

# Ecumenews

Volume 19  
January, 2012



## Preaching & Teaching the Texts of Lent and Holy Week

***Finding Joy in the Journey:  
Living and Preaching the Good News  
of Lent and Holy Week***

Monday, Jan. 23 at Wesley United Methodist Church, Wausau  
Tuesday, Jan. 24 at UMC Wisconsin Conference Center, Sun Prairie  
Wednesday, Jan. 25 at Community United Methodist Church, Elm Grove



The Rev. Dr. Gennifer Brooks

incarnate love of God in Jesus Christ.

This workshop will look specifically at the gospel texts for Lent and Holy Week for the specific purpose of finding transformative good news for preaching:

- The Profit in Shame
- The Joy in Being Foolish
- The Glory in Trouble

Rev. Dr. Gennifer Brooks is the Ernest and Bernice Styberg Associate Professor of Homiletics and Director of the Styberg Preaching Institute at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. She is an ordained elder and full clergy member of the New York Conference of

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**T**he Lenten Journey is considered a time for sober reflection as one prepares to observe the sacrificial death of Jesus. Thus Lenten sermons are generally reflective rather than celebrative.

As we journey once again to the Cross of Calvary, in the midst of life's challenges, the people of God can be transformed by the good news of Lent that offers an opportunity for celebrating the

## Sabbath in Everyday Life

***A Workshop for Lay Leaders  
with Spiritual Director Judy Nolde***

Saturday, Mar. 24, 2012, First United Methodist Church, Madison



Judy Nolde

**W**e're often better at the "bigger Sabbaths" in life, like taking summer vacations or going away for a weekend. But the smaller Sabbaths in everyday life can be harder. The frenetic pace of life and information can prevent us from taking the smaller Sabbath time we need. This retreat will explore Sabbath in everyday life, including spiritual practices to enhance Sabbath time, obstacles to Sabbath, and cultivating Sabbath by noticing and attending to God's presence. There will be presentation time, individual

reflection, small group sharing, and plenty of Sabbath time.

Judy Nolde is a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Madison, WI. She is a Benedictine Oblate with Holy Wisdom Monastery in Madison. Currently, Judy is a student in Loyola University's-Chicago, MA in Pastoral Studies program. She received her spiritual direction training through the Pacific Jubilee Program in Canada. She sees individuals for spiritual guidance, and leads small groups and retreats. She volunteers at Gilda's Club of Madison leading meditation sessions, and serves on the Missional Discovery Journey Planning Team of the South-Central Synod of WI, ELCA.

Check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. with refreshments; Workshops run 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For more information and online registration: [www.wichurches.org](http://www.wichurches.org) under "List of Events". ●

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## WCC Welcomes New Member: The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church



From l to r: Pastor Thomas Flint, St. Paul's AME in Madison, Rev. Walter Bauldrick, Presiding Elder of the Milwaukee District, AME, Rev. Bauldrick's spouse Pat Bauldrick, WCC President Bishop Linda Lee, and WCC Executive Director Rev. Scott Anderson

**A**t its December Annual Meeting in Green Lake, the WCC welcomed its 14th denomination into membership, the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The AME Church, one of the largest historic Black Churches in the United States, has 14 congregations in the southern part of Wisconsin.

Over the last two years there have been several significant conversations between AME and WCC leadership which have included local AME pastors in Madison and Milwaukee and Rev. Walter Bauldrick, the Presiding Elder of the Wisconsin District of the AME Church. This past spring WCC Executive Director Scott Anderson attended the Sunday School Convention of the Wisconsin District in Milwaukee, and in September, Pastor Thomas Flint of St. Paul's AME Church in Madison invited WCC President Bishop Linda Lee to participate in a local revival with AME Bishop John Bryant. Several WCC Board members were present for that worship service.

At a dinner following the revival service with Bishop Lee, Bishop

Bryant, Rev. Bauldrick, Father Fred Janacek from the WCC Board of Directors, two local AME pastors and Scott Anderson, Bishop Bryant gave his consent for the AME Church to join the Wisconsin Council of Churches and appointed Rev. Bauldrick to be his liaison with the WCC.

At its November 14 meeting, WCC Board members welcomed Rev. Bauldrick and all of the AME pastors from the Milwaukee District for a conversation about WCC membership. Following the discussion, the Board voted unanimously and enthusiastically to recommend the African Methodist Episcopal Church for membership in the Wisconsin Council of Churches.

Following an address to the annual meeting on December 12 about the history, beliefs and current challenges facing the AME offered by Rev. Bauldrick, delegates approved the recommendation unanimously, rising to give Rev. Bauldrick and the AME a standing ovation. ●

## Christian Muslim Dialogue: From Tolerance to Empathy

**I**n our relationships with people of other faiths, how do we move from tolerance (simply agreeing to disagree), to empathy (learning to walk in someone else's shoes)?



That was the theme of a remarkable day-long discussion at the Islamic Society of Milwaukee (ISM) with over 250 Christians and Muslims from across Wisconsin.

Co-sponsored by the ISM, the Wisconsin Council of Churches, and several Milwaukee congregations, the event marked the 10th anniversary of Sept. 11, helping us to look beyond our grief to a new day of interreligious engagement and community building. Drs. Sam Richards and Laurie

Mulvey, sociologists at Penn State University and Co-directors of the World in Conversation Project ([www.worldinconversation.org](http://www.worldinconversation.org)) facilitated our day-long workshop and taught us all new listening skills for deepening our relationships with people of other faiths.

These two professors spend their professional lives equipping students to "walk in the shoes" of people who are different from them. We were blessed by their presence and leadership at this remarkable event. ●



## Preaching & Teaching...

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the United Methodist Church and pastored local churches in rural, suburban, urban and cross racial settings.

Registration check-in begins at 8:30 a.m.; workshops run from 9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Lunch is included.

More information and online registration at: [www.wichurches.org](http://www.wichurches.org) under "List of Events". ●

# 2012 Washington Island Forum

June 25 - 29, 2012

## "Being Jesus"



Featuring Sara Miles

**H**e breathed on them.  
"Receive the Holy Spirit. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

What does it mean to live as if Jesus is real? As if you, and those around you, are filled with the power of Jesus, and sent to do his work of feeding, healing, forgiving and raising the dead? How do we practically carry out the acts of Jesus in his name?

### DAILY THEMES

(Tuesday - Friday)

#### Putting on Christ:

"Exploring the challenge, receiving the commission, and claiming the authority to be Jesus."

#### Healing:

"How healing happens, what it requires, and what it means to restore individuals and communities to wholeness."

#### Forgiving:

"The hardest miracle, and the most difficult. Prayer, conflict and the forgiveness of sin."

#### Raising the Dead:

"How to bring new life out of the grave."

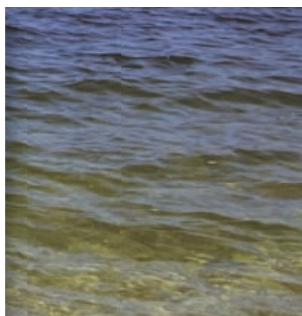
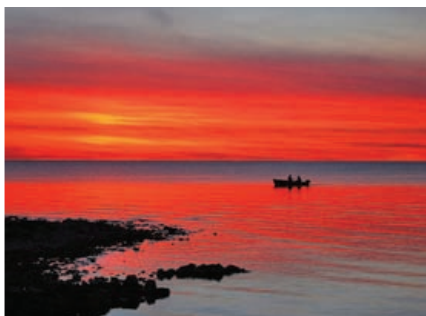
The presenter for the 2012 Forum will be **Sara Miles**, founder and director of The Food Pantry and Director of Ministry at Saint Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, San Francisco, CA.

She is the author of *Jesus Freak: Feeding Healing Raising the Dead* and *Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion*. She is a noted speaker, preacher and workshop leader nationally and her writing has appeared in the New York Times Magazine, The New Yorker, and on National Public Radio. See her web page at: <http://www.saramiles.net/>.

The Forum begins Monday afternoon, June 25 with check-in and an Opening Picnic at Trinity Lutheran Church. Sara Miles presents Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 to noon. On Friday there is a closing Eucharist and presentations until noon. See the WCC website for additional information as it becomes available.

Cost of the Forum is \$250, including materials, opening picnic for the registrant and daily refreshments. Lodging, ferry transportation to and from the Island and meals other than the picnic are additional costs. For Island information, including lodging, recreation, restaurants and other services see the Washington Island Chamber of Commerce website: [www.washingtonisland-wi.com](http://www.washingtonisland-wi.com).

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You can register for the 2012 Forum online with payment by credit card or check at the WCC website: <http://www.wichurches.org> under Calendar, Washington Island Forum. ●





Rev. Scott D. Anderson

# Executive Director's Corner

## A Season of Civility?

**A**re you as concerned as I am about the *tone* of our civil dialogue in Wisconsin? Perhaps like me, you are weary of the increasing polarization in our public discourse at the very time we need our government to provide leadership in addressing our biggest problems: an anemic economy, a shredded safety net, and public sector budgets that are out of balance.

In this New Year I continue to hold

out hope that those of us in the religious community will find the insight and the resolve to offer our state an alternative form of public witness, one that is rooted in the gospel values of neighbor-love and the up-building of community. Without taking sides in partisan political matters, can we support each other and the people of our state in sincere dialogue and honest debate that seeks the common good of all Wisconsin?

I was struck last spring, in a statewide conference call with a number of local church pastors, how most congregations are "split down the middle", neither red or blue but purple, and how ill-equipped many of us feel to provide leadership for more civil and life-giving conversations about both our differences and what we share in common.

Respectful conversations take time, patience, and Christian maturity. They require us listen to others as well as share our own views using language that is far different than what he hear in the media. They require us to acknowledge that those who hold different perspectives than our own are persons created in God's image and are united with us in the body of Christ. They call us to move beyond the walls of our churches and expand the dialogue to include others in our local communities.

As we prepare for potential recall elections in 2012 as well as the fall, 2012 election cycle, those of us in leadership within the religious community face a challenge. How can we equip ourselves to begin a *different* kind of conversation in our churches and communities, not to remain silent and either ignore or go along with the prevailing bitterness in our politics? Can we in our congregations begin to create "safe spaces" and learning environments for respectful conversations across the partisan divides and sometimes mean-spirited politics that plague our state?

The Wisconsin Council of Churches will be working over the next year to identify and promote existing resources and to develop new resources to help pastors and congregations navigate our way and help create a "Season of Civility." I hope you'll join us in that important task. ●

## Is This the Right Time for You to Invest Your Money for a Good Return?

"One thing I love about being a member of a strong Christian community is that I am regularly reminded that I can and I should make life choices through the lens of the gospel. Luckily, we are given not just the reminder and challenge to do this, but also given practical opportunities to

live our faith with the support and partnership of others.

"When I became more active in the Wisconsin Council of Churches a few years ago, I learned about new opportunities to put my faith into action. One easy choice for me was to become an investor in the Community Investment Program.

"As an investor, this is one of my few favorite places to put my

savings right now. The principle we provide works to create economic opportunity & housing for low income people around our state. And in addition to receiving this social return on the capital, we earn interest, which isn't always true of some of the other places I have put my money. The money we invest in the Community Investment Program is working to help the poor and communities across Wisconsin, and ourselves as well.

And that's a wonderful thing."

For more information about the Council's Community Investment Program, go to: <http://www.wichurches.org/programs-and-ministries/community-investment-program/> or call WCC Finance Manager Rich Fluechtling at 608-837-3108. ●



**W**CC Board member Helene Nelson, an investor in the WCC Community Investment Program, asked this question of those attending the WCC 2011 annual meeting in Green Lake. Helene also said:

"We all have many choices about where to give our time, our talents and our resources including our money.