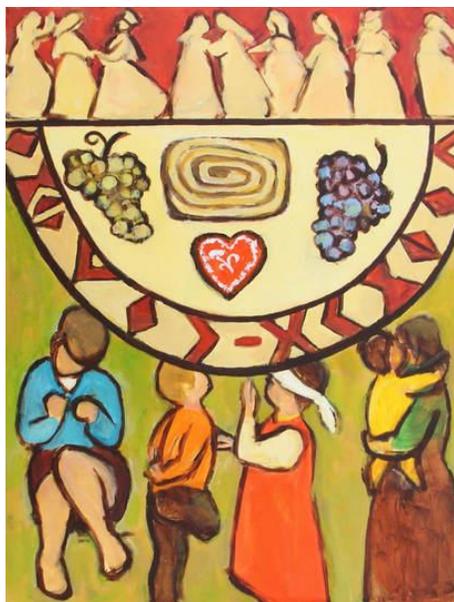


# Church Women United in Wisconsin

Volume 65 Issue 1

Winter 2019



## World Day of Prayer 2019

**Come, Everything is Ready!**

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## Is it Time for a Change?

A few days ago, I went to Dubuque, Iowa to do some shopping. I'd received Christmas money as gifts and thought I should spend it before it "burns a hole" in my pocketbook. I reasoned that this would also be an opportunity to "eat out" and shop for groceries.

Platteville had only a dusting of snow the night before, and my driveway and the streets were now clear of snow. However, the closer I got to Dubuque, more snow blanketed the hills. As I crossed the Mississippi in Dubuque I was awed by the scenery and the beautiful, snowy bluffs across the river.

In that short distance of only 25 miles, my surroundings changed. Changes in weather and in life are normal. Making some New Year's resolutions and changes are rather traditional this time of the year. But sometimes changes are scary and disrupt our regular routines. Others are challenging and result in learning and can make a positive impact on our daily lives. I thought of at least three aspects of our lives where changes do make a difference.

First, there are individual changes. Some changes are slight, such as sporting a new hair style or color, reading a different genre of books, moving furniture or painting your living room. Some more challenging changes could be taking a road trip to a place you've never visited before, buying a new car, or moving to another city or state.

Secondly, we might be thinking of changes we can make in our CWU local or State units. What are some new and fresh ways to conduct the organization's business? Maybe we can think of a new program or activity that will inspire and grow our fellowship. Perhaps we can develop a new project that will support our neighbors down the street. Later this spring you will receive a brochure inviting you to our 2019 Assembly. Just wait! You will discover a venue and program changes that will amaze you!

Lastly, there are changes in our spiritual lives as we open the scriptures to greater understanding. Most often change happens here through expanded research, Bible reading, and prayer. It may be inspired by meaningful sermons delivered from the pulpits of our churches by our pastors, or discussions with fellow Christians.

Blessings to you as you contemplate changes and resolve to make changes in your life!

*Carol Lange*

President / Church Women United in Wisconsin

## Calendar

**March 1** - World Day of Prayer

**March 9** - WCC Winter Forum

**March 14** - State Board Meeting

**April 11** - WCC Advocacy Day

**April 25** – Presidents Luncheon

**May 3** - May Friendship Day

**March 15** - Deadline for Newsletter

**June 24-28** -Washington Island Forum

**August 15** – State Board Meeting

**September 7** – State Assembly

**November 1** – World Community Day



*We have invited former presidents to share some reflections on Church Women United. **Dorothy Wetterlin**, our first guest writer, has been active in Church Women United in many ways for many years. She has served as President of CWU in Wisconsin, has been Central Region Director, and has served as President of the La Crosse Unit. She also has been honored as a CWU Valiant Woman.*

## When I Look Back.....

When my friend asked me if I would write a few words about my CWU story, I thought to myself,

"My computer is broken, my handwriting is illegible, and my recall is a bit slow these days." And then I said, "Sure, I'd be happy to!!" (I'm still laughing too).

I do have wonderful, warm, and very happy memories of this group of world-involved women and my time with them. So, these are some of the times, positive as well as "challenging".

A fond memory of CWU was reading to third graders about children in other countries - and loving their reactions! This was part of "*The World Around Us*", a program designed by Mary Kiskan and others of the La Crosse CWU in 2011. The La Crosse CWU group was reading to area children, Kindergarten to 4th grade, about children of varied and diverse homelands and cultures. It is still in action today.

A different memory was not as fulfilling. I was asked to serve on the WI Executive Board as the Ecumenical Communications Chair. I went to the four State meetings but did not know the job description - and did not say one word for the entire year! Doesn't sound like me, does it? - but a lesson learned!

I've been president of both the La Crosse and Wisconsin units. Separately, the two groups raised money, collected, and assembled over 1,700 Health kits which were sent to Church World Service. Over the years I was a CWU Central Region Representative, attended four Regional Assemblies, and the National Conference in Atlantic City which celebrated the 70<sup>th</sup> year of Church Women United! At these meetings, I met wonderful, dedicated, inspiring leaders who have kept the dream of our founding sisters alive. And IT IS ALIVE today!

One of my favorite roles in CWU was serving on Nominating Committees! Here was the opportunity to discover women's gifts, aspirations, fears, and God-given strengths! It involved taking time and dedication for each person, showing them the expectations of the role, and then supporting their talents along the way. It was such a joy for me! Often, a strong and lasting friendship was born as well!!!

My DREAMS for the future of Church Women United are these: Programs that set the hearts and voices of CWU on fire! Programs presented in early evenings, Saturdays, or entire week-ends so more can participate, with diverse audiences and speakers comprised of strong leaders from universities, hospitals, business and industry, as well as leaders of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religions. As has been the tradition of Church Women United in the past, only then, when major issues and problems are studied, embraced, and acted on, will "THIS WORLD BE A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN".

Written by *Dorothy Wetterlin* / CWU State President 2009-2011

## World Day of Prayer



### Did You Know?

The international logo for World Day of Prayer was adopted in 1982. It was developed by the women of Ireland. Broken down, the logo is made up of arrows converging from the four points of a compass, four persons kneeling in prayer, the Celtic cross, and a circle which represents the world and unity through all our diversity.



### "The Time Is Now"

Materials for the 2019 Celebrations are available at

<https://www.churchwomenunited.net/lo-cations/>

The program for World Day of Prayer 2019 has been written by the women of Slovenia. The title of the program "Come, Everything is Ready" "There is Still Room." is based on Luke, Chapter fourteen. It challenges us to widen our circles to include all peoples and all communities.

Our host country, Slovenia, is a Central European country of around two million inhabitants. Their main language is Slovene, with Hungarian and Italian being co-official languages. Slovenia declared its independence from Yugoslavia on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1991. Slovenia has continued to be the wealthiest and most politically open country of the former Yugoslav Republic. It is the smallest Central European country and will host the World Day of Prayer in six sites. *(For more information on Slovenia, check out the free materials at the World Day of Prayer Site.)*

One ethnic group in Slovenia, the Roma community, has suffered much prejudice and has been seriously stereotyped throughout the world. The Roma are mainly refugees from Bosnia and Kosovo and their numbers are growing. One of the Slovenia World Day of Prayer committee members is a member of this minority group. The Roma have traditionally accepted the major religion of the people from the area in which they live because they have wanted to gain the acceptance of the locals and avoid persecution. Today most of the Roma in Slovenia are Catholic, a minority are Muslim.

One phrase in the worship service especially captures the ideas explored in the program: *"Welcoming God, in your love, you have prepared a table for all, and you inspire us to open our hearts and our homes to offer a place to the ones who are not yet at the table."*

Since March 1<sup>st</sup> and World Day of Prayer are fast approaching, if you have not obtained your materials, you need to do so immediately. To order your materials, go to

<http://www.wdp-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2019-WDP-Order-Form-FA-.pdf>

*Call Kutztown Publishing to place an order over the phone. Phone number is 1-888-937-8720*

Submitted by *Eleanor Siebert*

CWU in Wisconsin Celebration Chairperson

## Theme and Location Chosen for 2019 Assembly

The 2019 State Assembly for Church Women United in Wisconsin will be held on Saturday, September 7 at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Middleton, Wisconsin. "Caring for Creation" has been chosen as our theme. As we reflect on Revelations 4:11; *Worthy are you, our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they exist and were created.*" - we remember that not only are we asked to be good stewards of creation - the land and all the animals - we also must take care of ourselves, for we were created in the image of God! What an awesome and wonderful God is our Creator!

Holy Wisdom Monastery is a perfect blend of caring for the environment and caring for the spirit. The modern retreat center at Holy Wisdom has a sixty-year history of being mindful of the environment. In 2017, it received the Assisi Award from the Society for Conservation Biology. The Assisi Award recognizes conservation initiatives around the world led by faith leaders from world religions and indigenous peoples. We will set aside time for those who wish to tour the grounds and learn about the restored prairie, gardens, buildings, and expanding oak savannah.

And to help nourish the Spirit within us, we will include a session on Spirituality Practices - such as centering prayer, walking meditation, or a related study and discussion of Scripture.

The committee is working to provide additional speakers and topics, and we will have our annual business meeting and induction of officers. A full lunch will be provided at noon.

The State CWU Board has voted to use the 2019 donation from the Christensen Fund to help offset some of the cost of reserving the retreat center so that the registration fee can remain at \$25. For those who wish to arrive on Friday, the retreat

center has single and double rooms available for overnight. More information on room reservations and costs will be provided in upcoming newsletters and posted on the website.

A full registration brochure of the assembly will be sent out in April. It would be helpful if you would print off these brochures and share the information throughout your units. The May Friendship Day Celebration on May 3<sup>rd</sup> might be an ideal time to pass out the brochures and promote this year's assembly. We think this will be a day you will want to enjoy together with your CWU sisters-in-Christ.

Submitted by Committee Members: *Kris Clausing, Sue Coghill, and Gloria Carter*



Holy Wisdom Monastery – site of the 2019 CWU State Assembly on September 7

For more information on Holy Wisdom Monastery, go to <http://benedictinewomen.org/>

**Agreed to Differ,**



**Resolved to Love, United to Serve**

## Unit News

### Madison CWU

The Madison's CWU ended the year in December with a successful silent auction fund raiser. The \$435.00 profit will be used to help publish the 2020 Madison Area Religious and Human Services Directory.

A highlight of the gathering was our own Faith Bauman speaking about her experience as a missionary in India. (If you don't know this special woman, look at our web site [churchwomenunited-madison.net](http://churchwomenunited-madison.net) to see pictures and learn her story.

Our first event in 2019 was our Human Rights celebration on January 4th. Will Green, founder and executive director of Mentoring Positives, was honored as the recipient of our Human Rights Award. Green, with the help of his wife Becky, started "Mentoring Positives" a program to help youth get their lives going in the right direction. Green and other mentors help youth develop critical life skills, deal with adversity, and take responsibility for their actions. The youth also are involved in growing food which is used at the center and is sold for income.

Submitted by *Ann Sowaske*



#### Meet Our Presidents...

*Ann Sowaske is completing a three-year term as President of Madison CWU - a job she has taken on once before. Ann has also served on the State Board as the Southwest Area Chairperson and as a member of the Policy and Bylaws Committee.*

*Ann is a volunteer at Olbrich Gardens, and she works as the only volunteer at the CWU/Madison Ecumenical office. Two church circle groups also keep Ann busy and engaged. Now 81, Ann has moved to Middleton*

*Glen, a retirement community, where she has helped organize a gardening group, helps maintain the community library, and assists in arranging entertainment for monthly birthday parties. Ann finds her new home in the retirement community a good fit as most of the residents are active, full of life, and inspire her.*

### Outagamie County CWU

Outagamie County CWU held its annual meeting on January 25th.

It was announced that Parent Connection and its Baby Closet will be our 2019 Mission Project. Parent Connection is a parent education and early childhood learning program that works to encourage, strengthen, and support families, especially first-time parents, throughout the Fox Valley and Outagamie County. They offer many services to support prenatal care, child development, positive parenting skills, and also provide assistance to at-risk families and children.

Lindsay Wollerman, the Volunteer Coordinator for Parent Connection, was at our meeting to share more about the work of Parent Connection and how we can get involved.

The Baby Closet, which is maintained by the Parent Connection, helps parents get needed supplies for their infants and toddlers. Items from the Baby Closet are made available to parents who participate in educational programs, meetings, home visits and mentoring through Parent Connection.

Throughout the year, our Outagamie CWU will encourage volunteering at the Parenting Center. We will be bringing items for the Baby Closet to our Celebrations, and we will be collecting monetary donations that will go to the Center.

Submitted by *Jayne Heinrich*

#### Meet our Presidents...

*Jayne has been president of Outagamie CWU since 2015. She teaches exercise classes through the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Outagamie County. She is also a monthly volunteer at special group events at the Boys & Girls Club, serves breakfast at the Warming Shelter, and is involved in a variety of church activities.*

## La Crosse Area CWU

January 11, 2019 marked the gathering of CWU of the greater La Crosse area for its annual meeting. Beyond ordinary business, discussion was devoted to a thorough update of our Directory. Potential members or contacts were named for churches whose key leaders were no longer able to serve. Time was allotted to review the role of the key leader as well as the host Church for our celebrations. A goal for this year is to expand participation by means of active invitations.

As part of our 2018 study of Wisconsin's *Racial Disparities and the Call of the Gospel*, we invited Rebecca Schwartz, from the YWCA, to share with us what they were doing regarding racism and racial injustice in our area. During 2019, our Justice and Peace Committee will invite persons of other races or cultures to our key leader meetings to help build relationships and to heighten our awareness of the gifts they bring.

Members were made aware of a city-wide Awareness Against Human Trafficking at English Lutheran Church in La Crosse on February 8, 2019.

We all went away with a renewed spirit of CWU, its mission and what might be possible in 2019.

Submitted by *Eileen Lang, FSPA*



### Meet Our Presidents...

*Eileen Lang is president of the La Crosse area CWU for 2018-2019. In her "other life," she is sacristan for the three chapels at St. Rose Convent and volunteers three hours a week at the St. Rose Media Center. Her focus for CWU during 2019 is to welcome more key leaders to the unit as well as to become more acquainted with the variety of cultures in our midst.*

## Richland County CWU

Under the leadership of President Eleanor Siebert, Richland County continues to host the celebrations and sponsor the Family Thrift Shop in Richland Center. This shop has been in existence for almost 50 years. It employs four women and enables the CWU group to give generously to various ministries within the community.

### Meet Our Presidents ...

*Eleanor Siebert is a very active member of her church and community. Her work reflects her faith in God and her commitment to help others. A former nurse, Eleanor is a leader and volunteer for her church and volunteers at a county care facility. She has completed lay school within her church and has become a Benedictine Oblate at the Valley of our Lady monastery at Prairie du Sac.*

## Nominations 2019 Update

The Executive Board is in need of women willing to serve at the state level. At present these offices are vacant and need to be filled: Vice President, Secretary, and Ecumenical Development. Additional persons are needed on the Nominating Committee.

The following offices will need to be filled for the coming year because the officers in these positions will have already served two consecutive terms. Positions being vacated after this year include: Treasurer, Ecumenical Action, Ecumenical Celebrations, Chair of Finance.

Carol Lange is in the second year of her first term as president and has agreed to continue in this position.

Please contact any member of the Nominating Committee with suggestions for these vacancies.

Hazel Christopher 920-731-7260 or 920-284-5720,  
Susan Becker 608-231-1817 or 608-230-4869,  
Gloria Higgins 920-261-6835 or 920-285-5463.

Submitted by *Hazel Christopher*, Chair  
CWU Nominations Committee

## Wisconsin Council of Churches

### 2019 Winter Forum

Saturday, March 9

9:30am – 5:30pm

First Baptist Church  
518 North Franklin Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin



### Austin Channing Brown

Key Note Speaker

Spokesperson for Racial Justice

Author of  
*I'm Still Here*  
*Black Dignity in a World*  
*Made for Whiteness*

### Peace and Justice

*Lynn McDonald will be serving as our new chairperson for Peace and Justice and she will be our representative to the Wisconsin Council of Churches. Lynn, now from Madison, has lived and worked in different countries and has an extensive background in education, social work, and research. Currently retired and enjoying being a grandparent of five, she does consulting and public speaking. As you will learn in her article, she has a passion for racial understanding and justice.*

This is my first report as the new Peace and Justice representative on the CWU State Board. Thank you for supporting Social Action across Wisconsin. I invite you as readers to send me your thoughts, your actions, and your local CWU unit reports related to Social Action so I can highlight them here. As you will see, this first report is a bit lean on local information, but I would like that to change.

An important activity to recognize this past fall was the successful push from across the state of Wisconsin to get out and vote during the November national and state elections. The voter turnout was much higher than anticipated. For example, in Madison, 93% of the potential voters voted. This is impressive - and was not an accident. Also, the turn out in Milwaukee was exceptionally high! Well done everyone!!!

In addition, as we of CWU work for racial justice and opportunity for all, the successful election of the first black and white leadership team in Wisconsin history: a white Governor, Tony Evers and an African American Lieutenant Governor, Mandela Barnes, should be applauded. Barnes commented in his acceptance speech, "this was not supposed to happen"! He was raised in the zip code with the highest rate of incarcerated black men in the US. He had beat the odds! It is only the second time in Wisconsin history that an African American was elected to a state office. Our state is turning around in very positive ways and we have hope again about what can be done for social justice. Already Governor Evers has been commended for his appointments which include African American women and men at a rate not seen before in this state.

In the 2016-2020 Quadrennial Priorities of the national organization of Church Women United, the fourth priority is of particular importance to me. It is about reducing racism and social exclusion. The [Race to Equity Report](#) (2014) shows that on a range of statistics, the race disparities in Wisconsin and in Madison are the worst in the US! If you have not read this, this is a very important and shocking report to review. It has been updated each year, and the rates are not improving.

As CWU-Wisconsin, I feel that we should focus on this fourth CWU priority in 2019-2020 as our most important and urgent activity. I was deeply affected by the message of Rev. Mary Council-Austin while attending the annual CWU-WI meeting in Fond du Lac last fall. Her words were inspiring at every level, telling us that we are a part of a history and mission bigger than ourselves. Social inclusion, respect, and human rights must integrate a strong faith with a strong church with a strong commitment across churches of different races and faith backgrounds, for the benefit of all - not just one group.

May I suggest that each CWU Unit and each parish member strive to specifically address the issues of racism, both within their own congregations, their own communities and their own cities. May I suggest that we set bench marks and goals for the next two years, of what we can do at a local level, and then report to CWU-Wisconsin what is being done. I would like to list these reports in this newsletter, and gradually have more and more to report. Social changes take time and

## Quadrennial Priority 4

### Diversity & Inclusiveness

#### ACTION STEPS:

Show warm and gracious hospitality to your neighbor.

Support policy positions that advance equality and acceptance of all God's creation.

Seek ways to inform and enhance your own racial understanding and cultural competency.

Be open to diverse views and voices in various life settings: church, community, and business.

Create cultural inclusion opportunities in your units, churches, and communities.

Visit a museum or participate in an event that represents a culture or ethnicity other than your own.



Dr. Lynn McDonald (left), Chairperson for CWU in Wisconsin Peace and Justice, and Dr. Joann Pritchett (right) at Grace Episcopal Church.

reducing systemic and personal racism is not an easy goal. However, naming it as a goal is the first step.

As an example, I would like to report what my own parish, Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, started on Jan 20, 2019. On Martin Luther King Sunday, we hosted our first of four monthly luncheons after church. We are using a series entitled "*The Diagnosis is Racism: Healing Racism Table Talk*", by Dr. Joann Pritchett and Dr. Lynn McDonald (a black and white team). We had 95 attend our first sit-down luncheon, most were from our own parish, but there also were visitors from six other Madison churches who were curious to learn more about this initiative. The luncheon was catered by a small catering business owned by an African American woman. We had 12 table leaders, 5 we recruited from our church teen group and the other 7 were women from the *More Just Community* committee, which was established shortly after the Race to Equity Report came out. Our goal was to get small groups of white people at our dominantly white church, from multiple generations, to talk about race and racism for over two hours at a time. We wanted those conversations to be personal and reflective. By including members of our own parish, we hoped these conversations about race, held in a safe context, would raise awareness on how we were taught about race. To be held monthly for four sessions, these conversations should engage some directly, and have a ripple effect across the parish of 500.

Here are some of the questions we addressed. Racism - Is it contagious? What are the signs and symptoms? Can it be treated and are there different treatment options? Is there a cure? We provided questions to guide the private table discussions: How was it taught to you as a white person? By our grandparents? our parents? our friends? our teachers? the media? Other questions to ponder: What have I done to perpetuate what I learned about racism? What spoken or unspoken words or gestures have I use to talk about people who are different from me? What benefits have accrued to me as a white person? What is privilege to me as a white person?

I am pleased to be involved in CWU at a state level and am looking forward to meeting new people with shared values and commitment to peace and justice.

Happy New Year and Best Wishes,

Lynn McDonald / Peace and Justice Chairperson

*Learn more about Grace Episcopal Church at*  
<http://www.gracechurchmadison.org/new-page-2>

