

JONAH JOURNAL / 25 March 2009 / living our faith values

submissions welcome – to editor Sara Bryan - sarasimona@hotmail.com

>The **Joint Finance Committee hearings** will be held at the Haas Fine Arts Center on **Friday, March 27 beginning at 10:00 AM.** (Parking in the Water Street lot and the Fine Arts lot will be free on Friday.) Members of JONAH will be speaking on behalf of \$22,000,000 in TAD funding in the state budget. In other meetings across the state, effective attention is being drawn to this issue. Your presence as support to the JONAH message would be very helpful if you are available to attend and stand for our presentation. It is helpful also for supporters to sign into the hearing as being in support of TAD funding even if you are not going to speak. We are on the verge of being able to win this issue and to change communities across Wisconsin. We welcome your support on Friday, March 27.

>The JONAH – Environmental Task Force is proud to be a co-sponsor of **“Taking the Natural Step to Sustainability: A Win-Win-Win for Business, Communities, and the Earth”** by Terry Gips, midwest sustainability expert. **Monday, March 30 from 5:00-6:30pm, Schofield Auditorium** on the UWEC campus. Other sponsors: the UWEC Sustainability Office, Clear Vision of Eau Claire, Members of the UW Faculty. “Natural Steps” is a philosophical guide being used in Europe and more recently in the U.S. to make a successful transition to sustainability. Don’t miss this FREE event!

Purpose Snippet: “Raising the voices of our local communities of faith so that our common faith-values are lived out in the Chippewa Valley is the gift JONAH brings.” – Jill Christopherson

The **Executive Board** meets the second Wed of the month at **10:00am.** The next meeting is: April 8. The **Board of Directors** meets the third Monday of the month (April 20) at 6:30pm. In April, the meetings will be at St. Bede Center.

We have a goal of adding four new congregations by **our next covenanting event:** May 17, 4:00pm at Christ Church Cathedral in Eau Claire.

Another goal: 125 **sustaining members** (individuals who make monthly donations) by the end of 2009. So far? we have 12. Contact treasurer Alta Bragg (altabra71@yahoo.com) to get your sustaining membership form. If everyone who receives this newsletter were a sustaining member, we would meet our goal!

Religious Leaders’ Table

Next meeting: Banbury Place, Gillette Room, on **Monday, April 20th** from 8:00-9:30am. Senator Pat Kreitlow will be the presenter.

A **week-long leadership training session** will be held in Techny, IL starting on July 12, 2009.

TIP: Treatment Instead of Prison TASK FORCE

2nd Tuesday (next meeting **April 14**) – 7:00pm – First Congregational UCC

Members of the TIP Task Force **presented Senator Kreitlow with petitions totaling 682 signatures** supporting an allocation of \$22 million from the DOC budget for community-based treatment, alternatives and diversions to jail and prison. This request is to be in addition to the limited program the Governor is proposing in his new budget which would provide early release for a targeted population of non-violent offenders. We are encouraging our legislators and the Governor to use taxpayer money prudently by expanding the TAD programs. States that already use TAD programs show that for every \$1 spent on treatment, etc., the state saves \$4 in incarceration costs.

Quoting from Paul Wellstone: “Significant social change comes from the bottom up, from an aroused opinion that forces our ruling institutions to do the right thing.” Join us at the **Joint Finance Budget Hearing on March 27** (UWEC Haas Fine Arts Center, 10am – 4pm, 121 Water Street) as we continue our work to force social change regarding TAD and other significant issues. (see above for more details)

Questions? Email markruddy55@yahoo.com

Environmental TASK FORCE (ETF)

2nd Wednesday 6:30pm at Unity Christ Center (1808 Folsom St in Eau Claire). Next mtg: **April 8**

>The ETF in conjunction with UWEC-Extension presented EnAct, an environmental action plan for individuals, small groups, congregations and business that uses a book club format to guide participants through five sections on sustainable living practices. The Lunch and Learn on March 6th was attended by (45) people including Clear Vision, City and County Officials, University members, Sunbow Farms, Next Step Energy and District Assemblyperson Kristen Dexter.

The meeting was to introduce the concept and the resources required to launch the program in the Chippewa Valley. The program was well-received with some reservations about resources and funding. A follow-up meeting to discuss details and to determine if this coalition of interested parties will go forward with the program is scheduled for March 31st.

Contact: Greg Raleigh – Raleighs@centurytel.net

Economic Justice TASK FORCE

meets 1st Monday 7:30pm at First Congregational UCC. Next meeting: **April 6**

We are planning a forum which will focus on how the recession is affecting the local economy.

Contact: Paul Savides – psavides@wwt.net

Health Care Reform TASK FORCE (HCTF)

We are currently developing a postcard writing campaign in support of health care reform. This is one of WISDOM's strategies for promoting change.

The targets are Congressmen Ron Kind and David Obey, and Senators Russ Feingold and Herb Kohl. Postcards, postage, and sample messages will be distributed to JONAH members via the core teams. The core teams are asked to set up the postcard writing sessions in the way best suited to the congregation. Postcards will then be mailed when ready, to provide a steady flow of support for health care reform. Hopefully the campaign will be complete by the time postal rates change in May.

If anyone is interested in helping with this effort, please contact either Martha Nieman (marlia@charter.net), Alta Bragg (altabra71@yahoo.com), or Sr. Mary Frances Gebhard (mgebhard@saintbede.org).

Words of Inspiration

“The Indians had become people to me – they were no longer my ‘field.’ While I had once declared them to be my equals, I now regarded myself as theirs. Instead of saying, ‘Oh, you are as good as I – let me help you,’ I now said, ‘I am as poor as you. God help us all.’” – Elisabeth Elliot in No Graven Image (a fictionalized account of a young single missionary’s experience in Ecuador. This book had a major impact on me when I was in my teens. –Sara Bryan)