human Rights Award

Beverly C. Davison came to Madison, Wisconsin, in 1963 with her husband, Andrew C. Davison, as he answered a call to ministry as pastor of First Baptist Church. Beverly provided ministry in her own right, working with the Baptist women's missionary society, teaching church school classes, and taking part in Madison's larger world. It was her work with the Wisconsin Council of Churches and on issues of women's rights and peace and justice that earned her CWU's Valiant Woman award.

In preparation for her life of service, she received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Vassar College, a Master of Arts from Union Theological Seminary/Columbia University, an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Keuka College, and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Alderson-Broadus College.

Beverly served as president of American Baptist Churches USA from 1990-1991. She also served as president of the American Baptist Historical Society, president of American Baptist Women of Wisconsin, and was a member of the Board of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs (now Religious Liberty), and the Board of the American Baptist Historical Society. Beverly has also volunteered with American Baptist Women's Ministries in numerous roles, and has served as a bible study leader and teacher on multiple occasions for varied conferences. She has been a devoted volunteer to community organizations and her local church.

American Baptists recognized her life-long work and commitment, along with that of her husband, Andrew, at the American Baptist Biennial Gathering on June 21-23, 2013, in Overland Park, Kansas, where they presented Beverly and Andy the Cora and John Sparrowk President's Award on behalf of the ABC Board of General Ministries. The recipient(s) must be American Baptist, and over a period of years made an exceptional and outstanding contribution to the life of Christ's Church and who in life and service manifests richly the fruits and gifts of the Spirit.

Beverly and Andrew returned to Madison in 1998 to be near their family. They have two grown children and four grandsons. Beverly and Andy celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary during the last week of June. Through their years of marriage, they have served American Baptists Churches "together in ministry" in various ways. The Davisons have served churches in Albany and Buffalo, New York, and Providence, Rhode Island. They still reside in Madison and Beverly continues to "follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ" by serving in Women's Ministry at her local church, which is still First Baptist Church.

## **Note: February 28, 2014**

Bethany United Methodist Church, 3910 Mineral Point Rd.

8:30 am: CWU Madison Key Women Meeting; Chair, Shirley Stennis-Williams

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9:30 am: Board Meeting, President and Chair, Shirley Robbins

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