



Church Women United in Madison, Wisconsin

www.churchwomenunited-madison.net

C.W.U. Newsletter May, 2015 No. 9

May Planning Meeting Friday, May 22, 2015 Preparing for Next Year

**9:30 am Board Meeting
10:15 am Planning Meeting**

**Key Women will join board Members to share ideas
for programs and service projects**

**All those who have ideas and suggestions for next
year also welcome to attend**

**You may bring a bag lunch to be ready in case our
discussion runs past noon**

**Bethany United Methodist Church
3910 Mineral Point Road
Madison 53705**

Annual Planning Meeting

On May 22, 2015, CWU-Madison will hold its annual meeting to share ideas for programs and possible service projects for our 2015-2016 program year. The board will meet at 9:30 am, and key women will join them at 10:15. If anyone has ideas they'd like to see considered, please tell your key woman about them. You can also attend yourself and share them directly at the meeting. This can be a very creative discussion, as ideas grow and change as more people add their knowledge and experiences to topics on the table.

Depending on how creative the discussion, the meeting may run past noon, and so you are welcome to bring a bag lunch. There will be coffee and tea for the entire meeting.

May Friendship Day Celebration

Wellspring United Methodist Church welcomed us to our celebration of Journey of the Caregiver. Blanche Emerick of United Methodist Women gave us a

thumbnail sketch of the church's history. She invited us to visit their food pantry garden and their Labyrinth, a community outreach program. In 2010, they donated over 300 pounds of fresh produce. They emphasize relationships, with intimate generation commingling. Children are always welcome, and how to serve the neighborhood is a top priority. Blanche led us in prayer for the community.

Shirley Robbins then called the annual meeting to order. Minutes of the 2014 annual meeting, the annual treasurer's reports (CWU & MEC), the annual reports all approved or accepted. Ann Sowaske asked for help checking the information for our MEC Directory of Religious and Human Resources. They have already checked all churches. Now they are contacting 500 agencies to update their information. It's easier this year, because the United Way has four paid staff to keep up with agencies, and we can check their listing, plus the websites of the individual agencies. It's all done by telephone. Gloria Carter gave a plug for being a caller. It's fun, and interesting to learn about the agencies.

Shirley Alexander presented the nominations for officers. We elected and installed President Kathleen Dooley; Secretary Barbara Eggleston; Treasurer Marleen Lippert; Treasurer for Madison Ecumenical Center Rita Honnold; Enabling Services Chair Shirley Robbins; Nominations Chair Shirley Alexander. Open offices: Vice President/Program Coordinator, Ecumenical Action Chair, Ecumenical Celebrations Chair, Ecumenical Development Chair, and By-Laws Chair. Immediate Past-President is Shirley Robbins. Shirley Alexander thanked those who helped with the nominations, especially Susan Becker, who did much of the work while Shirley was ill.

Shirley Robbins reported the death of Isabel Beck, a fountain of strength of Church Women United. She read the following from Isabel's obituary. "Isabel

was involved in volunteer work throughout her years in Madison. She was an active member of Church Women United serving as President of the Madison chapter and later of the State of Wisconsin. She was given The Valiant Woman Award from Church Women United in 1994 for her eight years of service as the editor of the State Newsletter. . . . Isabel helped establish the Williamson Street free health clinic.” This was only a part of her life of service. Isabel died April 6, 2015.

Gloria Carter reported on the Justice Advocacy Day of People of Faith United for Justice , which she attended on Wednesday. A thousand people from all over the state attended. Hannah Rosenthal was one speaker, Everett Mitchell the other. The issues of concern to present to the legislature were protecting the safety net, criminal justice reform, driver’s licenses for illegal immigrants, and transit funding. Protecting the safety net concerned issues of unnecessary barriers to public assistance, preserving long term care system and opposing changes to Badger care, and accepting federal funding. Criminal justice reform involves three different areas: keep people out of prison, reform prisons, and help integrate those released back into society. Treatment alternatives and diversions are better ways of dealing with lawbreakers. It costs \$50,000 a year to keep a person in prison. Prison reform featured concerns about solitary confinement. Reintegrating looked at crimeless revocations of early release persons. People eligible for reform are still sitting in prison. Tough on Drugs puts people in jail for minor offenses. Ban the box is an idea to get that box removed from employment records except for serious offenses so that people returning to society after serving their time can find employment. And instead of cutting the Transitional Job Program, keep it. Under its program, employers get money to hire someone for 6 months. This gives released persons a better chance of getting a job and finding housing. Supporting driver cards for immigrant workers makes sense. They gain knowledge of the rules of the road and have to get insurance, making the road safer for all of us. Legislators want to take transit money out of the transit fund and put it into the general fund. Not a good idea. There is hardly any transportation in rural areas and even in Madison it can be difficult to get transportation if you are in a difficult situation.

Journey of the Caregiver

Caregiving is a task entrusted to us by God. As women, we care for others throughout our lives: from children and youth, to our spouses and significant others, to our parents and grandparents. The committee, knowing the tasks of caregivers and their inability sometimes to care for themselves, recognizes a need of love and respite for our caregiving sisters (and brothers). This May Friendship Day Celebration is for all people who struggle with their calling of caring for the needs of others. Caregiving can be a lonely place of isolation and frustration. Jesus calls all of us to care for the least of these. How can we provide support for our sisters in Christ who give o their own lives in order to care for the needs of others? Like Simon of Cyrene who helped Jesus carry the cross to his crucifixion, how can we help to lighten the burden of caregivers and join them on their journey?

The choir opened with His Eye Is On The Sparrow, and the opening prayer crystalized our purpose. “Heavenly God, give strength to those who care for others. We know they grow weary. Show them patience in their loving care for others. Grant our sisters and brothers peace as they struggle with challenging moments each day and night. Let the caregivers experience joy in the little details of life, love when anger and frustration threaten to control their thoughts, and hope when despair and darkness overflow with hopelessness. Lord, help those who care for others feel the kindness and warmth of your love surrounding them through the body of Christ that is Church Women United. In the name of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit we pray, Amen.”

It was a meaningful service that touched the hearts of its participants. Other choir numbers included longtime CWU member Margaret Steadman’s A Friendly World, Blessed Are They, and Irish Blessing.

Scripture readings included Romans 12:6-8, Psalm 54:10-12, and 1 Thessalonians 5:9-18. And during the service we honored another valuable CWU member, presenting Rita Honnold the Valiant Woman Award of Church Women United. The biography sent to National CWU appears after this article.

Our guest speaker, Cherie Milton, is an Agrace Family Therapist who is with the family both before and

after the death of a loved one. She was moved by the morning's service. "When women get together for good cause, there is a dynamic power."

She began her presentation by reading the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10. Caregiving comes as a surprise, and in that story, the caregiving was a surprise to the innkeeper, and undoubtedly to the innkeeper's wife. An event, a fall, a diagnosis. It is unexpected, but people step in. It is powerful that we just step up, and it is both a blessing and a curse. Caregiving is in addition to regular stuff. It takes time to realize you are even a caregiver. Over 34 million people are caregivers, 21% of households are impacted, sick days, days off are increasing, 83% are family members, but neighbors and friends are involved also. Wives are 47 and older. Daughters, when 46 or older.

Out of pocket costs for a caregiver older than 50 can reach \$6,000 a year. Many give up their jobs or cut their time. Caregivers also don't know how long this is going to last. The top four challenges are time management--trying to fit in work, family responsibilities, and own activities; Competing demands, making accommodations for the rest of one's life and the ripple effects; Financial considerations, stress, feeling guilty for worrying; Physical and mental stress. Caregivers care for everyone else first, which is hard on bodies. Caregivers have a higher incidence of illness, sickness.

We can't do it alone. We must ask for help. Being the body of Christ, we must be able to reach out for others. Get listings of groups that offer help. Ask the spirit for strength. Cherie brought handouts that included 10 Tips for Family Caregivers, a bookmark from the National Family Caregivers Association. 50 Things Every Caregiver Should Know, tips to make your job easier, Journeyworks Publishing, P.O. Box 8466, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, 800-775-1998, www.journeyworks.com and a listing from Agrace of Dane County Focal Points for Resources and information. She also brought copies of her book, Before You Go, stories for a better life from those facing death. The circumstances may be tragic, but the strength of the human spirit endures, nonetheless. Cherie shared stories from her work and her own family that were stirring and thought provoking. We must be aware of what caregivers are going through and how we can help our friends, neighbors and family who have this daunting role.

A great presentation for our celebration of Journey of the Caregiver. And she enjoys discussing the role of caregivers with other groups. Thank you, Cherie, for your inspiring message.

Valiant Woman Award Biography of Rita Honnold

Rita Honnold was born in Madison WI in May, 1931. Her mother and father met when both were teachers in northern Wisconsin, but her father later became an accountant for the State Highway Commission in Madison. Rita grew up on the eastside with two older brothers and a younger sister. Rita took piano lessons from 3rd grade to 9th grade and sang in the triple trio at East High School for six years. She went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison on a four-year Music Clinic scholarship. Rita became church organist at Plymouth Congregational Church in her senior year of high school and continued that job through her years at the University. Rita studied in the Integrated Liberal Studies program her first two years at the UW and then majored in American Institutions with a minor in music. She was active in the Student YWCA and was co-chair of a Midwest summer regional conference of 1,100 students from Y and Student Christian organizations held at College Camp on Lake Geneva.

She graduated from the UW Madison and was married to Jim Honnold in 1953. Jim was studying social work in graduate school and active in the Student YMCA, where he and Rita met in joint activities of the Y's. In the 10 years after they were married, they live in Iowa City, Sparta, Elkhorn, and Racine, and had a child born in each town--Barb, Doug and Patty. They returned to Madison in 1964 when Jim became an area administrator for the State Welfare Dept. and Rita resumed her organist job at Plymouth UCC, a job she held for almost 35 more years. Both Rita and Jim served on many of Plymouth's Boards and committees. Rita took her turn as chair of the Board of Trustees and Social Concerns Committee and served a term as moderator of the church. She has been the long-term treasurer of the Plymouth Women's Fellowship since 1992! Rita also volunteered at a nearby school, tutoring reading, and accompanying choral programs.

Rita joined Church Women United in Madison in 1973. This was the time when our local CWU became sponsors of the VISTA program in Madison.

In order to do that, Madison CWU had to become incorporated! We started with two projects, Freedom House and Children's Home, and ended sponsorship having helped some 20 different groups. Rita was assistant treasurer of CWU and had to type VISTA reports in triplicate for the federal government! VISTAS were phased out of Madison in the late 1970's and then the projects were on the own, but many still continue today. In 1976 the Madison Area Council of Churches dissolved and CWU obtained their treasury of \$5000 to start their Madison Ecumenical Center. Rita became treasurer of MEC and has had the job ever since. We held Dialogues with clergy and people from the various human service organizations, and eventually started to publish a Madison Area Religious and Human Services Directory each year, seeking donations for typing and printing the directories. MEC had a part-time coordinator for many years who was paid minimal wages but that required Rita to make reports and social security payments to the government. Both Church Women United and the Madison Ecumenical Center share an office and expenses such as rent, telephone and insurance.

In the 1980's SERRV items were sold from the MEC office and in 1992 CWU opened a non-profit fair trade shop in a train car permanently located on tracks near the old depot on W. Washington Ave. Rita was treasurer of the Global Express too for about eight years and had the enviable job of figuring out the amount of daily sales as recorded by volunteers on the cash register that had to agree with bank statements since we paid 10% of sales for our rent of the train car, a fortunate arrangement for CWU but difficult to figure out. Rita sent in a 990EZ report to the federal government each year (which was not EZ because she had to combine the annual financial statements of CWU, MEC, and the Global Express in the report since CWU now had higher gross receipts because of the Global Express). The Global Express was closed after 15 years when our agreeable rent arrangement ended and other fair trade shops opened in Madison. Rita has been the main go-between Madison CWU and the federal and state governments since she joined CWU.

In 1985 a former CWU president, Alice Schacht, started the CWU Ecumenical Choir, the only one in Wisconsin. Rita has been the accompanist for the

choir and all the CWU Celebration Days since then. She feels she has not really played a major leadership role in CWU but believes she has been a helpful facilitator behind the scenes and has enjoyed what she does, though, in her 80's, she wonders how much longer she can continue driving to MEC meetings, choir practices, and CWU programs, mostly on the other side of Madison. Now she is also a caregiver for her husband who has become somewhat permanently disabled by a fall.

Wellspring United Methodist Church--A brief history

Founded in 1964 as the Evangelical United Brethren West Side Mission Church, they broke ground for their church building on Hammersley Road in the winter of 1966. With a new building, they began a daycare program in 1968 which they expanded to include a preschool and after-school program, providing an intentional outreach ministry to the community. In 1968, after the merger of the Evangelical Brethren and Methodist denominations, the church became known as Divine Savior United Methodist Church. After an arson fire in 1969, Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ offered them a temporary location while they rebuilt. Then, needing a larger building, they relocated to South Hill Drive in 1992. Facing 2008-09 recession challenges, they closed their longest term ministry, A Place to Grow. The last student of the preschool graduate on May 20, 2010.

In 2009, the church proclaimed a new direction, understanding it is called to be the church "in the neighborhood, the Madison community and the world." On January 1, 2013, they became Wellspring United Methodist Church, a community of faith that values relationships and welcomes diversity. Worship celebrations are intimate, thought provoking and offer an atmosphere in which generations mingle comfortably. Children are always welcome at Wellspring. An open environment for exploring faith is encouraged, with a variety of learning opportunities available for all ages. Interaction with the neighborhood and beyond is important to the Wellspring community. The creation of the Community Labyrinth on Rosa Road and the food pantry garden both reflect the belief that actions speak louder than words and witness is a work of the hands.