



Start the Conversation in Your Congregation about Ending Child Poverty in Wisconsin

One out of 6 children in Wisconsin live in poverty – more than 200,000 children, almost twice the population of Green Bay. Four out of ten black children in Wisconsin live in poverty – and are four times as likely to be poor as white children.

The Wisconsin Council of Churches, the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families and the Citizen Action of Wisconsin Education Fund, have launched an initiative to build a broad-based commitment to cut childhood poverty in half in ten years -- and create a brighter future for all of Wisconsin's children.

What can you do? Begin the conversation in your congregation. On the "Combating Poverty: Faithful Citizenship Campaign" page of the WCC website, you can find tools to help you lead productive, civil conversations using the interfaith theological statement and poverty statement that have emerged from the campaign.

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Citizenship doesn't end with voting

Join us for the 2017 Advocacy Day
People of Faith United for Justice
Tuesday, April 4 at the Capitol

When we think of our role as citizens, what is usually at the top of our minds is voting. But we have just finished an election, with its long, wearying campaigns. What's left for us to do?

Plenty! Voting is only the beginning of the story. Now is the time to connect with our elected representatives to tell them our concerns and priorities, our expectations and aspirations. Whether we expect them to agree with us or not, they *need* to hear from us.

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2017 WINTER FORUM TROUBLE I'VE SEEN: CHANGING THE WAY THE CHURCH VIEWS RACISM

With Dr. Drew G.I. Hart
MARCH 3–4
Sun Prairie United Methodist Church
702 North St, Sun Prairie



Join Dr. Drew G. I. Hart and other Winter Forum participants from around the state for four timely lectures and conversations about the church and race.

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Goodbyes are never easy! As we begin the 6-week transition here at the Wisconsin Council Churches to interim leadership March 1 and I prepare to return to parish ministry, I am filled with both grief and excitement. There are so many relationships at the WCC that I will dearly miss: staff colleagues, Board members, judicatory leaders and many more that I have come to know over the years. At the same time I am filled with anticipation in returning to pastoral work. Fortunately, because I will be remaining in Madison, there are many clergy colleagues in the area I will continue to see.

I have been blessed with a rich and fulfilling ministry at the Wisconsin Council of Churches for the past 13 years. It's been an honor to work with a terrific staff, great Boards of Directors, many outstanding clergy and lay leaders who have served on our committees and commissions through the years, and our judicatory leaders, who have been committed to the ecumenical vision of visible unity we all hold dear. I am enormously grateful for the opportunity to have served you as Executive Director.

The ecumenical witness of the Wisconsin Council of Churches will continue. In an age of growing fragmentation in the wider culture, the prayer of Jesus "that all may be one" has enormous relevance and possibility through the healing and reconciling ministry of Christ that we all share.

Farewell Reception

Sunday, February 19
Christ Presbyterian Church
944 E Gorham St, Madison

2:00 – 4:00

Presentation at 3:00

Please join us as we say goodbye to Scott at the WCC and wish him well on his next journey.

RSVP at:

www.wichurches.org/scotts-farewell-reception/

Community Investment Program

Ministry as your voice in society

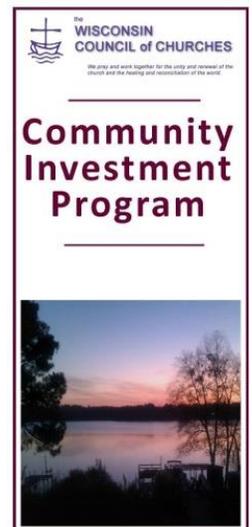
This program offers an investment option for individuals and congregations of member denominations, as well as denominational bodies, to have funds working for a brighter future for Wisconsin's low income families and communities.

The Council offers a unique opportunity to local church members, congregations and its member denominations to place dollars in CIP Fund. The Fund then invests in selected community development institutions (CDFI's) throughout Wisconsin. The CDFI's help distressed communities, low and moderate income people and minority populations to develop housing, employment and business opportunities.

Oversight and management of the Fund is taken care of by the Finance and Development Committee of the WCC.

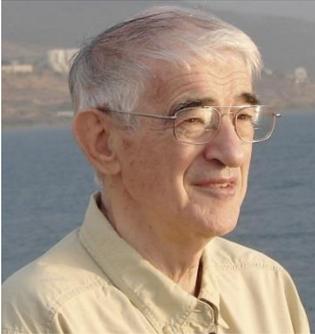
More information and brochure at:

www.wichurches.org/programs-and-ministries/community-investment-program/



2017 Washington Island Forum June 26-30, 2017

THE CHALLENGE OF THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE With John Dominic Crossan



John Dominic Crossan is generally regarded as the leading historical Jesus scholar in the world. He is the author of several bestselling books, including *The Historical Jesus*, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* and *The Birth of Christianity*, and *Who Killed Jesus?* Crossan was educated in Ireland and the United States, received a Doctorate of Divinity from Maynooth College in Ireland in 1959, and did post-doctoral research at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome from 1959 to 1961 and at the École Biblique in Jerusalem from 1965 to 1967.

Through four comprehensive lectures, Dr. Crossan will examine these questions: Is the God of the Christian Bible violent? Is the historical Jesus, Rider on the Peace-Donkey of the Gospels, or the apocalyptic Jesus, Rider on the War-Horse of Revelation, the norm, criterion, and discriminant of the Christian Bible?

Here are the daily themes:

- Tuesday: "Original Sin": Sexual Temptation or Escalatory Violence?
- Wednesday: Covenantal Law: Human Destiny or Divine Sanction?
- Thursday: God's Kingdom: Violent Revolt or Non-Violent Resistance?
- Friday: Christianity's Criterion: Historical Jesus or Apocalyptic Jesus?

The Washington Island Forum is especially tailored to lay leaders and pastors who want to deepen their spirituality and connect with the message of the scriptures in a more profound way.

Forum Setting: The Forum is a 40 year tradition and is sponsored by the Wisconsin Council of Churches and *The Christian Century* magazine. Enjoy four and one half days of worship, workshops, discussion, and contemplation in an ecumenical retreat setting on Washington Island, just north of Door County Wisconsin. The week begins with a welcome and opening picnic Monday afternoon at Trinity Lutheran Church. Tuesday through Thursday enjoy Morning Prayer and workshop sessions at the Trueblood Performing Arts Center (TPAC) with John Dominic Crossan and optional afternoon discussion groups. Friday begins with a Eucharist, a final workshop and discussion, with departure at noon.

Registration Fee: \$299 (does not include housing or meals). For registration materials and more information, go to: <http://www.wichurches.org/calendar/event-list/2017-washington-island-forum/> Lodging, meals and recreational opportunities are offered by numerous Island establishments. More information can be found at Washingtonisland.com or Washington Island Chamber of Commerce at <http://washingtonisland-wi.com/> Homes and cabins are available for rent through Door Passage Vacation Rental and sites like VRBO, Flipkey and HomeAway. The Forum is limited to 250 participants.

More information at: <http://www.wichurches.org/calendar/event-list/2017-washington-island-forum/>

Ending Child Poverty in Wisconsin

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Included are:

- A leader's guide for either one or two sessions, with handouts and an optional slideshow;
- The full text of both statements, with background;
- A slideshow (in PDF format) you can use to make a presentation to your congregation or community group; and
- Links to additional resources that can help you plan activities in your congregation and community to increase understanding and action to combat poverty.

You can endorse - **right now!** – the statement of commitment that can put Wisconsin on course to dramatically reducing child poverty:

“The people of Wisconsin need to set a goal of cutting childhood poverty in half in the next ten years. To guarantee greater equity, we also need to cut racial disparities in childhood poverty in half. These goals need to be accompanied by a commitment to evidence-based evaluation of progress.”

Sign the statement here:

www.wichurches.org/resources/combating-poverty/our-commitment-as-faithful-citizens-to-reducing-child-poverty-in-wisconsin/

You can invite the other members of your congregation to endorse the statement using this link, or a form that can also be downloaded from the site.

Citizenship doesn't end with voting

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As people of faith we are called to join the public conversation about the common good – about the kind of a state and nation we can be justifiably proud of, the legacy we want to leave our children and future generations. Past generations of citizens, through government, made the decisions and investments that benefit us today. Now it is our turn.

This spring, in collaboration with seven other faith-based organizations, WCC offers you a golden opportunity to take your citizenship one step further.

The 5th biennial “People of Faith United for Justice” advocacy day at the State Capitol will be held Tuesday, April 4. Keynote speaker will be the Rt. Rev. Steven A. Miller, Bishop for the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee.

The event begins at First United Methodist Church, (203 Wisconsin Avenue, Madison) with registrations and refreshments at 8:30 a.m., followed by a morning plenary at 9:30. There will be breakout sessions on the issues to be discussed with legislators and staff, time to get organized for the visits, and participants will go to the Capitol following lunch. The event will conclude by 4 p.m.

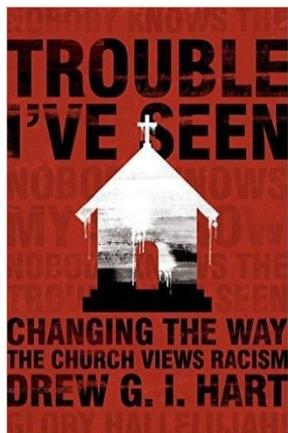
Other sponsoring groups are: the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee; the Jewish Federation of Madison; the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation; the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin; Madison-Area Urban Ministry; Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice; and the Wisconsin Jewish Conference.

Registration and lunch is \$25 per person by March 27; after March 27, the cost is \$35 and lunch cannot be guaranteed. You can register on the WCC website under “Events” or use this link:

www.wichurches.org/calendar/event-list/2017-advocacy-day/

2017 Winter Forum

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Wisconsin is facing enormous challenges right now centered on the growing racial disparities between whites and people of color in this state. Professor Hart will offer practical strategies for local churches to engage these issues in effective ways, and to be a part of the solution.

Dr. Hart is a professor in theology, an author, and an activist with ten years of pastoral experience. His undergraduate work was in biblical studies at Messiah College, he received his Masters of Divinity degree with an urban concentration at Biblical Seminary, and he recently defended his dissertation in the field of theology and ethics at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Last fall he began teaching full-time as an assistant professor in theology at Messiah College.

Regularly speaking at churches, conferences, and colleges, Drew brings together his pastoral experience with his academic training to challenge the Church on a variety of topics. He has been particularly invested in conversations on white supremacy and racism and their entanglements with western Christianity, but Drew also speaks and writes about Christian discipleship, western Christendom, Christian history, liberation and oppression, peacemaking and nonviolent resistance, urban ministry, social media, etc.

Drew has a *Christian Century* hosted blog entitled 'Taking Jesus Seriously', while also writing occasionally for *The Mennonite* as well. His own personal site is <http://www.drewgihart.com>. He regularly sneaks in tweets with the handle @DruHart and can also be found on Facebook. Drew and his wife have two young sons and live in Philadelphia.

The Winter Forum begins at 6 pm on Friday, March 3rd and concludes in the mid-afternoon on Saturday the 4th. Friday dinner Saturday morning refreshments and lunch will be provided.

For those of you traveling from afar, a block of rooms has been reserved at Quality Inn & Suites, 105 Business Park Drive, Sun Prairie. Phone: (608) 834-9889 Rate: \$90. **This rate and a block of rooms is available until February 3, 2017**

More information at: www.wichurches.org/calendar/event-list/2017-winter-forum/