

Dialogue

A reflective journal about faith and action
from Madison-area Urban Ministry

Spring 2011

Has the sleeping giant awakened?

Sarah Palin came to town on April 16th. Many of my friends and colleagues asked if I would be attending the counter-rally that day. I would have liked to, but I had another commitment. So as I sat on the school bus with the children, grandmas and Family Connections volunteers, headed up to Taycheedah Correctional Institution, I knew that -- as important as the demonstrations and rallies are -- so too was the need these kids had to see their moms.

Their moms were in prison before the governor's budget was introduced. The grandmas on that bus, raising their grandchildren, were struggling long before the

Governor's budget was introduced. Long before the Governor's budget was introduced there were thousands of school children in Dane County who are homeless, families being turned away from shelters that were at capacity, increasing demand for help at food pantries and other human service agencies. Long before the Governor's budget, state and local governments had slowly been weakening the social safety net through stagnant funding or funding cuts to the private sector human services system. Long before the Governor's budget we were leading the nation in racial disparities in incarceration rates. Long before the Governor's budget was introduced we had decided that it was okay to balance budgets on the backs of the middle

class and the poor, offering tax breaks, cuts and loopholes to corporations and the most wealthy in our country. Before Governor Walker's budget there were no mass demonstrations, no calls for solidarity, no quotes from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoken from the Capitol steps about an injustice to one is an injustice to all.

I have heard many people refer to Governor Walker's actions as having "awakened a sleeping giant." I am not sure that the giant is yet fully awake. The early focus of the protests was pri-

marily on labor. Too often the chants focused solely on labor, collective bargaining and pensions (all important and valuable things that should be protected). Yes, union busting is disgusting, but so too are the proposals that will decimate the most vulnerable in our community. Proposing to cut healthcare to those living in poverty, to senior citizens, to people with disabilities, and to veterans who will be even more negatively affected by the Governor's budget proposals and policies is not only disgusting -- it is contradictory to our call as people of faith to work for the common good.

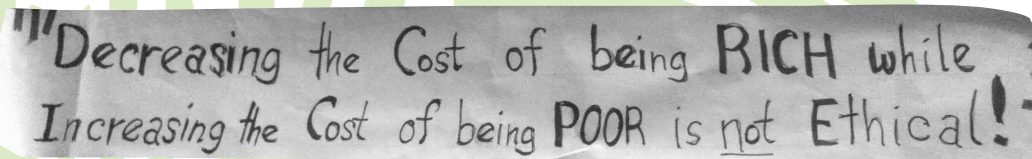
My own faith tradition might view the metaphoric "sleeping giant" as described in I Corinthians 12 "for the body does not consist of one member

but of many...as it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable and those parts of the body which we think less honorable we invest with the greater honor, and our unrepresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so adjusted the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior part, that other may be no

discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If

one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."

On Wednesday February 16th my daughter and I were at the rally at the Capital. My daughter held a sign she made that read "save our schools." A woman standing next to us had a sign supporting teachers; I asked her if she was a member of MTI. She said "yes" and asked if I was too. I told her no, I worked in the private non-profit sector. She said "I am embarrassed to admit that this sort of thing has been happening to the private sector for years and I didn't do anything but here I am today because it affects me." This insight must be part of the awakening. I am not sure that the giant



"Decreasing the Cost of being RICH while
Increasing the Cost of being POOR is not Ethical!"

Continued on next page

Giant from page 1

fully understands that this movement must be broad based and that labor must make a commitment to stand with the most vulnerable and the private sector.

Badgercare, SeniorCare, and Medicaid are crucial to the health and well being of those living in poverty, those workers who work for minimum wage with no benefits, who have not had the protection of unions. Yet how often do we, who now proclaim that unions must be saved, shop at stores that pay little in terms of wages, which offer benefits too expensive for their employees to afford. How often have we supported businesses and corporations that contribute millions to corporate candidates?

Have we finally found our collective consciousness? Have we finally realized that, to paraphrase Pastor Martin Neimoller, if we do not begin to stand together there will be no one left to stand for us?

We at MUM support worker rights and we abhor the efforts to undermine

unions. But it seems to us that this movement, this awakened giant, will only truly be successful when we see tens of thousands of people demonstrate in opposition to cuts to health-care for the poor. This movement will only truly be successful when tens of thousands of people clamor in the streets for an end to the obscene racial disparities in incarceration rates and the still unacceptable racial achievement gaps in our public schools. This movement will be truly successful when tens of thousands of people of faith flood their legislators offices demanding that those in power listen to the voices of the most vulnerable in our community. This giant will not be truly awakened until proposed cuts to the social service safety net are met with massive protests and a cry for economic justice.

In faith,

Linda Ketcham

Greater Isthmus Group [G.I.G.]

Thursday, May 19, 8:30-10 a.m.
Immanuel Lutheran Church
1021 Spaight Street

GIG is a round table work group that meets monthly to address critical issues around housing stability for all persons. Representatives from the various faith communities and other groups come together to work on common concerns that impact affordable housing for all. Send your representative to GIG meetings on the 3rd Thursday of every month: May 19, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 15, October 20 and November 17.

For more information contact Barbara McKinney, Assoc. Director, Re-Entry Supervisor, at 256-0906 or barbara@emum.org.



MUM is proud to be a member of the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice

Dialogue is a reflective journal of faith and action printed by Madison-area Urban Ministry staff. The positions expressed here are the opinions of the authors and not necessarily the board of directors or funding sources of MUM. All individual members and all faith communities in Dane County receive a copy. Individual membership



in MUM is encouraged. Please mail contributions to our address below.



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The Phoenix Initiative: Breaking the Cycle

The Phoenix is a mythical bird that embodies the ability of one to rise from the ash of a burning flame to show itself as beautiful and born anew.

The men and women returning from prisons in the State of Wisconsin are seeking an opportunity to rise above the conditions that lead to their incarceration.

The Phoenix Initiative is a new program of MUM designed to provide peer support and assistance for men and women returning from prison. Access to employment and links to mental health, housing and drug treatment services in Dane county are the focal points of MUM's re-entry programs. It is the hope of this initiative that each step that is taken with the returnee along this path minimizes the stress of not knowing where to begin to find a job, housing, or support.

For more information contact the re-entry staff at the MUM office.

Vigils for a “Just and Equitable Budget”

Sponsored by MUM and ICWJ

Karl Barth said,

*“To clasp hands in prayer
is the beginning of an uprising
against the disorder of the
world.”*

Since the Wisconsin Assembly passed the biennial budget, MUM and ICWJ (Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice) have facilitated vigils at the state capitol with various faith communities being responsible for different nights of the week. Mondays have been the responsibility of the Jewish community, Tuesdays – Unitarians, Wednesdays – Episcopalian, Thursdays – Lutheran, Fridays – Presbyterian, Saturdays – interfaith gathering hosted by MUM, Sundays – Methodist faith community. The daily presence of the faith communities is a reminder to all that the Scriptures of the World’s great religions remind us to care for those who are not able to care for themselves. The budget, as proposed and passed by the Assembly, does not do this.

To quote from a letter sent from some of our clergy, “A budget must protect the most vulnerable in our midst – children, immigrants, the elderly, the disabled – and our faith traditions mandate that we act to safeguard their well being and call our state to put their interests before the desires of the wealthy, the powerful, and the politically well-connected.

We believe that every person has sacred worth and that as leaders of faith we are charged to hold, honor and act on that belief, even if it means speaking truth to power and challenging our elected officials to do what is right.”

By the time this newsletter is printed, the vigils may have reached a natural end. For Christian faith communities who participated as a part of a Lenten commitment, Lent is over and



MUM’s director, Linda Ketcham holds “Protect BadgerCare...” sign as she joins the interfaith vigil with ICWJ.



we live in Resurrection times. For all of us, the responsibility to speak for those who cannot remains. Thanks for being with us on the journey. We will keep you updated on the various ways we can remind the powers that be of our commitment to the poor.

MUM staffers Rev. Lori Powell and Lynn Miller are joined by son Tony during MUM’s vigil for a just budget.

MUM thanks these “Beat the Winter Blues and All that Jazz” event sponsors

Dr. John Leonard
Rev. Ken Pennings
Eliot Butler
Alexandra Wright
County Board Supervisor Carousel Bayrd
Frank Remington Center, University of Wisconsin Law School
Woodman’s Food Markets
Rose Meinholz and Howard Hochman
Sheila and Tom Spear
Jan Wheaton
Mary Fulton and Steve Koslov

Erica and Michael Sweitzer-Beckman
Julie Hetzel
Roberta Felker
Michael and Kathleen O’Shea
Linda Newman
Jan Froelich
Bob Salov
Judith Adrian
Linda Ketcham and Kim Fisher
Fred and Sherry Reames
Susan and Kevin Corrado
Paul and Atsuko Kusuda
Rev. Mary Pharmer

AJ Schumacher
Rick Flowers and R Place on Park Club TNT
Oakhill Correctional Institute
SERRV
Romilia Schlueter
Celia Jackson
Rev. Gregory Armstrong
Azure Fudge hart
Sister Esther Heffernam
Betsy Knight
Rev. Chris Long
Angela and Jacob Schuldies

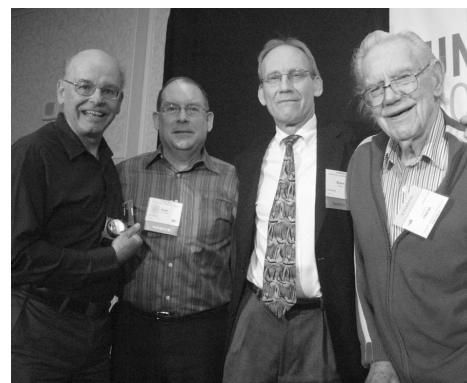
Thank you SO very much!

Circle of Support receives Community Volunteer Award

Thursday April 14th was a special day for the Circles of Support program. A Circle of Support from Covenant Presbyterian Church was recognized for the time and energy they have given to the program. These five men – Alan Cormack, John Norman, Steve Coons, Donald Hausch, and Walter Lehmann – have served as Circle Members for about 6 years. They received a Community Volunteer Award from the United Way of Dane County.

Over the years, they have worked with a number of men with very different personalities and struggles. They all have an amazing heart that has been tested with clients that have relapsed, abused their trust, and a client who passed away. Yet they continue to volunteer and they are an inspiration to the Circles of Support program.

This also has become a spiritual journey for these men and strengthened the bond among them. Their focus is on helping the Core Circle Member strengthen ties in the community, helping the Core Circle Member see the good in themselves, and becoming a positive figure in the community.



All the Community Volunteers who received special recognition. (Photo courtesy of the United Way of Dane County.)

Members of MUM’s Circle of Support from Covenant Presbyterian Church (Left to Right): John Norman, Alan Cormack, Steve Coons, Walter Lehmann. (Donald Hausch, also a member of this Circle was not present for this photo. Rev. Stephen Minnema, former pastor at Covenant Presbyterian, was an early supporter of this Circle.)



John Givens talks at a recent re-entry service fair.

The Journey Home holds monthly re-entry service fairs

The Journey Home is a program to provide on-going support for re-entry into the community after prison. Service Fairs are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month to share information about community services.

Each fair includes:

- Welcome
- Program (Topic varies each month)
- Exhibitor information tables
- Refreshments

Fairs are held from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the Atrium at the Villager on Park.

Fairs are open to all community members and families. People are invited to come out and learn about

housing, employment, support, treatment/health, transportation, education and other community resources.

Upcoming Service Fairs

- May 24
- June 28
- July 26
- August 23
- September 27
- October 25
- November 22
- December 27

For details or to register as an exhibitor contact John Givens at 256-0906 or john@emum.org.

People of Faith United for Justice

On March 15th, over 400 people gathered at Bethel Lutheran Church, Madison for "People of Faith United for Justice." This advocacy day was sponsored by the Wisconsin Council of Churches, Wisdom, Madison-area Urban Ministry and the Lutheran Office of Public Policy. This was a day of study, worship, plenary speakers and meeting with state legislators.

Bishop Bruce Burnside of the South Central Synod ELCA gave a stirring opening session reminding us that advocacy is a ministry. He said, "People of faith bring a particular and peculiar vocabulary" to state budgets and priorities.

More information on this eventful and passionate day can be found at the Wisconsin Council of Churches website. MUM serves on the Stewardship of Public Life Committee of the Wisconsin Council of Churches.



MUM
MADISON-AREA
URBAN MINISTRY

*A prophetic voice
for justice
since 1973*

Join us for MUM's Annual Meeting: *The Importance of the Prison Narrative*

Tuesday June 21st, 5:30p.m.
The United Way Building
2059 Atwood Ave.

We will begin with a catered meal at 5:30. A brief Annual Meeting will begin about 5:45. This will include some of Chuck Pfeifer's reflections on the life of Alice Schacht, the "mother" of MUM who died in February.

The presenters for the evening are Richard Ralston of UW Madison and Judith Adrian of Edgewood College. The presentation will include selected pieces from the book, *In the Place of Justice* by Wilbert Rideau. Those in attendance will be invited to reflect on the role of the prison narrative as we work towards a better understanding restorative justice.

There is a suggested \$20 donation for the evening.

To register, contact lori@emum.org or call (608)256-0906.

Concerned clergy meet with governor's staff

Dear Colleague,

On March 29th, thirty Wisconsin clergy gathered in the capitol to meet with three members of the governor's staff. We came from traditions across the spectrum — African Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, ELCA Lutheran, Moravian, Orthodox Christian, Reform Judaism, Roman Catholic, Unitarian Universalist, United Church of Christ, Unity, and free church. Representatives of ethnic church ministries were a part of our group, as were leaders from Dane County United, Holy Wisdom Monastery, Madison-area Urban Ministry, Wisconsin Council of Churches, the Wisconsin Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and WISDOM.

We gathered because we believe a budget is a statement of values, and we believe that the biennial budget under consideration goes against the moral and ethical values that, as people of faith, we hold sacred.

We gathered because we believe a budget must protect the most vulnerable in our midst — children, immigrants, the elderly, the disabled — and that our faith traditions mandate that we act to safeguard their well-being and call our state to put their interests before the desires of the wealthy, the powerful, and the politically well-connected.

We gathered because we believe a budget must uphold the common good through maintenance and growth of those entities that benefit all of Wisconsin's citizens — schools and universities, public employees, social services, safe roads, efficient transit systems, and natural resources.

We gathered because we believe a budget must grow from shared sacrifice and that sacrifice must come from every sector, especially from those who are already wealthy and powerful.

We gathered because we believe a budget must be developed through thoughtful and fair-minded decision-making processes and that our leaders charged with making tough financial decisions can seek reasonable options and find the "tools" they need by closing tax loopholes, imposing modest sales and income tax increases, and requiring corporations to pay equitable taxes as well as benefit from their business in our state and the labor of our work force.

We gathered because we believe that every person has sacred worth and that as leaders of faith, we are charged to hold, honor, and act on that belief, even if it means speaking truth to power and challenging our elected officials to do what is right.

And now we reach out to you,

our sisters and brothers in faith, to invite you to join us in the work of attending to the sacred obligations laid out for us in our scriptures...

To protect and provide for those who are hungry, far from home, without shelter, and struggling with illness or incarceration (Matthew 25)

To uphold justice for the worker, the poor, the immigrant, and those without an advocate and make special provisions to ensure they receive what they need and have earned (Deuteronomy 24) and...

To sow with our words and our actions that which meets the needs of humanity and all of creation (Sahih al-Bukhari).

We invite you to join us by...

1. Writing letters to the Joint Finance Committee, the governor, your elected officials, and state and local newspapers, that hold up the points provided in this letter (see attached) that are most meaningful to you. We encourage you to include personal stories from your own life and the lives of those you serve and love who will be injured by the budget as it stands. If you are passionate about topics we haven't covered, please pursue those and share them with us.
2. Contacting your friends and colleagues who might join you or who could attend and testify at the hearings if you live far from the designated locations or are otherwise unable to attend.

Want to learn more? Check out these resources...

Wisconsin Council of Churches

www.wichurches.org/advocacy/faith-community-response-to-the-wisconsin-budget-crisis/

Wisconsin Council for Children and Families

www.wccf.org; especially their

Comparative Analysis of 2011-13 Biennial Budget Bill

www.wisconsinbudgetproject.org/budget_comparative_analysis_2011-13.pdf

Save Badgercare Coalition

www.savebadgercare.org

Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice

www.workerjustice.org

Coalition to Protect Women's Health in Wisconsin

www.wiawh.org/hprccenter/hprcadvocacynpolicy/cpwh.aspx

Wisconsin Education Association Council

http://www.weac.org/Issues_Advocacy/Legislative_Resources/Support_Our_Union/state_budget_resource_page/State_Budget_Resources.aspx

Thank you for reading, considering, and acting on what we have shared here. Please contact us with any questions you may have and to let us know about any action you take or response you get from newspapers, elected officials, or the Joint Finance Committee. Thank you for what you are already doing for the people of Wisconsin.

With hope,

Rev. Curt Anderson	Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice canderson@firstcongmadison.org
Rev. Winton Boyd	Orchard Ridge UCC winton@orucc.org
Rev. Tisha Brown	Madison Christian Community mcctisha@tds.net
Linda Ketcham, Exec. Dir.	Madison-area Urban Ministry, linda@emum.org
Rev. Leah Lonsbury	Alliance of Baptists pastorleah@memorialucc.org
Rabbi Bonnie Margulis	Wisconsin Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice bmargulis@tds.net

FROM GEORGIA PRISON STRIKE TO WISCONSIN JOBS

Wednesday, May 18,
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Neighborhood House
29 S. Mills Street
Madison

*Why should Madison,
Dane County and Wisconsin
care about the historic
Georgia Prison Strike?*

In December 2010 prisoners in 10 Georgia prisons simultaneously went on strike, making it the largest prisoner strike in U.S. history. Their demands included wages for their work and improved conditions of confinement. Investigations by a fact-finding coalition raised serious questions. Operation Welcome Home, with co-sponsorship from MUM, invite the public to a forum with panel discussion about this strike and its relevance to Wisconsin.

A light dinner will be served.

Donations to help with meal costs and future programs will be gratefully accepted.

For more information, contact:
ljhaukeness@uwalumni.com or
call the MUM office at 256-0906.

Governor's proposed tax cuts hit poor and seniors hard

Candidate Scott Walker consistently promised not to raise taxes. Governor Scott Walker's budget includes reducing tax credits that benefit low-income families and seniors while expanding tax cuts and credits to corporations: in short, robbing a very poor Peter to pay a very wealthy Paul. The Governor's budget proposal reduces the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Homestead Tax Credit. These two programs benefit seniors and people on the lower end of the economic continuum. The effect is a tax increase on the most vulnerable in our community.

According to a recent article in *The Capital Times*, the Governor is proposing to cut \$500 million in funding from Medicaid programs in Wisconsin. These cuts will occur over the next two years and include:

The BadgerCare Plus Plan

The BadgerCare Plus Plan currently has 736,432 children, pregnant women, parents and caretakers enrolled in the program. Created by Republican Gov. Tommy Thompson in 1999, BadgerCare provides health care for low-income working families who are unable to find or afford private insurance. The program was expanded from serving families under 133 percent of the poverty line (\$29,726 for a family of four) to families with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty line (or \$44,700 for a family of four). The Governor's administration is asking for a waiver from the federal government allowing for more frequent reviews of member income levels and eligibility. The Governor also wants to impose higher premiums, verify residency and increase co-pays to participants. The Governor also is seeking permission to require members who are eligible for private plans to switch to those plans (apparently regardless of the cost to them). If the Walker administration does not receive permission from the Feds for these changes they plan to drop up to 63,000 parents and caretakers in families earn-

ing above 133 percent of the poverty line effective July 1, 2012. They may also cut optional benefits including dental care, prescription drugs and physical and occupational therapy. Health Services Secretary Dennis Smith has insisted, however, that the department will not eliminate these benefits.

The BadgerCare Plus Core Plan

BadgerCare Plus Core Plan has 40,000 childless adults enrolled and 80,000 are on a waiting list. The Program was created in 2009 by former Gov. Jim Doyle. When it was rolled out the demand was so overwhelming that enrollment was stopped after three months. Eligible adults are those under age 65 without dependent children and with incomes under 200 percent of the federal poverty line (approx. \$21,700). The Governor is considering reducing eligibility to 133 percent of poverty, about \$14,000, eliminating coverage for an estimated 7,000 current enrollees.

The BadgerCare Plus Basic Program

The BadgerCare Plus Basic Program has 5,700 childless adults enrolled in the program. The Plan started in 2010 with the purpose of providing basic medical services to people on the Core plan waiting list. The program was supposed to be self-funded through enrollee paid premiums (\$130 month) and co-payments charged to members. According to the Administration, the program is in the red at least \$2 million. Enrollment for this program was recently frozen and premiums increased by \$70 per month. The increase is likely to result in reduced participation by healthier enrollees, which could exacerbate the challenge of making the program self-sufficient.

Family Care Program has approximately 40,000 enrollees in this and in

other related long-term programs. There are more than 9,000 individuals on the waiting list. The program was started as a pilot in 2000 under Tommy Thompson. The goal is to provide seniors and people with disabilities crucial community-based support services allowing them to live at home rather than in institutions where their care would be much more expensive.

The Doyle administration expanded the program statewide in 2007. Eligible individuals include frail older adults with long-term health problems and children and adults with physical and developmental disabilities. Fifty-five counties in WI offer the program. The Administration proposes capping enrollment beginning in June. New participants will be accepted as current participants drop out. Counties not currently participating in the program will not be able to enter into it. The Legislative Audit Bureau is conducting an audit. If the proposed changes are implemented it is expected that more seniors and people with disabilities will end up in nursing homes at a greater cost.

SeniorCare

SeniorCare has 91,000 seniors currently enrolled. SeniorCare offers a low-cost prescription drug program, subsidized in part by rebates from drug companies. The Program was supported by Tommy Thompson and his successor, Republican Gov. Scott McCallum. McCallum signed the bill into law in 2001. Eligible seniors are age 65 or older. Under the plan a single person with an annual income of \$17,424 or less pays a \$5 co-pay for generic and \$15 for branded medicine. Seniors pay \$30 a year for enrollment and individuals with higher incomes

How
can it be right
to rob the very poor
“Peters” in our state
to pay the very
wealthy “Pauls”?

Continued on next page

contribute more. The Governor's budget would require members to enroll in Medicare Part D to save the state \$15 million in the next budget cycle. But critics of his proposal fear that the change will cost seniors as much out of their pockets and will benefit drug companies. It appears that some Republicans are uncomfortable with this proposal and the co-chairs of the Joint Finance Committee want to preserve the program. Democratic U.S.

Senator Herb Kohl is asking the Feds to deny the waiver required to change the program. Perhaps U.S. Senator Ron Johnson -- whose own company Pacur has employees on BadgerCare because they cannot afford the benefits offered by Pacur -- should also weigh in on the proposed changes. Let your legislators hear from you. It's your right and responsibility to lift your voice.



Volunteer Opportunities:

- Board service** :: work together to sustain and develop MUM
- Mentoring Connections** :: mentor the child of an incarcerated parent
- Family Connections** :: accompany children to visit incarcerated moms
- Circles of Support** :: Re-connecting formerly incarcerated men and women with positive community role models who assist in the transition from prison to home
- Office Assistance** :: helping with a variety of tasks in the MUM office
- Returning Prisoner Simulations** :: guiding participants as they "take a walk in the shoes" of a newly released prisoner
- Re-Entry Simulations** :: help MUM conduct "rehearsals for re-entry" for prisoners who are near their release date
- Interested?* Contact us at mum@emum.org or 256-0906.

MUM Receives Grants from Local Foundations

MUM is pleased to announce the receipt of a Community Grant from the Alliant Energy Foundation.

MUM also was the recipient of a grant from The Capital Times Kids Fund Child and Family Development Committee, given to support MUM's Reading Connections program.

Reading Connections is a program where MUM invites mothers who are incarcerated at Taycheedah Correctional institution to read a childrens' book while being video taped so the tape and the book can then be sent to the child. It does a lot to keep children feeling connected to their moms, and it also helps kids form positive feelings about reading.

Our thanks go to these local foundations for their contributions toward MUM's social justice work. We depend upon local support to help sustain our programs.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you!

Support MUM's work for social justice

- Yes, I'd like to support Madison-area Urban Ministry's social justice programs!
 - \$175 Sustaining annual \$100 Supporting annual \$65 Household annual
 - \$50 Individual annual \$_____ Student/Low/Fixed Income (Please contribute based on ability)
- Check enclosed payable to Madison-area Urban Ministry: \$_____

Name/s _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please send your contribution to: Madison-area Urban Ministry, 2300 S. Park St., #2022, Madison, WI 53713

MUM's child participants need your help

There are many hurting children in the United States for many reasons such as poverty, racism, single parent-headed households etc., yet some of the most hurting are those children with parents in jail, in prison or awaiting sentencing. No child is responsible for a parent's decisions but research proves that having an incarcerated parent can mean that 7 out of 10 children will be incarcerated too, especially boys.

The stigma of incarceration, poverty resulting in financial loss and the emotional issues of a missing parent, all play a part in leading children into negative involvement with law enforcement and eventually jail or prison. Madison-area Urban ministry (MUM) is a leader in providing services for hurting people, especially men and women who have been incarcerated, as well as their children. Mentoring Connections has been joined by two additional programs, Family Connections and Reading Connections, to offer even more services to this growing population of children.

Mentoring Connections matches caring adult volunteers to children for a minimum of one year. Family Connections takes children to visit their mothers in Taycheedah Women's Prison. Reading Connections allows incarcerated mothers, again at Taycheedah, to be videotaped reading a book to each child. A letter, the video and the book are then mailed to the child as a way to stay connected to a beloved absent parent. All of the programs still exist despite the end of a federal grant that supported Mentoring Connections until August 2010. MUM is committed to supporting the matches and maintaining Family and Reading Connections which came under our organization in January 2011.

MUM's intention is to grow all of



Children end up paying a price for their parent's incarceration. Mentoring Connections helps kids deal with the losses and added stresses while their parent is away in prison.

these programs to better serve families. We hope to take children to visit parents in other Wisconsin prisons. Right now our grant for Family Connections only covers Taycheedah. We'd like to take children on monthly visits instead of quarterly and we'd like to increase the books, as well as the number of mothers, who utilize the Reading Connections program. The short term goal

You could become a mentor to a child whose mom is in prison.

for Mentoring Connections is to maintain a minimum of 50 matches and to continue to offer quarterly events that gather all of the matches together.

We also wrote for a grant to support two high school students, Mentoring Connections participants, to work part-time in our office this summer.

MUM needs funding for our Spring or Summer Quarterly Events and we did not receive the grant to pay for two student summer workers. It is important to keep our quarterly events going because it is how

MUM supports the matches, checks in on both adults and children, allow the mentors the chance to meet, have the children engage in fun, educational activities, as well as reassure families that they are not alone in their struggles. We wanted to financially support two students to work in our office to provide gainful employment, connect them to what MUM's mission and vision involves, and teach them work and life skills.

The children in our MUM programs need your help with:

- **Sponsorship for Spring and Summer quarterly events** (75-100 people.) \$1,000 for two events. School supplies give-away and the Holiday quarterly events are covered by community organizations.
- **Sponsoring two high school students from Mentoring Connections to work in our MUM office** from June 20-August 26 (10 weeks) at minimum wage for 20 hours a week. \$3,500.00 for both students (which includes training before they begin work).
- **Multi-ethnic books** (elementary-high school) and books specifically for Middle & High school students for parents to send to their older children.

To help us meet any of these needs, please drop new/gently used books off at our MUM office during office hours and please designate financial contributions to Quarterly Events or to Summer Student workers. Thank you in advance for blessing the lives of children and for your important support of MUM's vision to help hurting people.

Fabu Carter Mogaka,
Mentoring, Family & Reading Connections

Do you value BadgerCare and the healthcare it provides for many in Wisconsin? Yes? *Then please – write a simple letter to your legislator.*

5 good reasons to invest in BadgerCare....

1. BadgerCare is an incredibly successful program that has made Wisconsin a national leader by providing health care insurance to 750,000 residents!
2. BadgerCare protects the health of residents from across the entire state, from all walks of life!
3. BadgerCare keeps Wisconsin's working families healthy and strong!
4. BadgerCare is good for Wisconsin businesses!
5. BadgerCare brings federal dollars into our state.

Add YOUR reason to this list!

Children, pregnant women, adults and caretakers throughout Wisconsin have access to health care insurance because of BadgerCare, Wisconsin's Medicaid program. If you or someone you know benefits from this incredible program, share your story! Simply personalize the letter listed to the right and return it to us. Your letter can be short and simple. What's most important is that our legislators hear what matters most to you.

We will share your story with your legislator.

Please commit to keeping BadgerCare and our communities healthy and strong!

Save BadgerCare Coalition

*A smart investment
in Wisconsin's health*

Learn more at
www.badgercare.org

Dear Legislator,

- I am healthier today because of BadgerCare!
- I pledge to support legislators that invest in BadgerCare!

Please save BadgerCare.

Act
now

Sincerely,

Name (print): _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address:

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, May 18
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

From Georgia Prison Strike to Wisconsin Jobs A forum about the December 2010 prison strike in Georgia and why it matters to Wisconsin. At Neighborhood House, 29 S. Mills Street. Details on page 7.

Thursday, May 19
8:30 to 10:00 a.m.

GIG: Greater Isthmus Group Group meets to discuss affordable housing for all. At Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1021 Spaight Street. Details page 2.

Tuesday, May 24
3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

The Journey Home Re-Entry Service Fair Fairs provide ongoing support for re-entry. At The Villager on Park, Atrium Building, 2300 S. Park Street. Details on page 5.

Tuesday, June 21
5:30 p.m.

MUM's Annual Meeting: The Importance of the Prison Narrative We hope to see you there! At the United Way Building, 2059 Atwood Avenue. Details on page 5.

United Way of Dane County on Atwood Avenue. See details on page 5.

MUM's Annual Meeting

Plan to join us Tuesday, June 21, 2011



Madison-area Urban Ministry
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