

Dialogue

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

Winter-Spring 2013

Where guns are concerned, the personal is political

On Thursday, February 7th, the Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort (WAVE) (www.waveedfund.org) sponsored a Community Wide Candlelight Vigil to End Gun Violence. The event was held at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Madison. Despite the snowy weather, over a hundred people gathered to mourn those lost to gun violence and to support efforts to end gun violence. I was honored to be invited to speak at the vigil and we are reprinting my remarks from the vigil below:

Those of use who express outrage over the pervasiveness of guns in our community and who call for an end to gun violence are often accused of politicizing events like the mass murder at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

It's true, we oppose easy access to automatic weapons, to high capacity magazines. However our call for an end to such weapons is as much grounded in the fact that we are parents as it is in our opinion about guns.

Our call is grounded in the fact that

our faith calls for weapons to be beaten into plowshares.

Our call is grounded in the fact that these guns exist solely to kill as many people as possible as quickly as possible.

Our call is grounded in the fact that

**“
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**”
Isn't it time for the
conversation?**

gun violence in this country far exceeds that of any of our counterparts across the world.

The truth is that the personal is political. We live in a society based on democratic principles that require change to come through the political process. The truth is that each time such massacres occur those of us who call for change are told that we should wait to have the conversation, but the

conversation never comes.

We are told to wait until after the funerals are held but the funerals just keep coming, every day another funeral, on average thirty funerals a day. So to those who hold the second amendment sacred but attempt to squelch freedom of speech by accusing anyone who disagrees with them of politicizing a tragedy, fine – view our response as political. It is a political response guided by our faith, by our belief in non-violence, by our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

The characterization of our call as political does not invalidate or diminish our sadness, our fear for our children or our outrage over the continued killings and it does not diminish our compassion for the friends and family members who have lost loved ones to gun violence.

At Madison-area Urban Ministry we see too many families affected by gun violence and we grieve with them and for them.

We ask every parent who grieved over the children murdered at Sandy Hook, every parent who fears for the safety of his or her children, we ask every aunt, uncle, brother, sister, grandparent who shed tears over the senseless loss of life at Sandy Hook, to

Continued

commit themselves to this conversation.

The media likes to ask “what was wrong with the shooter?” That’s the wrong question. We should be asking “what’s wrong with a country where over 10,000 people die each year from gun violence? What’s wrong with a country that can openly mourn for the children killed at Sandy Hook but pays virtually no attention to what is, according to Slate.com, the over 1,600 people killed by guns in this country since and including Sandy Hook?”

Among those killed:

- Ryder, age 3, Oklahoma
- Damin, age 14, Missouri
- Alivia, 18, Maine
- Easton, 8, South Carolina
- Aaliya, 10, Maryland
- Barry, 51, Illinois
- Aydan, 4, Missouri,
- Alfreddie, 10, Tennessee
- Karissa, 18, Dallas
- And from WI:
Larry, 25
Anton, 20
Jen, 30
Aaron 21
Arthur 29
Michael 44
Alfredo 18
Marvis, 25

Each one of those murdered was someone’s son or daughter. We will never see most of their faces, or hear

their names on the news. Maybe it’s because they don’t look like us, maybe because they don’t live near us, maybe because there are just too many victims, maybe because if we were to see the faces and hear the names of everyone in this country killed by guns our hearts would quite literally break. Maybe it’s all of the above.

Addressing gun violence only after a massacre, out of the context of our culture and society, gets us nowhere. We must act on our faith now; we must act consistently and with our voices raised in unison.

John 3, verses 16-18: “We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother in need and yet refuses to help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.”

We have the world’s goods, how can we look at the number of people dying by guns and not see that our brothers and sisters are in need? We must act in truth and action. When we leave here tonight what will be our truth? What will be our action? Lighting candles is not enough. Faith without works is not enough, prayer without action is not enough. Our brothers and sisters are dying and we are called to end the violence.

In Faith,
Linda Ketcham

MUM Satellite Re-Entry Office in Sun Prairie is now open!

MUM staff now offers re-entry assistance in our satellite office, located in the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church.

If you know of anyone in the Sun Prairie area who could use assistance rebuilding his or her life after prison, have them call Mark Ciske at MUM: 608-256-0906.

Mark will be available Wednesday mornings by appointment. MUM is pleased to expand our services to returnees in Sun Prairie during their transition home from prison.



Like us on Facebook.

Get social justice news and join in the conversation.

United Way



United Way of Dane County

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. Give online or mail gifts to MUM.



MUM
MADISON-AREA
URBAN MINISTRY

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Random Thoughts

It is absurd and hypocritical that the very legislators who lifted up the Second Amendment as sacrosanct, passing legislation that allows people to carry guns into the capitol building and even on the Assembly floor, have thoroughly disregarded the First Amendment by denying anyone from holding a sign, recording a proceeding, and as of last week, even took coloring books away from children in the Assembly gallery. Not a very good lesson in the Constitution for our children.

Running government like a home?

An open response

The Governor's budget was released on February 20th. As we write this we are awaiting Congress to act on sequestration. In these budget debates we often hear legislators say that government needs to be run the same way we citizens run our homes. In that vein we offer this response:

Dear Elected Official:

We recently heard you offer advice to your colleagues and constituents about spending priorities and budget issues. In your remarks you stated that our elected officials must run government the way their constituents run their homes. Here is how we handle spending and budget priorities in our home:

In our home, when people are hungry, we feed them.

In our home, when people are tired, they are provided a safe, warm bed.

In our home, when your winter coat is no longer warm or your shoes are worn out, you get shoes without holes and a warm coat.

In our home we send our child off to public school to receive a quality education.

In our home when someone is sick and needs medical treatment we take them to the doctor to receive treatment.

In our home we give 10% of our income to help people we will never meet who are struggling and who are none-the-less our neighbors.

In our home when money is tight we

look at where we can cut our expenses without harming the health and well being of the members of our household. And when we have made those cuts, we look for ways to increase our income/ revenue to make sure that all the members of our household still have healthy food, a safe, warm bed, clothing, access to healthcare, and a quality education.

In our home, we believe in the social compact: the idea that each generation bears some responsibility for the support of our elders who raised us and to the generations to come after us. It is time that you adhere to your own sound bites, that you pass a federal, state, county or city budget that indeed runs the government in the same manner we citizens run our homes, with concern for each member, a commitment to insure that everyone has what they need, and that those of us who can do more or pay more, in fact do.

We agree that government should operate in the same way we operate our home.

Sincerely,

Your Constituent

Progress on implementing recommendations of MUM report continues...

The Homeless Issues Committee is continuing its work of study and recommendations to the County and City. The initial framework for the committee was provided by MUM's July 2012 Report on Possible Alternatives to the Occupy Madison Site.

The Housing Issues Committee meets twice a

month; their meetings are typically held on Tuesday or Wednesday evenings.

You can find the committee meeting dates, agenda and minutes on the County Board Website under Committees.

To learn more about the efforts of the Housing Issues Committee,

Occupy Madison and the Day Shelter contact Linda at MUM.

To get involved in the efforts to address homelessness in our community contact Linda at linda@emum.org or MUM's Greater Isthmus Group (G.I.G.) which also focuses on housing availability for all. (The G.I.G. is a round table work group that meets fourth Tuesdays from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1021 Spaight Street, Madison.)

For more information about G.I.G. contact Barbara McKinney at MUM: barbara@emum.org or 608-256-0906.



**Housing
availability for all
MUM works to address
homelessness in our
community.**

Homelessness is increasing in our Community

Each year the agencies responsible for providing services to our brothers and sisters who are experiencing homelessness are required to conduct a “Point in Time” study to determine how many people who are homeless can be counted. The count includes people in the shelters on two particular nights and people who the counters find on the streets who are homeless. The first count for this year was conducted on January 31 and counted 831 people who were homeless on January 31, 2013 – this compared to 567 people who were counted as homeless in January 2010. Please keep in

mind this count only represents the men, women and children who could be located by the counters. Many others intentionally find places out of the way, hidden, to sleep for the night and are never found by the counters. Other people are unwilling to share their personal

information with the volunteer counters, strangers to them who will share the information with the City. While the numbers are reported by various categories, listed in the chart below are the total number of individuals who were identified as homeless on January 31st.

Homelessness in Madison <i>(Total number of people, not households)</i>		
Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
2013 – 732	2013 – 99	2013 – 831
2012 – 659	2012 – 77	2012 – 736
2011 – 531	2011 – 42	2011 – 573
2010 – 283	2010 – 68	2010 – 567

Madison Community Development Authority proposes admissions and policy revisions that will make finding housing more challenging.

The Madison Community Development Authority Housing Operations Subcommittee has proposed policy changes that will make it more difficult for people who are homeless to obtain housing. Among the concerns expressed by attorney and County Supervisor Heidi Wegleitner: the changes will deny housing to people who have old criminal cases if they still owe money to the court; denying housing to people for

criminal activity who have not been convicted or charged with a crime (arrests only, civil ordinance violations, drug paraphernalia charges); denying people for bad credit and old landlord debts regardless of ability to pay or if the debt has been disputed by the potential tenant; and removing wait list preferences for people who are victims of domestic violence and for people who are homeless.

Please contact Mayor Soglin: psoglin@cityofmadison.com, City Alders: allalders@cityofmadison.com, and the Community Development Authority (CDA) staff at: SCover@cityofmadison.com, NERdman@cityofmadison.com, and aolvera@cityofmadison.com .

Be sure to include your address, and express your concerns about policies that will make it harder for people to find housing.

MUM convenes task force on medical shelter

Imagine that you have just had major surgery. You don't have insurance and you also are homeless. The hospital discharges you with the directions to get two weeks of bed rest, with special dietary needs, plus the need to change your bandages. You are homeless. The shelters are only open overnight. Where do you go for twelve hours a day to rest? Where to you go to get food that matches your dietary needs or help changing your dressing?

In Dane County you might get a hotel voucher if the \$10,000 allocated each year is not gone. If it is, you

must try to call around, find faith communities to help. If it isn't gone, you get to go to a hotel room: no food, no one checking in on you, helping with medication or changing your dressing.

The need for a 24/7 medical respite center for people who are homeless is one of the gaps in existing services identified in the MUM report to Dane County on Possible Alternative Sites for Occupy Madison.

On February 18th, MUM staff, clergy and lay leaders from area faith communities met to begin discussing how we address this gap. MUM has

a vision for a facility that will offer people with medical needs who are referred by a physician the appropriate post-operative or recuperative care that they need. The models for such programs exist.

If you would like to learn more about this effort contact Linda Ketcham at linda@emum.org. MUM was instrumental in the development of the shelter system in Dane County, including the Warming Shelter; we must now focus on the remaining gaps to our system.

MUM celebrates 40 years of social justice work

On May 11, 1973 Madison-area Urban Ministry received its official 501(c)(3) letter of determination from the IRS. While that date marks the official existence of MUM as a private, non-profit agency, the seeds that would grow to become MUM had been sown years earlier through the work of Pilgrim United Church of Christ. Recognizing the societal and neighborhood changes that were happening in the 1960's, Pilgrim's congregation had worked to bring neighbors together in conversation and dialogue, across boundaries, to strengthen the neighborhood and community. Pilgrim had opened its doors to the Neighborhood Association for meetings and community programs. When the congregation came to realize that they could no longer keep the doors of the church open, they gave the building to the Neighborhood Association to become the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center.

Servants on Errands was forerunner to MUM

In 1970 Pilgrim UCC approached First Congregational United Church of Christ to ask that congregation to take Pilgrim's remaining assets and to create a social justice ministry. First Congregational formed the Servants on Errands Committee to study, pray and meet with members of the community to decide what such a ministry might look like – and the groundwork for Madison Urban Ministry was laid.

The Servants on Errands group met for two years, building relationships, studying community needs and interests, looking at the issues facing people in our community. Although MUM was not officially incorporated until 1973, the Servants on Errands Committee was not about to let a little thing like IRS status impede the work to be done. The Committee began responding to need, discerning directions and mission,

and responding with programs as they identified the needs.

From 1970 – 1971 MUM started the following projects: Near East Side Health Center (to eventually merge with the Mifflin Street Health Center to become Madison Community Health Center), the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, Children's House Day Care Center, a prayer group and a senior citizen's recreation program.

MUM becomes independent agency

As more congregations and denominations became involved with MUM, it no longer made sense to handle everything through First Congregational UCC, and MUM was formally incorporated. The result was an expansion of focus from the near east side to the entire city, and eventually in 1998, to the county.

First projects as independent agency

During the early 1970's MUM helped to initiate a number of projects including: Project Home, Family Enhancement, the Befrienders Program, a Sunday meal program, and in collaboration with the Dane County Commission on Aging, forming four Coalitions of Older Adults, including the North East Side Senior Coalition, the East Madison/Monona Senior Coalition, the South Side Senior Coalition and the West Side Senior Coalition. By 1974 MUM's incubator work with the Coalitions of Older Adults was complete and all four Senior Coalitions were spun off, becoming free-standing non-profit agencies that

would serve tens of thousands of Dane County residents.

MUM generally operated by forming a task force to consider a community issue or problem, developed a program to meet the need, and then spun off the project as an independent, separately incorporated organization as soon as it could make it on its own.

When MUM officially incorporated in 1973 it was a collaboration of six congregations and Church Women United. By the late 1970's the number of congregations involved with MUM had grown to 17.



Transitions lead to clarified mission and new focus

The late 1970s have been described by former MUM Board members and supporters as a time of transition. Reductions in funding for social programs made it more challenging to create or start new projects; old projects needed to be consolidated. As earlier projects were spun off, MUM tended to lose active members to the new project, as well as other resources. In 1981 MUM held a series of three conferences focusing on power, poverty and politics. The conferences helped to redefine MUM's mission. The new vision was to address the issues of poverty, racism and peace.

We will continue to share MUM's 40 years of social justice work in our community on our Facebook Page. Please "Like" the page and follow along as we trace forty years of ministry in Dane County.

This year's People of Faith United for Justice event will focus on three issue areas:

11 x 15

WISDOM'S 11x15 Campaign is working toward increased funding for Treatment and Diversion programs (community based) under the state's Corrections budget and toward decreasing Wisconsin's prison population from 22,000 to 11,000 by the year 2015.

For detailed information about the 11x15 Campaign and the work of WISDOM, visit the web: prayforjusticeinwi.org .

Jobs and Transit

The last biennial budget cut funding for transit in Wisconsin by 10 percent. We opposed that cut then, and now we will again be advocating for that 10 percent cut to be restored to the state budget.

Medicaid and Badgercare

Governor Walker has proposed significant changes to the state's Badgercare program. Among them, changing income eligibility guidelines that will push low-income, working parents off of the program and into the Federal Exchange program even though the exchanges were not intended to serve people who are working and barely above the poverty level. We will break down the numbers, the cost to the State in terms of lost revenue, the projected increase in uninsured parents and other implications of the proposal.





Advocacy Day at the Capitol

People of Faith United for Justice

Thursday, March 14, 2013

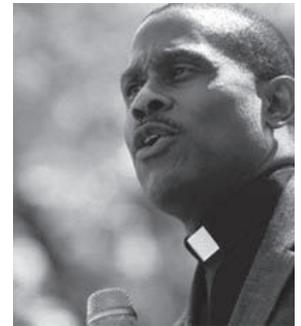
9:30 am - 4:00 pm

Bethel Lutheran Church

312 Wisconsin Avenue, Madison

People of Faith United for Justice is a day-long gathering to learn, discuss, pray and advocate together for social justice issues of importance to all the people of Wisconsin.

As a new legislature starts work on the next state budget, our representatives need to hear our values, priorities, and concerns. Together, we can ensure that our commitment to compassion and justice is reflected in that budget.



Keynote Speaker
Rev. Bryan N. Massingale, S.T.D.

- 8:30 am Gathering/coffee at Bethel Lutheran Church
- 9:30 Welcome: Hannah Rosenthal, CEO Milwaukee Jewish Federation
- Plenary session: Rev. Bryan N Massingale
- Break-outs at Bethel Lutheran church and First Methodist Church
- 12:30pm Lunch at Bethel Lutheran Church
- 1:30 March to Capitol
- 2:00 Meet with legislators
- 4:00 Conclude

Rev. Bryan N. Massingale, Professor of Theology at Marquette University Milwaukee, received his doctorate in moral theology from the Academia Alphonsianum (Rome). He specializes in social ethics and teaches courses on Catholic Social Thought, African American religious ethics, liberation theologies, and racial justice. His approach to social ethics focuses upon the impact of religious faith as both an instrument of social injustice and a catalyst for social transformation.

Sponsored by the following organizations:



REGISTRATION

Yes, Register Me for Advocacy Day:

Registration & Lunch: \$25/person by March 1
After March 1, \$35 (lunch not guaranteed)

Name: _____

Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

(If your home and congregation are in different districts, please provide the address for the district of the legislator you wish to meet. Go to <http://legis.wisconsin.gov> to find the legislator for either address)

Email address: _____ @ _____ . _____

How did you hear about this event? _____

Mail to: WCC, 750 Windsor Street, Ste. 301, Sun Prairie, WI 53590, or
Register online at: www.wichurches.org under "Events"

For More Information:

Wisconsin Council of Churches

750 Windsor St. #301
Sun Prairie, WI 53590
(608) 837-3108

www.wichurches.org



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PLEASE SAVE THE DATE

**Saturday May 18, for MUM's
40th anniversary party**, at the Madison
Concourse Hotel. Enjoy music by Jan
Wheaton. Featured speakers include
Rev. Everett Mitchell, Christ the Solid
Rock Baptist Church and Director of
Community Outreach for UW-Madison,
and Rabbi Renee Bauer, Director of the
Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice.



UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday, March 14
9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

PEOPLE OF FAITH UNITED FOR JUSTICE

Advocacy Day — Meet at Bethel Lutheran Church in morning
March to capitol building and meet legislators in afternoon
See details and registration form on page 7

MUM is pleased to again be a co-sponsor of this important interfaith effort to bring people of faith from around the state together to lobby our lawmakers on issues important to us, including WISDOM's 11x15 Campaign to reduce Wisconsin's prison population by half by the year 2015, proposals to reduce access to Badgercare, and efforts to care for our creation.

**Saturday, May 18
6:00 to 9:00 p.m.**

CELEBRATING OUR PAST, LOOKING TOWARD OUR FUTURE

MUM's 40 Years of Social Justice Work in Our Community
At the Concourse Hotel, Madison
Return your reservation form now! *(See insert)*