





## **February Forum**

On February 1, we will gather at Dale Heights Presbyterian, 5501 University Avenue, for a program on *Open Doors for Refugees*. This organization and this topic are vitally important today, and with immigration and border wall issues appearing daily in our newspapers and on our screens, the timing for this program is particularly relevant. Hannah Koury of *Open Doors for Refugees* will be our speaker. Open Doors for Refugees, an all-volunteer community group formed in February 2016, helps refugees make a home in the Madison area. They work with Lutheran Social Services and Jewish Social Services, the two refugee resettlement agencies in Madison. To help meet the needs of the refugees, Open Doors has organized teams to collect donations of furniture and household items, set up apartments for incoming refugees, and provide a variety of services including interpretation, transportation, cultural orientation, ESL, and employment services. Hannah is the leader of the ESL team. Periodically, Open Doors hosts large public events to raise awareness of the refugee crisis abroad and support for local refugees. Church Women United in Madison has supported the work of Open Doors by organizing donations of household items from our congregations.

## **January Celebration**

Over 30 people attended our Human Rights Day Celebration. Wellspring welcomed us with a bountiful array of treats, which led to an excellent time of sharing before we moved to the sanctuary for our Human Rights Day program. Blanche Emerick, president of their UMW, welcomed us with acknowledgements to their group for our tasty introduction to their church. And to Sue Plasterer of their board of trustees for shoveling the parking lot.

They have two fundraisers a year, their Christmas Market and their Brat Sale, which help support missions. They have a church garden to provide food assistance, they support the Men's Homeless Shelter, and Northcott House in Milwaukee.

We got a thumbnail history of Wellspring, which used to be Divine Savior Methodist. They received numerous calls of people trying to reach the hospital—Divine Savior, in Baraboo. They changed their name and moved to a new building that housed Asbury Methodist until they moved to another building.

They are welcoming interim pastors. In mid-January, dual pastors Linda and Mel Vance, will serve them until June.

**Announcements for CWU** included February's program and our next major project—the **MEC Directory**. We are working on this for 2020 so be sure to call the CWU office for any changes at your church or organizations you work with.

- Tim Cordon, social justice coordinator at First Unitarian Society, announced their First Friday evening programs. These consist of films about refugees and a meal. January's film was *Reluctant Radical*. They will also host a mayoral forum.
- Grace Episcopal has formed a *More Justice Community* committee that will look at race in Madison. They will meet on 4 Sundays from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm, with lunch included. *When the Diagnosis is Racism* is the topic for January 20. Other dates, February 17, March 17, and April 28.

### **Human Rights Award**

Learning about the work and programs of other congregations made a rich lead-in to our Human Rights Celebration. We presented the CWU national Human Rights Award to Will Green, who founded *Mentoring Positives*, and to his wife Becky. This award is dedicated to those helping women and children.

Will told us about his organization. His topic—*The Hook is the Key*. He came back to Madison to found Mentoring Positives in 2004 to honor his mother (her initials are MP). He never knew his father, and only met him when Will was 43 years old. His mother was 14 when he was born and had severed all ties.

Will grew up in Gary, Indiana, the murder capital, before going to UW-Eau Claire, a major change. He met Becky there. He became a probation officer, but he wasn't doing enough. He quit his job, founded Mentoring Positives. He and Becky provide foster care for teenage boys and provide opportunities for youth. They have two children of their own. He coaches girls' basketball at La Follette and uses basketball as a way to connect with teenagers. They have programs at the Clubhouse, which is presently a two-bedroom apartment. One bedroom is an office. The living room is a place for play, meetings, social time that gives them space to talk about things. Twenty-five kids take part. Different activities include cooking and doing newsletters for the Darbo neighborhood. They make connections, form relationships. Will and

Becky are their moms and dads. They do community meals and food carts. They offer support, companionship, boundaries.

They reward competencies. They are able to grant school credit for the work kids do, 1/4 credit for every 45 hours of work. This gives kids a chance to catch up, gives employment skills, and mentoring positives. Social entrepreneurship engages them through basketball, and when they got an acre of land, they started growing vegetables for salsa. They made and bottled the salsa and got it into Metcalf's thanks to Mary Carlson. It was so successful that they now make Off the Block Salsa and sell it at Metcalf's, Willy Street, Regent Market. Their next venture is pizza. They paid the kids \$10 an hour for their work in the kitchen. They'll soon have pizza demos in stores. Create their own revenue source. Girls are making the pizza. They've made pizza with CUNA Mutual. In the workspace, they watch how kids engage.

This past year they have received several awards that will allow them to expand their programs. A March for Justice Award of \$15,000, and in May will get a \$175,000 Cuna Mutual Award, and a grant from UW of \$10,000. Will is going out to Harvard to get some leadership work training this spring.

It takes love to do the work, and they feel blessed. They have reached 200-300 kids. They will be looking for a building where they can feel the love, and nurture these kids who will be taking over one day. The kids they serve are middle and high schoolers. They start with the high schoolers, then take down to the middle schoolers. They have a contract with Human Services, give services to 5 kids, and will be employing kids through grants this summer. It's a struggle. Some kids yearn for negativity. But they are trying to provide more positive experiences. And a third business venture is coming—Rejeweled, turning old jewelry into something new. This is happening with a fresh start at Holy Cross.

Our thanks to Will and Becky Green for making a difference in the lives of so many kids.

## **December Updates**

Our report on Faith Bauman's look at missionary work in India had one incorrect piece of information. Faith was director of Christian Education, not her husband.

Silent Auction Note - If you purchased the Utility Clippers at the December Silent Auction, Helene Georgalan would like to get to you the "Operating Instructions and Care." Please phone her and she will mail them to you. Phone 608-238-5342.

## **A MEC (Madison Ecumenical Center) Appeal**

For many years Rita Honnold has served as MEC Treasurer. She is not going to be able to continue secondary to her many responsibilities caring for her husband now.

So the MEC Board is asking you all to consider whether you could use your talent and time to serve in this capacity. Rita will be happy to mentor you regarding the responsibilities and tasks. It primarily involves writing periodic checks and doing some “end of the year” government reporting forms and the years we sell the directories, keeping track of the incoming funds from the sale of the directories.

If you are considering volunteering for this, please contact Ruth Hein on her cell at 608-347-4724 or via e-mail at [rich4parse@charter.net](mailto:rich4parse@charter.net).

## **Plymouth Church to Host Conversations with Immigrants and Dreamers**

Immigration and refugee policy was at the forefront of the presidential campaign in 2016, and continued to make headlines throughout 2017. Heart-breaking stories and images of immigrants and dreamers filled the news and challenged us almost daily. Who are the immigrant and refugee and “dreamer” among us? Come to hear stories, concerns, and hopes of our immigrant, refugee, and dreamer neighbors at “Promised Land, A Conversation” on Sunday afternoon on February 25th at Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, 2401 Atwood Avenue. Our time together begins at noon with a free, light lunch, and then we will hear from people in our community most directly impacted by the uncertainty of changing immigration policy. Conversation and brainstorming about what we as a community can do next will follow, with things wrapping up by 3:00 p.m. All are invited to participate. Childcare is available. RSVPs (to [lschenk@pcucc.org](mailto:lschenk@pcucc.org)) not required but helpful for planning.

**CWU Board Meeting - Next board meeting is Friday morning, 9:30 am, January 25, 2019**, at Bethany UMC, 3910 Mineral Point Road. Coffee and fellowship at 9 am.

## **Ecumenical Choir Rehearsal**

We meet at Bethany UMC, 3910 Mineral Point Road, Madison 53705 from 12 noon to 1:30 pm on the following Fridays. January 11, 25; February 8, 22; March 8, 22; April 12, 26, 2019. Come join us. — Jenny Armstrong, director

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS & DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS FORM  
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Please Note: These contributions will be used for the general operating expenses of CWU of Madison, as well as for the Celebration materials, choir music, annual donations to selected community social services, and annual contribution to Church Women United of Wisconsin. GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES include, in part, the office rent, insurance, and the cost of producing and mailing the CWU newsletter, and miscellaneous supplies need throughout the year.

Please send in contributions by November 30 of each year. Our financial year ends on December 31 of each year.

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Please make your check(s) payable to: Church Women of Madison and send to:

Marleen S. Lippert, Treasurer, CWU of Madison  
6329 Scandia Lane  
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Thank you for your financial assistance in carrying out the various projects of CWU. Your contributions are sincerely appreciated.

**CHURCH WOMEN UNITED OF MADISON WI INC  
725 GILMORE STREET  
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53711  
MEC 608-663-8450**

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