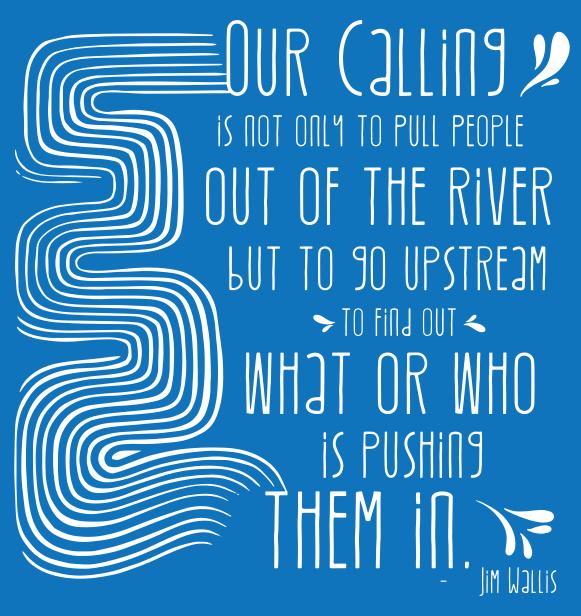
JONAH: Joining Our Neighbors, Advancing Hope





2022-2023



1310 Main St • Eau Claire, WI 54701
(715) 832-2421
www.spiritlutheran.org







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JONAH LEADERSHIP

Rev. David Huber – Interim President

Mike Steuer – Executive Vice President

Andy Thompson – Vice President Liaison

Janine Tyler – Co-Secretary

Joanne Mellema – Interim Co-Secretary

Emily Moore – Treasurer

Lori Leach – Bookkeeper

Lynn Buske – Organizer

Perla Martinez - Communications

Kari Allen and Ken Hood – Rural and Congregational Outreach Organizers

Jacky Miller and Rev Kathy Reid-Walker – Religious Leaders Co-Chairs

Judi Moseley & Susan Wolfgram – Affordable Housing Co-Chairs

John Wagner – Child Poverty Chair

Sue Waits - Environmental Chair

Tom Wirth - Justice Action Team Chair

Ray Koch – Immigration Chair

Mark Quam and Phil Swanhorst – Transportation Co-Chairs

OPEN - Mental Health Chair

Nycki Walsh and Kelly Mahoney – EXPO Staff and FREE Organizers

Sedgrick Farley – CV EXPO Organizer

Training Team: Paul Savides, Joyce Anderson, Lynn Buske, John Wagner and Perla Martinez

JONAH Board Members

Martha Nieman, Patty Scott - Eau Claire Friends
Paul Savides, Jackie Christner - First Congregational UCC
Jan Frase, Sharon Stedman - First Presbyterian
Joanne Mellema, Lacie Weatherholt - Hope United
Methodist

Ray Koch - Immanuel Lutheran

Jeff Goettl - Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

Michelle Pride - Spirit Lutheran

Jacky Miller - St James Parish / Catholic Deanery

Judi Moseley - St John's Lutheran

Mike Steuer, Susan Wolfgram - Temple Sholom

Phil Swanhorst, Mark Quam - Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Sandi Anderson - Unity of Eau Claire

Trinity Lutheran

Randy Adams - Grace Lutheran

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Eau Claire Catholic Deanery (9 parishes)

Eau Claire Friends

First Congregational UCC

First Presbyterian

Grace Lutheran

Hope United Methodist

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Spirit Lutheran

St. Johns Lutheran

Temple Sholom

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shephard

Trinity Lutheran

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Unity of Eau Claire

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Our board is comprised of leaders from institutional members that support our common values; currently there are 22 congregations, of various denominations. We are always growing, evolving and welcoming.

There is often strategic value to collaborating with other

faith-based organizations in Wisconsin or beyond.

WISDOM is a Wisconsin statewide network of 11 affiliates, including JONAH. Other affiliates include: RIC, CUSH, JOB, MICAH, SOPHIA, RUTH, ESTHER, JOSHUA, NAOMI, and

MOSES. WISDOM is a member of the Gamaliel

network. Gamaliel is an international network in more than 17 states, Great Britain, and South Africa. Gamaliel and WISDOM provide our Organizer, leadership development, training, and technical assistance support





HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

- Affordable Housing Task Force 1st Thursdays, 5:30pm, moseleyjudi@gmail.com or wolfgram.susanm@gmail.com
- Child Poverty Coalition 4th Tuesdays, 4:30pm, jwagner@chipvalley.com
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse varies, contact Lynn Buske cvjonahorganizer@gmail.com
- Environmental Task Force 1st Mondays, 7pm, waitsr@charter.net
- EXPO 2nd Mondays, 5:30pm, segdrick@expowisconsin.org
- EXPO FREE (Women's Incarceration Issues) 4th Mondays, 5:30pm, nycki@expowisconsin.org
- LIFT: Housing for Returning Citizens 1st and 3rd Thursdays 6-7pm
- Immigration Task Force 3rd Mondays, 4:30pm, rk9561@charter.net
- JONAH Action Nights last Thursday of the month, 6-7:30pm
- Justice Action Team 2nd Wednesdays at 8:30am, tom.wirth59@gmail.com
- Mental Health 1st Thursdays at 1pm AND 3rd Thursdays at 10am, cvjonahorganizer@gmail.com
- Transit Task Force CVTA varies, contact Mark Quam, mrquam@charter.net

Join a Core Team

Is your congregation a member?
Contact your board member
(page 2) to see about joining the
JONAH group at your church.
If your congregation is not
a member, contact
cvjonahorganizer@gmail.com
to learn how your church can
become one or other ways
to be involved.

Volunteer

There are always numerous ways to support the functions of JONAH without the commitment of a task force. Contact cvjonahorganizer@gmail.com to find your place within our organization – all are welcome!

Contact ...

505 S Dewey St Suite 204 Box 10
Eau Claire, WI 54701
www.jonahjustice.org
Facebook: facebook.com/JONAHCV
715-497-8732 – Organizer's Cell

Learn more!

Visit our site at jonahjustice.org

MISSION & VALUES

JONAH - Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope - exists to deepen relationships within and among faith communities and partner organizations to empower people in addressing the root causes of social injustice in the greater community.

We organize diverse people around these common values:

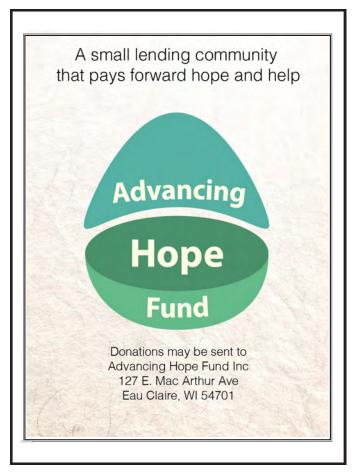
- Radical Inclusivity: Belief in the infinite dignity and worth of every human life, in the ethic of shared abundance, and the intentional inclusion of all persons - especially people who have traditionally lived at the margins of society.
- Love: Opposition to all forms of oppression and inequity, and trust in the triumphs of love and hope over cynicism, hate, fear.
- Reconciliation: The idea of repairing past harms, and restoring people and communities to right relationship.
- Living for the Future: Having the well-being of our grandchildren's grandchildren's grandchildren as the criterion for the decisions we make and the structures we support.
- Environmentalism: Belief that we are responsible for the stewardship of the natural world.

Antidiscrimination Statement

We, who believe in the infinite dignity and worth of every human life and celebrate diversity, affirm the following, and as policy do not discriminate as such:

People of all ages, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, educational backgrounds, marital status, physical or mental abilities, theological perspectives, political perspectives, and economic conditions belong in the activities of JONAH and are welcomed with open arms. We commit to finding ways to be more inclusive by strengthening our practice of acceptance and equity for all.

Adapted from Trinity Lutheran,
 WISDOM Values, and UU statement



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Immanuel Lutheran Church Trust Fund

Making small grants for innovative projects in the Chippewa Valley, including:

Chippewa Valley Free Clinic

JONAH Immigration Pandemic Emergency Fund

ELCA Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Vecino a Vecino ministry

Stand In the Light Memory Choir

Lake Superior Bridge Builders

Luther Park Bible Camp for new Ministry Center

For information and grant applications, visit

www.Immanuelec.org

3214 Golf Rd • Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701

A Note From the President...

Thank you all for your dedication to the excellent and morally good work that JONAH does in the Chippewa Valley. You have a significant impact on the quality of life of many people. More significant than most people ever get a chance to offer in their lifetime, because you make strides not in charity, but in JUSTICE. Your time, your work, and your dedication are turning unjust systems into systems of justice. Systems that work for everyone.

Justice, not charity. I dream of a day when charity has been abolished, left on the trash pile of historical failures. This is not because I don't think we should help people. We should, and we must, until our justice work is done. But I believe firmly that the need for charity is a sign of our failure as a society (and of our religious institutions). A truly just society has no charity, because "love your neighbor" is the highest virtue and the moral compass of every aspect of our communal life: employment offers living wages, everyone has access to the mental and physical healthcare they need, has a place to live, has access to healthy food, can raise their children, pay their bills, save for retirement and actually afford to retire, recover from a setback, find a job after incarceration, get an education, and... you can fill in your own dreams here.

What attracts me to JONAH is that we are changing the systems. When I was first introduced to JONAH, it was likened to a river that is filled with people. Charity pulls people out of the river; justice goes upriver and removes whatever is causing people to fall in. I support JONAH because we go up the river and make a better future.

JONAH's work is not only important, it is effective. In my year as interim president, I've had the privilege of seeing close-up how much work you all are doing, the passion that drives you, the importance of the relationships you have formed, and how many lives you are touching and making better through your advocacy, relation building, and public witness.

Thank you for trusting me with this position for the past year. I am a better person, and I think a better pastor, because of what I experienced and because of the amazing people I worked with. You push each other, and push our community, to be better, building a world in which charity has become an archaism because justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Flow on!

Blessings, Rev. David Huber, Interim President



HOW WE WORK

Founded in 2007, JONAH, Joining Our Neighbors, Advancing Hope, is an organization that uses grassroots organizing to bring people in the Chippewa Valley together around social injustices and empower them to build a more just and healthy community for all. We specifically bring people together when a bridge is needed.

JONAH believes in the principle that those closest to a problem or issue are best equipped to address the problem. The principle also informs our local action agenda - the issues we chose to address reflect what is important to our Chippewa Valley community.

5



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"It is hard to argue that housing is not a fundamental need. Decent, affordable housing should be a basic right for everybody in this country. The reason is simple: without stable shelter, everything else falls apart." -Matthew Desmond



One eviction can change the trajectory of an individual or a family's life and multiple evictions in a community are destabilizing. We aim to intervene early between tenants and landlords before the word 'eviction' is even spoken. For more information please check out the JONAH Affordable Housing Task Force Facebook page or visit www.ectlrc.org.



Susan Wolfgram
Director



Paul Savides
Director



Judi Moseley Director

Organizer Reflection

I write this on the fall equinox 2022, outside in my hammock under the tree on a sunny but chilly day. I am physiologically aware of having both a familiar feeling and being in new territory. Bright colors swirl around me as foreshadow of the impending coldness. This reminds me of how we work in JONAH right now in 2022 entering 2023. So much of what surrounds us is familiar but also feels and really is new.

We have done so much great work in JONAH in 2022. I am always amazed by the great people leading our work. 2023 brings even more, new opportunities with more partners, already in motion. Our societal problems still exist, which weighs heavy. The way we work on those problems largely is similar and worth celebrating, but there is also change in our approach and the issues themselves - not only has language shifted, the willingness to change and collaborate has grown more prevalent, but also, I feel there has been an increase in how urgent the work is. And a similar urgency in that the work looks different - humble, collaborative, realistic, and creative. There are people in our community who need change now. Some of us are aware of this urgency to the point of exhaustion. Some of us are comfortably removed from the direct impact of WHY we work on the issues we do. Some around us are determined that change does NOT occur - and that is a real threat to creating true community.

Creating a space that is welcoming for a shifted perspective and societal growth requires two things:

- 1. For YOU to be YOU, and build authentic relationships through listening (not telling).
- 2. Remember where FAITH fits in to this work, because it is bigger than us and there is much we don't have control over.

Relationship, to first point, really is the CORE GOAL of our work in JONAH. I have had a recurring conversation with people all year: They are baffled when I say that JONAH's primary mission is relationship. They think that surely we must want money or membership or commitment first. But there is no reason for us to have any of those things if there isn't relationship. We see community as the way to fix our damaged society and we want it badly enough to go out and build those relationships.

Relationships are built through listening to others first, and can be built with anyone - people we meet on the

street, new volunteers we encounter, new partners, or legislators. Building these relationships helps us: 1) practice community and 2) talk about the issues we struggle with. JONAH is the seed, the bridge, the catalyst. There's nothing else in it for us except community. Many people don't trust that, which is why we MUST keep that focus. FIRST. Healthy, inclusive relationships must come even before the goals of our task force work.

To the second point, faith, I explain often all the reasons we organize around faith communities: values over partisanship, finding people who live out their values through action, and demonstration of the ability to work together despite differences. But the one I embarrassingly forget to mention is the most important: we can't fix these large problems without God. Whatever faith you come to this work with, trust that over yourselves.

In this present moment, from this hammock, I feel like a small cog in a giant wheel - but abundance is all around. From the death that comes with Fall is nourishment and rejuvenation and reflection. The wheel I create around me determines what comes out and how I feel. Similarly, in our organizing work, the people I bring around me determines the outcome.

One of our primary principles is that No One Person Has All the Answers. We organize, on a grassroots level, because we know we need to work extensively together as a community. Each person, each organization, has its own role. But we have to be in the same room to support those roles. What is YOUR role just yours? What is truly someone else's role? Can you see the value in each person you encounter? Can we look beyond external behavior? These answers come through LISTENING. And then being COURAGEOUS and CURIOUS, to use your voice for your role as much as you can.

Let not the perfect be the enemy of the good – overcome fear of perfection and find authenticity. We will never be fully right, but we can exist in the space of EVOLVEMENT. We are always on a path of change. It doesn't have to be shockingly different; it can be familiar, but new!

Gratefully, Lynn Buske, JONAH Organizer





Halmstad Elementary Learning Pavilion

The Learning Pavilion constructed at Halmstad Elementary School permanently honors Girl Scout Troop 3055 pedestrian car crash victims. This pavilion was made possible by an outpouring of community support from the following individuals and businesses:

B&B Electric

Central Lutheran Church

Chilson Automotive Group

Chippewa Concrete Services

Chippewa Valley Excavating

Chippewa Valley Technical College

Collision Center

The Coulliard Foundation

Eau Claire Auto Group

Eau Claire Ford

Farrell Equipment

Haas Sons Inc.

Huffcutt Concrete

Izzy's Construction

The Kelley and Helgeson Families

Ken Vance Motors

Markquart Motors

Miron Construction

Morrie's Chippewa Valley Mazda

Natural Stone Veneer Int.

Next Step Energy

Numerous community members

Poligon/Porter Corporation

Powder Plus

Prestige Auto Corporation

Reese Recreation Products

Rock & Tait Exteriors

Royal Credit Union

Rutledge Charity

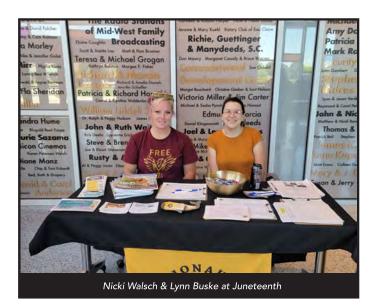
Stein Bros. Steel

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Wally Quaschnick & Michael Bestul

WEAU

Xcel Energy







On the evening of December 20, the night before winter solstice, JONAH Religious Leaders held a Candlelight Vigil for Homelessness. Our community gathered to honor our eleven homeless neighbors who died in the past year, to hear from people with lived experience about the trials and travails of living on the streets – especially in the coming winter months – and to lift up the injustice of an economy that is structured in a way to almost guarantee some percentage of the population must live in poverty, but also has enacted legal barriers to prevent good-meaning people from solving the problem.

JONAH, and our larger groups WISDOM and

GAMALIEL, is built on a strong commitment to building relationships, so to hear that we have people in our community who are already suffering from systems that drive people into homelessness for mental health, addiction, bankruptcy because of medical bills, and so on, also feel the insults, eye-rolling, avoidance, or other subtle and not-so-subtle messages from their neighbors that they should be hidden, pushed to the margins, or otherwise not be visible because their presence makes us uncomfortable. Well, perhaps we should be uncomfortable. There will be no change until enough of us become uncomfortable enough to make that change.

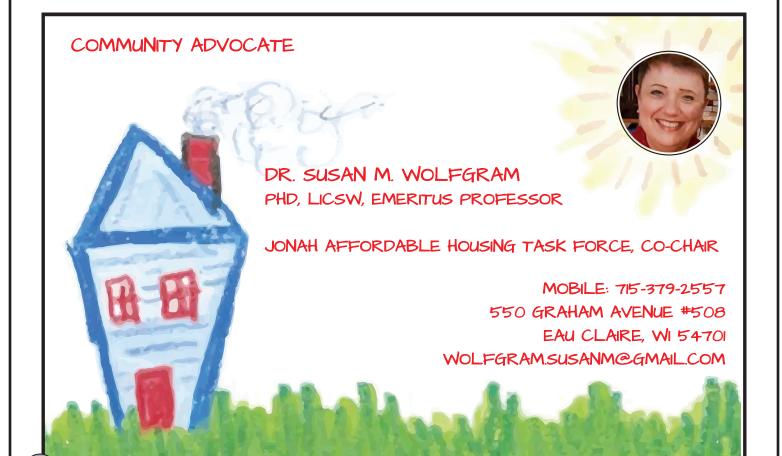


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Affordable Housing Task Force

The Need for the Tenant Landlord Resource Center: Selected AHTF Accomplishments for the Past Year Collaborative article by: Susan Wolfgram, Paul Savides, Debbie Gough, Judi Moseley, and Lynn Buske

The need for a Tenant Landlord Resource Center has been evident for many years but has been greatly exacerbated by the pandemic. Our JONAH Affordable Housing Task Force was receiving an influx of messages asking for consultation and assistance regarding tenant rights as the threat of eviction loomed and folks were losing or leaving their jobs. We were made aware of the fact that there were no eviction prevention or mediation services before a person was involved in the eviction legal process. One eviction can change the trajectory of an individual or a family's life and multiple evictions in a community are destabilizing. Early intervention between tenants and landlords before the word "eviction" is even spoken benefits everyone.

Trying to find housing to rent and/or navigate the various programs that help is often too difficult for the people who need help the most. There are no standard

applications or procedures, and even for the knowledgeable, filling out the forms correctly can be challenging. Once housed, many of the most vulnerable have trouble understanding the conditions of their lease or what they need to do if they encounter problems with their apartment or landlord.

During an affordable housing crisis, as we have just described, our community needs education, resources and referral, mediation services, housing navigation, and eviction prevention services. It is much harder for everyone, but particularly low-income residents to find housing. Once they find it, it is extremely important that they maintain that housing, because finding new

housing, particularly if they have an eviction or a bad reference from a landlord, will be difficult if not impossible.

WHAT WILL THE TENANT LANDLORD RESOURCE CENTER DO?

It will serve as a "front door" to improve awareness of resources and direct people to available services. The center will serve as a resource for both tenants and landlords to prevent problems and to mediate as necessary. The TLRC will be in a centrally located physical location near other social assistance service providers. It will provide landlord and renter education, counseling, and assistance programs that will focus on providing information, skills, and resources to existing renters as well as those seeking housing to help them navigate the lease process, know their rights and responsibilities, and learn how to be a responsible tenant.

"As a social worker, I routinely hear the stories of failed housing applications, evictions, hopes and then disappointments. It is nearly impossible for some people to obtain housing independently using traditional methods. The Tenant Landlord Resource Center is crucial for the success of both the tenant and the landlord."

- Karen Petersin, Chippewa Valley Street Ministry

JONAH is proud to
announce that we have
received funding from
County ARPA dollars to
move forward with the
start-up phase at Grace
Lutheran Church
(http://ectlrc.org/).
Currently we have no set

hours; however, when the Coordinator is hired, all information, including hours, will be posted on the website. It is our intent that the TLRC will assist in keeping people in affordable homes, prevent evictions, and thus contribute to our community by preventing homelessness.

What else has the Affordable Housing Task Force been doing in the past year?

- Provided advocacy, support, and collaboration for area groups:
 - Pablo Properties (low income housing efforts)
 - Oak Ridge Mobile Home Court
 - Developers of affordable housing



proposals (Mt. Washington, Prairie Heights, Water St Flats, Millwood Crossing, No Boundaries, Hope Village, Fountain Uppers, Sawmill Flats)

- Trained and certified one member of the core team to provide mediation services and to be able to train volunteers to mediate in landlord tenant disputes. Training and certification provided by Hamline University.
- Organized a Maples Mobile Home Park stakeholders meeting to discuss the aftermath of the sale and relocation of residents. The focus was on learning from the experience, and making changes in policies and processes so that we can prevent some of the drastic problems that occurred at Maples.
- Worked with City and County officials to advocate for better housing opportunities for residents of the Regency Hotel.
- Collaborated with the City of EC and UCP to develop a pilot project called the Landlord Support Program.
- Organized a large group of community stakeholders to form a Steering Committee for the development of a Day Resource Center for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Advocated statewide with WISDOM for increased public funding for affordable housing, and legislation that would reduce barriers to affordable housing and reduce discrimination against housing applicants.

We welcome volunteers and interested supporters. Our task force meets in person the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm, Grace Lutheran Church 2nd St entrance. Contact Susan Wolfgram (wolfgram.susanm@gmail.com), Paul Savides, (paul.savides@gmail.com) or Judi Moseley (moseleyjudi@gmail.com) for more information.



We Are Stronger Together

The mission of the

Greater West Central Area Labor Council

is to improve the lives of working families and bring economic justice to the workplace and social justice to our state and the nation. 2233 Birch Street • Eau Claire WI 54703

gwcalc@gmail.com



Photojournalist Eau Claire Leader-Telegram, 12.21.21



Mental Health Task Force

The Mental Health Task Force is JONAH's newest task force. We formed in March 2022 after the effects of the last two years finally brought this important issue to the forefront. Mental health has long been a part of the discussion within JONAH, as it is intersectional to each of our task forces. Our group includes those with lived experiences with mental health issues, some of whom work or volunteer in the field. All of us are passionate about mental health and feel compelled to take action in our community.

As a new group, we are still exploring possible directions to take. Right now our goals include raising awareness and ending stigma, building relationships in the community through one-on-one conversations, obtaining more funding for mental health peer support services in the community, and addressing the accessibility and financial gaps in mental healthcare. Since forming, we have connected with a variety of knowledgeable mental health workers at NAMI, We Adapt, At the Roots, the Eau Claire Police Department, Eau Claire County Outpatient, and CSP (Community Support Program) to get the full scope of our community's challenges and needs. We worked to create an extensive resource directory and worked with the County to update theirs. We have discussed the importance of peer support in mental health settings and how to train more peer support specialists. We wrote letters of support for two different groups working to provide mental health services in the community. A





few of our members met with the city to express the need for funding for peer support and mentoring programs. Others shared lived experience stories at JONAH's public meeting this year.

Our most recent focus is the new 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Line. The group has assessed the pros and cons and is moving towards bringing awareness to a variety of crisis-based resources based on an individual's needs and personal situation.

We begin our task force meetings by sharing centering activities to participate in as a group. We share our own experiences in mental health with each other, so we come together to address mental health needs at an individual level as well as on a community level. We welcome you to join us the 1st Thursday of the month at 1pm and the 3rd Thursday of the month at 10am in person or on Zoom. Contact cvjonahorganizer@gmail.com to participate.

In 2023 we will be focusing on two projects:

We received a grant from the Eau Claire Community Foundation to help organize and hold trainings on various mental health topics for providers, community members, people impacted by mental health challenges, and supportive family members. There are a variety of trainings that partners offer (Question Persuade Refer or QPR, ACES, and Resiliency and Mental Health First Aid) but they lack the capacity to organize as many trainings as they'd like. There are also newer trainings not as available currently in our area that we would like to bring – like Emotional CPR and Stigma Reduction Training.

The Bandana Project is a program designed to spread awareness of resources for those with a mental illness or are struggling with a mental health crisis. It was started at UW-Madison in 2016 and has spread to many college campuses across the United States, including UW-Eau Claire. Green bandanas are distributed to students across campus and are attached to students' backpacks. This indicates they are a safe individual to approach with mental health related issues, that they know where resources are, and they hold a few resource cards with outlets to get help and support in times of crisis. This project has been very successful on college campuses. The Mental Health Task Force feels this can be beneficial to the whole community as well. By carrying out the bandana project in the Eau Claire community, we hope to raise mental health awareness and help overcome the stigma of mental illness. We will distribute bandanas with resource cards attached, and offer pins for folks who have gone through a training for mental health crisis support. We have

partners who will help us with taking this program further into the community. Contact Dustin at dustinvs@gmail.com if you'd like a bandana or more information!



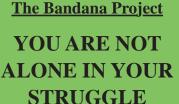


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YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS



Chippewa Valley Justice Action Team

The Chippewa Valley Justice Action Team is an advocacy focused group working to transform poverty, incarceration, and mental health care.

Our strategies include focusing on inclusive and engaging discussions, while exploring prevention-focused community strategies focused on addressing the resources and needs of folks who have experienced incarceration, with the hope to move further upstream to prevent over-utilization of the incarceration system as the answer to inequitable distribution of resources.

Strategies include:

- Inviting guest speakers representing community organizations, non-profits, legal/judicial systems, health care, mental health, incarceration system, academia, and others to learn from their work
- Be a meeting place to share ideas and resource and encourage each of us to grow and learn from one another and especially those who have been personally impacted.

Some examples of our work include:

- Reaching out and writing to community and county locally elected officials to encourage more equitable practices
- Advocating for representation of those with lived experiences on various boards and decision-making bodies
- Continuously advocating for systemic change that positively impacts the Chippewa Valley community by sharing information about this group
- Working collaboratively and partnering with academia, especially those who are interested in conducting and supporting research in areas that can have meaningful impact for community change.
- During election years, a group effort with other organizations like FREE and EXPO, plans and coordinates a panel to explore candidates' perspectives regarding jail and the current incarceration system occurring in the Chippewa Valley.
 - Forming a committee to explore domestic violence and sexual abuse

in the area: to make connections between groups working in or affected by abuse, learn from and promote within the Hispanic community, lift up the voice of those directly impacted, and to change the community narrative about this issue.



Thank You

Thank you JONAH for all your work on affordable housing, criminal justice reform, environmental

justice, fighting child poverty and encouraging mass transit. Our community is stronger because of you!





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Rev. Kathy Reid Walker, Pastor

Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance (CVTA)

The Eau Claire Transit Commission approved a work plan at the beginning of the year to help guide the commission in addressing needs and improvements to the Eau Claire Transit System, including various issues such as bus stops/shelters, bus fare structures, review of complete streets policies, increasing ridership, updating the city comprehensive plan, developing a Shaw Town Neighborhood Plan, continuation of a transit ambassador program, adding a 3-bike rack carrier system for buses, user friendly bus schedules, developing a bike share program, transit services expansion, improving transit center connections, and a potential new UW Eau Claire transit hub.

Construction continues to move forward on the new downtown Eau Claire Transit Center. The completion date for the project is mid-2024. The new Transit Center will provide bus transfer connections, space for retail, parking, and housing.

CVTA observed Transit Equity Day with Eau Claire Transit in February in honor of Rosa Parks' birthday. Rosa, a civil rights activist, fought for equity and social injustices issues prior to the Civil Rights Act. Eau Claire Transit observes Transit Equity Day annually.

CVTA observed Earth Day in April with Eau Claire Transit. Earth Day is a reminder to reduce carbon emissions and promote more alternative forms of transportation. CVTA donates each year to Eau Claire Transit so free bus rides can be offered on Earth Day.

Eau Claire Transit revaluated some of their existing bus routes in 2022. A new expanded bus route is being planned for the City of Altoona. UW Eau Claire is also interested in adding more bus services to serve the campus. Expansion of services is currently in discussion.

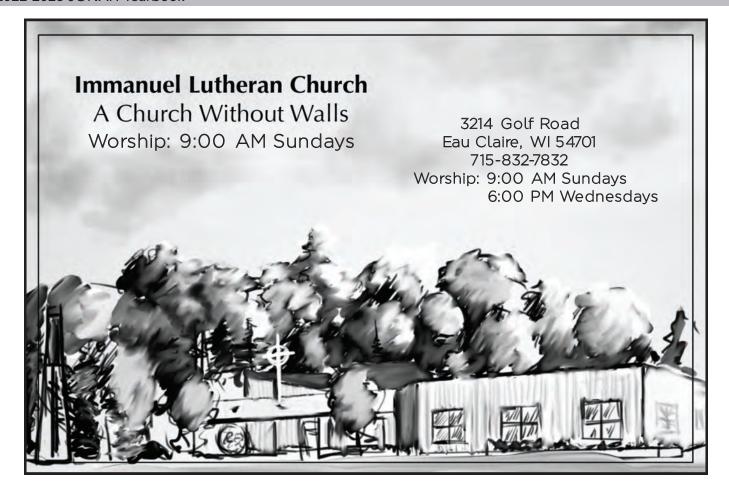
In June, the Eau Claire Transit Commission reviewed a designated trip pilot program. During the winter of 2021-2022, people experiencing homelessness were allowed to use the Eau Claire Transit system free of charge to shelter them from the extreme weather elements and meet their basic needs throughout the community. The program was a temporary pilot program. Members of the public attended a June Transit Commission meeting to address the on-going needs of people experiencing homelessness and their ability to access public transportation year-round at no cost. Funding was secured from community agencies to keep the pilot program in place through December of 2022. Starting in 2023, the City of Eau Claire will fund the program with COVID relief funding set aside from the federal government.

Efforts to bring passenger rail service back to the City of Eau Claire and the Chippewa Valley remained strong during 2022. The Chippewa-St. Croix Rail Commission was formed which consists of Eau Claire County, Dunn County, St. Croix County, City of Eau Claire, Altoona, Menomonie, Baldwin, New Richmond, and Hudson. Other entities represented on the Rail Commission include the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition, Union Pacific Railroad, UW Eau Claire, UW Stout, and UW River Falls. The Chippewa-St. Croix Rail Commission will have the legal backing and authority to move the passenger rail project forward. The Rail Commission is currently working with the Union Pacific Railroad and a potential third-party operator to provide the service between Eau Claire and St. Paul. Amtrak is currently studying Eau Claire as a potential new service route for additional regional passenger rail service between the Twin Cities, Eau Claire, Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago.

*CVTA meets as needed. Contact CVTA at chippewavalleytransitalliance@gmail.com



A united voice for transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians in Eau Claire & neighboring counties of West Central Wisconsin





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Environmental Task Force

The Environmental Task Force (ETF) is focused on 3 major issues:

- 1. Reduce overall use of single use plastics such as bags, water bottles and straws.
- 2. Increase awareness about the Eau Claire County Seven Mile landfill and the need to divert waste by composting. Advocate for community-wide composting.
- 3. Increase awareness of the environmental benefits of native landscapes over traditional turf lawns.

Reduction of Single Use Plastics

The average person in the US uses 400 plastic bags per year with the average lifespan of that bag being 12 minutes. The amount of plastic used worldwide is overwhelming. The ETF is working to create awareness about the need to reduce rather than recycle. It is estimated that



Kathy Campbell (wearing the plastic bag costume) at International Fall Fest

less than 9% of plastic waste is recycled while the remainder is incinerated, sent to the landfill, or is found as litter on land and water. Rather than a single focus on recycling, the ETF supports consuming less, finding alternatives to single-use plastic, and advocating for legislation.

Although many parts of the country are working on plastic bag bans, the state of Wisconsin currently prohibits communities from implementing such bans on plastic bags or containers.

The ETF has focused to "get the word out" about single-use plastic alternatives through outreach and community speaking events such as the Fall Festival, Congregational Green Teams, and other community organizations.

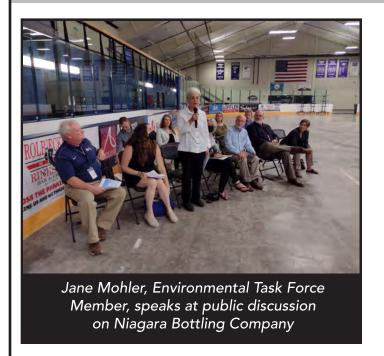
Composting

A recent Wisconsin DNR audit revealed that 34% of landfill waste is organic. The ETF gave a group of University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire students the task of evaluating the state of composting in Eau Claire and identifying barriers to community-wide composting. The students quickly realized the need and benefit of community-wide composting to divert waste from the ever-growing landfill. The students identified many barriers centered around cost and the privatization of the landfill and trash haulers. The final recommendation was to focus on community awareness and to begin in the schools.

In cooperation with EC County Recycling and Sustainability Office, a grant has been submitted to implement composting throughout the ECASD and to increase accessibility to residential composting containers. Grant availability is still pending.

Lawn Alternatives

There is growing awareness about the need to shift behavior away from the resource intensive traditional green lawn to native landscapes. Native landscapes have a positive impact on the environment as they are bee and bird friendly and don't require chemical fertilizer, excessive watering, or mowing.



The ETF collaborates with other organizations throughout Eau Claire in the area of lawn care alternatives. The Sierra Club and Eau Claire Garden Club have tours scheduled for 2023 that showcase alternatives to a traditional turf lawn. In addition, the ETF would like to develop other strategies to increase awareness of the benefits of native landscapes.

Other Action to Support ETF Initiatives

As part of the ETF, a network of congregations have formed the Interfaith Green Team which is comprised of individual congregational Green Teams. The Interfaith Green Team meets monthly to exchange ideas and resources. Each congregation develops programs within their congregation to address environmental issues, and increase awareness among congregants. For example, Spirit Lutheran has implemented a collection site for items that can be recycled but can't go in the residential curbside recycling bin. By collecting these items such as batteries, electronics, etc., they are diverting waste from the landfill and raising awareness within their congregation and community. Spirit Lutheran shared the details of their collection program at the September Interfaith Green Team meeting so that other congregations can adopt a similar program.

In summary, it is important that we all talk

about the environment and ways we can do better.

To emphasize the need to engage in conversation about the environment, ETF Member Pat Mertens shared the following Jane Goodall quote: Only if we understand, will we care. Only if we care, will we help. Only if we help shall we be saved.

The ETF currently meets the first Monday of the month at 7PM. This time changes periodically to accommodate member schedules.

Current Active Members of ETF:
Julie Lepp, Pat Mertens, Patty Scott, Kathy
Campbell, Nancy Coffey, Kathy Reid-Walker,
Rebecca White Body, Jamie Larson, Amy Kalmon,
Sharon Bussard, Christie Puetz, Sue
Wagner, Kate Hartsel, Dan Giguere, Carmen
Skelton, Sue Waits - chair
Other Active Participants:
Regan Watts, EC County Recycling and
Sustainability Coordinator
Jane Mohler, EC Water Alliance



EXPO: Ex-Incarcerated Persons Organizing

Chippewa Valley EXPO believes in the HUMAN DIGNITY of formerly and currently incarcerated people, and recognizes they come from, and are PART OF OUR COMMUNITIES. We believe men and women with conviction and arrest records should be viewed as valued HUMAN BEINGS, members of FAMILIES, and assets to COMMUNITIES.

EXPO works to end mass incarceration, eliminate all forms of structural discrimination against formerly incarcerated people, and restore formerly incarcerated people to full participation in the life of our communities.

Goals we worked on in the Chippewa Valley this year:

- Bridging the gap and working towards changing the narrative
- Policy changes and connecting with decision makers
- Addressing mental health and trauma in our jails and community
- Peer support
- Positive re-entry
- Support groups
- Housing
- Resource guides for the DCC
- Work closely with elected officials and community organizations working on criminal justice reform
- Bringing individuals in our community with



lived experience to every table.

- Unlock The Vote and voter engagement
- Improving community supervision

Chippewa Valley EXPO has had a busy year and started 2022 out strong. This year, our focus has been on educating individuals around voting and our "Unlock The Vote" campaign. This campaign is working towards restoring voting rights to individuals and to help address voter suppression being allowed in our systems. Unlock the Vote is aimed to restore voting rights to people when they leave jail or prisons. We all are aware of how important this upcoming election is and we are fighting hard to make sure all voices are heard and counted.

We had an event where we discussed our "Locked Up On The Outside" campaign and highlighted what life is like for individuals who are on community supervision. We had members of the Department of Corrections in attendance and they were able to listen to testimonies in hope that we can come together to address the issues that make it difficult to be successful while reintegrating back into our community. The event was very successful and sparked continuing conversations with the DOC and EXPO.

Nycki Wallsch and Kelly Mahoney were then asked to be guests on Wisconsin Public Radio to talk about the efforts to improve parole and probation in western Wisconsin and were able to continue the conversation from this event. EXPO plans to do more with this campaign in the months following the election.

Some of our leaders participated in Gamaliel weeklong training specifically for formerly incarcerated leaders. Here they were able to connect, work on the concepts of organizing, storytelling, power analysis, outreach, civic engagement, and recruitment.

Our leaders have been able to participate in conversations with classes and students at the University of Eau Claire. Previously, classes included topics on Mass Incarceration Examining Issues and Intersectionality Through a Public Health Lens. This fall ,our leaders will be participating in a



panel discussion during an art exhibit at the University, highlighting issues and intersectionality of social, racial, and criminal justice.

We continue to work closely with other organizations in our community, and our leaders are also a part of many other groups that tackle similar issues in our communities.

Our local chapter meets the second Monday of every month 5-6pm. We have a virtual option as well as meeting in person at The Community Table.

The current CV EXPO Organizer is Segdrick Farley. He got connected to Jerome Dillard, EXPO Director, while he served 21 years of a 30-year sentence. He was released a little over 2 years ago, partly due to the efforts of EXPO of Wisconsin. He is married with 2 small children. He is studying constitutional law at CVTC intending to go to law school. He is a peer support specialist for CC We Adapt, an On-Site Coordinator at The Community Table, and the Co-Chair for the WVRC. He is passionate about

restoring voting rights to marginalized communities. He does this work, he says,

"because I understand how being disenfranchised can have a butterfly effect that can lead to incarceration and poverty." Helping people find their voices is an important part of his work, where he creates bridges between people who have been disenfranchised with those who have never lived or seen what it's like. He hopes to help more people understand "Just because someone has been incarcerated doesn't mean that they are dangerous or horrible people that doesn't deserve dignity and opportunity."



FREE

The FREE Campaign, a campaign in EXPO, is focused on the unique issues of women who have experienced incarceration.

The FREE Campaign was founded in 2016 by women who are members of EXPO Wisconsin, when they began to notice the lack of discussion of women's particular incarceration challenges. Since then, FREE has developed networks of directly impacted women from around the state, with particularly strong chapters in Eau Claire and Milwaukee. We are meeting today in order to start to build relationships and build power in Madison, to link up with other chapters on statewide issues, and to make sure that the issues that are specific to directly impacted women in Madison are addressed.

Nycki Wallsch is the Eau Claire organizer for the Free campaign.

Immigration Task Force

"If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

This quotation is often ascribed to a woman named Lilla Watson. Lilla Watson is a Murri (indigenous Australian) visual artist, activist, and academic who works in women's issues and aboriginal epistemology (how indigenous people think and perceive the world). She expresses an important and commonly expressed sentiment. People don't need helpers; they want partners in the struggle. What is needed are people who realize that none of us are free until all of us are free. Or, as we say in JONAH, "No one does well until everyone does well." In helping-relationships you have the power and the person helped does not, and in fact, they are cast in a dependent or subservient role. To stand with one another is to share agency and power, to lift one another up. The disability rights movement popularized a similar saying, "Nothing about us without us."

In loving memory of Deb Allison Adams



The Immigration Task Force gratefully remembers our co-worker and friend, Deb Allison Adams. Deb's dedication to serving and advocating for others was boundless. For over 20 years Deb, a nurse practitioner, along with her husband Bob, organized and led groups to El Salvador to conduct medical clinics and health and wellness clinics each year. Their connection with Central America led them to bring Lidixe Montoya and her family to the Chippewa Valley which started the Vecino a Vecino (Neighbor to Neighbor) Ministry here. Deb was a long-time member, an insightful, funloving, and hard worker on the JONAH Immigration Task Force.

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." -Amos 5:24

The saying probably dates to Poland's constitutional struggle in 1505 and has echoes of our Revolutionary War slogan: "No taxation without representation." People are entitled to a say in what affects their lives.

This is a principle that we know well in JONAH. We strive to include at the table those closest to the issue, to let those with whom we partner define the struggle. It is not easy. People experiencing poverty, homelessness, or racism often are expending a lot of energy just to survive. It is not easy. But it is essential. In the Immigration Task Force, we have a long way to go but we continue to work toward this goal. I am encouraged when I read about our actions in the past year by how many contain words like: partnered with, worked with, had dialogue with, established a partnership with.

May our "together" expand more in the coming year.

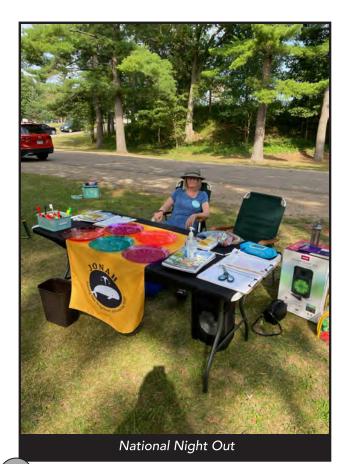
JONAH IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE ACTIONS THIS PAST YEAR:

- Continued to promote Neighbor to Neighbor Fund to assist those affected financially by the pandemic.
- Partnered with City of Altoona to create inaugural River Prairie Cultural Festival.
- Worked with Eau Claire City-County Health Department on various health initiatives, particularly related to COVID 19's effect on our local immigrant population.
- Partnered with Health Department to provide 2 pop-up Vaccination Clinics.
- Continued to work with Eau Claire Area School District on resources for affected minority students.
- Continue to partner with the Mexican Consulate of St. Paul to host a Mobile Consulate visit.
- Continued to have a dialogue with the Eau Claire Police Department on local immigrant concerns culminating in an in-person Story Share experience in

June.

- Continued to develop and present a Reader's Group with personal stories of immigration.
- Partnered with UWEC on various issues and a fundraiser for scholarships benefitting the Latinx Student Association that raised \$3700.
- Continued to partner with the AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) chapters at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Hope Lutheran Church, and University Lutheran Church.
- Helped establish relationships that led the ELCA Northwest Synod of Wisconsin to create a new ministry to cultivate meaningful relationships with the Latino American community in our area.
- Participated in the Webinar: "Walking with Asylum Seekers."
- Continue to participate in statewide WISDOM Immigration calls.

- Established a partnership with Chippewa Valley Bridge Builders asylum seeker sponsorship.
- Participated in conversations to establish a local group to welcome Afghan Refugees to the Chippewa Valley.
- Continue to communicate and work with local and state legislators on issues related to immigration, especially Driver's Cards for Undocumented Wisconsinites.
- Participated in Eau Claire's National Night Out event.
- Hosted a celebration of the gift of diversity and our immigrant past for Eau Claire's 150th birthday.







Child Poverty Task Force

Mission Statement:To promote public, private, and legislative awareness of poverty and racial disparity, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's), and their far-reaching impacts on society.

The consequences of child poverty and the lack of quality child care have been issues in our state for many decades. Poverty and affordable child care have significantly worsened during COVID. Today, Wisconsin is at a crisis point: low-income mothers want to work but quality child care is either not available or too costly in most localities. We must do whatever we can to stop generational poverty by providing resources to families with children.

A number of long-term research studies have shown the importance of quality early child development to success as adults. These studies have also shown that the best method is to provide direct payments to families. Investments in families with children also provide positive returns of investment (ROI) by lowering public taxes, increasing the gross national product, improving community safety, and reducing intergenerational poverty. When families do better, our society does better.

The direct payment method was tested last year through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which enabled direct cash payments to families with children during the second half of 2021. These payments provided support for both children and child care and, according to the Columbia University Center on Poverty and Social Policy, reduced child poverty by 30% in the first month.

The Child Poverty Task Force has worked diligently over the last year to support the following initiatives:

 Researched the impact of the ARPA on families with children. The six-month program reduced child poverty by 30% in one month. After the payments ended in December, the child poverty rate increased by 41%.

- Remotely attended the congressional budget committee meeting in which testimonials from witnesses supported direct payments to families, concluding that the best use of public funds are policies that improve the health and well-being of low-income children since these payments pay for themselves through positive returns on investment (ROI) to the public.
- Supported a Medical College of Wisconsin student (Ms. Shanzay Suhail) during the spring and summer who published two major reports on the Child Tax Credit and childcare in the Eau Claire region. The reports are titled Impact of the Child Tax Credit on Child Poverty, and Quality Childcare and its Impact on Early Childhood Brain Development and Health Outcomes. Please contact John Wagner if you wish to receive copies of these reports.
- Supported regional activities of the Wisconsin state initiative *Project Growth*. The goal of this program is to build relationships between early care and business communities. The program has been very successful in meeting this goal.
- Established a team working to collect stories of children living in poverty.
- Scheduled a press conference to support affordable quality child care, and policies that provide direct payments to families with children.

Please contact your state and federal representatives and ask them to support policies that raise families with children out of poverty and provide quality child care at an affordable price.

The Child Poverty Task Force meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 4:30 PM via Zoom. Please contact John Wagner if you have any questions or are interested in supporting our mission.





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JONAH Book Club

Whenever we hear of injustices in the world, we try to think of ways that we might be able to help. But then there are so many problems that need to be fixed and we become overwhelmed. So many people are facing discrimination- blacks, immigrants, people with disabilities, gays, poor, homeless, under-educated. There are also environmental problems that need immediate attention. There is food insecurity, equal healthcare access, the refugee crisis, gun violence ... the list goes on and on. How can a person begin to address all these issues?

The JONAH Book Club began after a Civil Rights Pilgrimage when we saw obvious discrepancies between people who have and people who do not have equal opportunities and resources. A small group of JONAH members decided it was important to educate ourselves on some of these social injustices. We decided we could bring together a group of interested people to read and discuss these issues. Maybe just becoming better informed about these problems and talking about the them would be our small way of helping. Maybe by talking to others, we will learn to take a more open-minded view of others. Maybe we could find ways to support each other and make a small differences in our social injustices.

We have had some amazing experiences since the beginning of book group three years ago. When we were reading the book, "White Fragility: Why It's so Hard For White People To Talk About Racism" by Robin Diangelo, Nanette Massey

joined our group on ZOOM. She is a black woman from New York that teaches others how to talk about race. She has been quoted as saying there are "Too many white people talking about race with only other white people." She invites whites who have

questions about racism to ask and

she will answer their questions with honesty and frankness.

When we were scheduled to read "Biased," Jodi Thesing-Ritter offered to help facilitate our discussion. She is the Executive Director for Diversity and Inclusion at UWEC. She is also the Coordinator of the Civil Rights Pilgrimage. A grant given to the University provided everyone in the group the book free of charge. A few weeks later, several of our readers met at the Pablo Center to see the Smithsonian Exhibit: The Bias Inside Us.

We have read books on a variety of topics including racism, environmental issues, transforming communities and laws that actually deprive people of their rights and privileges. This summer we read "I Take My Coffee Black" by Tyler Merritt. He is an actor, comedian, author, singer, and founder of the Tyler Merritt Project. We let him know we were reading his book and he joined us for our book club discussion. What an amazing evening. On September 7, he was a speaker at Viterbo College in LaCrosse. Again, we let Tyler know we would be there. He made a point of speaking with us and we even got hugs!

The JONAH Book Club meets every odd numbered month on the third Wednesday. We meet at 6:00. Consider joining us for all our book discussions or join us reading books that are of the most interest to you.



JONAH CORE Teams

One of the basic building blocks of a grass roots organization like JONAH is the Core Team. Typically, a JONAH Core Team is organized within a member congregation to share their congregation's interests and issues with the wider JONAH and to communicate the many opportunities for work in the wider community that JONAH provides. Core teams can also exist within non-profits or other organizations to serve the same purpose.

Core teams also share some of the important principles of organizing with their members by working on issues within the congregation or organization. They can demonstrate how one-to-ones and listening campaigns within their congregations or organizations can build community and help them to discover common interests and concerns.

First Congregational UCC Core Team

Despite the many challenges of virtual meetings, busy schedules, and COVID concerns, the First Congo Core Team had a full and successful year. We expanded to ten members, met monthly, and organized some great community-building activities. In the process we were able to share important JONAH information and opportunities with our congregation and continue to build strong

and loving relationships among our congregation member.

The First Congo Core Team activities during 2020-21 included the following:

- Held a JONAH Sunday, which included presentations by Paul Savides on JONAH's structure, goals, and activities; and Susan Wolfgram and Judi Moseley, co-chairs of the JONAH Affordable Housing Task Force, on the ongoing work of their task force.
- Recruited congregation members to volunteer at the Chippewa Valley Warming Center.
- Organized and held a JONAH Golf Fundraiser at Hickory Hills Golf Course.

We have new activities planned for the 2021-22 church year, and we invite the wider community to participate. Be sure to watch the JONAH calendar at jonahjustice.org for more information.

The JONAH First Congo Core Team meets via Zoom on the second Tuesday of every month from 6:00 to 7:00 PM. We welcome new members! If you are interested or want more information, please contact Paul Savides at psavides@wwt.net or 715-450-3695.

Events Committee

Holding public events has always been the best way to connect with many people at once. Some JONAH members see the effectiveness of holding public events, enjoy putting on events, and thus, the Events Committee is born!

Led by Jeff Pritchard (UU member) and Julia Bennker, this group has big goals. 2023 will have an events calendar of collaborations with other groups in the community as well as recurring events you can come to expect from JONAH and our task forces. The Events Committee's first project was creating the first hybrid annual event through building relationships with task forces and

community partners.

Other members of this committee are Sue Glenz (longtime annual event volunteer) and other volunteers who have offered their help as needed. We need more people who like planning events! Do you like decorating, making food, helping the day of, or playing music? Join this fun group either as a monthly member or an on-call volunteer! Contact Julia at jbennker@gmail.com to participate in planning or share your ideas about possible events you would like to see happen in 2023.

Fundraising Committee

With any non-profit organization there are operating costs associated with its daily functioning. Ours include staff, office space and supplies, media fees, and public events. Much of our funds come from church membership fees and our yearbook sponsors, and some projects are funded by grants, but the majority of our funding is from the generosity of individual givers! Our team strives to keep in contact with those donors and supplement that income with additional projects, ideas, and initiatives. Near the end of our second year, we are excited by the impact we have had as a team.

With our new bookkeeper, Lori, it has been much easier to track our impact and we are grateful for her attention to the importance of this. Thank you, Lori, for all you do! We have been sending out two fundraising letters a year since we started and that has helped us connect with our donors, update them on our work, and increase our giving during low times of the year. Joanne has also worked with Lori to make sure all donors receive a handwritten thank you letter!

Twelve volunteers rolled up their sleeves to run a Festival Foods Brat Stand for JONAH in April. It was a good experience, relationships were built, and we raised a lot of funds for JONAH!

This May, JONAH held its first Sustainer Breakfast in several years! It was also our first in-person event since COVID. We had a lot of volunteer help with the food, Spirit Lutheran donated its space, and the event was well-attended. We made really great, overdue relationship connections. Presentations on our work and the value of being a sustainer were given. Sustainers were given a pin and we earned several new sustaining members. It was a lovely day!

Our team has spent part of the year working to create items for JONAH that can either be sold or given as gifts. We started working with Tangled Up in Hue to create an image that speaks to the mission of our work (see the yearbook cover for the image!). We have also printed it on cloth

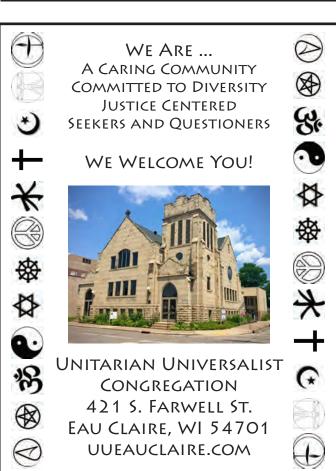
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grocery totes and greeting cards. More items will be coming!

We worked on planning the annual event and formed a new Events committee. We look forward to what we can do through our fundraising efforts in 2023 to further the valuable work JONAH does.

Fundraising Team members in 2022: Joanne Mellema, Rebecca Wurzer, Sharon Stedman, Janine Tyler, Lynn Buske, and Teri Larson





JONAH Leadership Training Team

"I have benefited in all aspects of my personal and

community relationships thanks to JONAH

The JONAH Leadership Training Team had another successful year of training community members and leaders and finding ways to spread the messages of inclusion, relationship building, and collaboration. Altogether twelve JONAH members attended the 5-week, online WISDOM leadership training, and twelve others attended the outdoor JONAH One-to-One training. New JONAH and community leaders emerged from the trainings with a renewed purpose and the tools to advocate and organize for significant and challenging issues in our community. As past JONAH president Sandra McKinney put it, "JONAH is about developing leaders."

This year, the team expanded to include Perla Martinez, Joyce Anderson, and John Wagner, as well as past trainers Lynn Buske and Paul Savides. With our newly expanded team, we have gone through a period of restructuring to focus on one-to-one training, which is the life-blood of organizing and the key to building a strong, collaborative community. As

one training participant said, "The session on one-on-ones was truly amazing. Actually practicing it gave me the courage to step out and do it."

JONAH Immigration Task Force Chair

training."

JONAH Leadership Training is first and foremost about building a community of members, leaders, and organizers that have the confidence and necessary skills to build the beloved community we all so deeply wish for. Patrick Patterson, a Gamaliel weeklong training participant, was deeply changed by the experience. "The training I received changed the way that I view God's justice work in the world and my participation in it," he said.

One of the important messages of leadership training is that the work is "not just about us." After participating in the WISDOM 5-week training, one JONAH member said, "We aren't here simply to maintain our existence but to engage in the public arena, to make a difference. That mentality is so important."

JONAH leaders and members know that it takes a communal effort to create real, long-lasting change. "I know in my heart that we must work together in community. Social justice is work that no one person can do alone," said long-time JONAH member Martha Nieman."

As the new year approaches, please think about how you can join us in the work of transforming our

- Ray Koch,

community into a place where every one of our neighbors can grow and thrive and experience all the wonderful opportunities that life

affords us. Our team is ready to provide training and support to you and to your organizations. To plan a One-to-One training or get more information, contact Paul Savides at paul.savides@gmail.com or Lynn Buske at cvjonahorganizer@gmail.com.





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JONAH Religious Leaders Group

As faith leaders of JONAH, we seek to provide the theological core for the organization. As we witness important issues in our community, we bring them to the JONAH Board, teams, and task forces. We strive to bring awareness, conversation, education, and action on those issues. As members of different faith communities and beyond, we serve with compassion and the Spirit of love that binds and guides us.

The JONAH Religious Leaders group is composed of clergy and lay leaders of many faith traditions. We stand together as communities of faith, reflecting our common values, working for change and justice for all members of the Chippewa Valley. We build relationships with one another while building support for the work of JONAH through our faith communities.

This past year ,we brought to the attention of our board, task forces, and our community our concern for our unhoused population not having a warm place to go to in extreme cold during the





day. We hosted a prayer vigil on a very cold night so people could have an experience of what it is like to be out in this cold weather. Some of our unhoused friends witnessed their desires and needs. Because of this awareness there was a community effort to try to do better and secured a warming center on the weekends and extreme cold days for them on Farwell Street in a church owned by Christ Church Cathedral. This is just one example of the importance of faith leaders bringing an awareness of justice concerns in our community.

We also organized a vigil for Ukraine, which gave many people (many not typically connected to JONAH), including people from Ukraine, a place to connect and grieve and pray together during such a tough time.

JONAH Religious Leaders recently resumed meeting in person over lunch at 12:30 on the second Tuesday of odd-numbered months. It is hosted by the various faith traditions and we always welcome new members. You can check out our website for where the meeting will be held. If you would like to join this group, please contact Lynn Buske at: cvjonahorganizer@gmail.com.



Golf Clubs gripped and repaired Dave Morley N460 Probst Road New Auburn, WI 54757 715-829-6529 demorley47@gmail.com

Morley Custom Golf congratulates JONAH on all the good things you have done in and around the Chippewa Valley. Thank you for making a positive difference in the lives of many.





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JONAH's Partners

With JONAH's very mission being about bringing people together and sharing our gifts toward a common goal, so much of what we do is with partner groups! We deeply treasure all the groups we collaborate and connect with. We can't possibly list them all here! Here is a sampling from several good allies in social justice work. We hope by reading these you understand on a deeper level how JONAH works – alongside others, learning from those in the thick of the issues, and often as a catalyst for change empowering those that can make a difference.

Advancing Hope Fund

Ten years ago, we had a crazy dream of providing small interest free loans. That dream has matured into an interesting, exciting program. Here is a summary of what this all-volunteer group has accomplished. It should be noted that AHF evolved out of JONAH'S economic justice subcommittee a decade ago.

Loan History:

- Total loans made \$75,000
- 114 loans to 58 individuals
- 63% of the total we have loaned from the board
- has been paid forward by our recipients

Financial Wellness:

- Meet with financial counselor
- Monthly contact with a partner
- Automatic repayment withdrawal
- Incentive plans

Each neighbor shares the weight and anxiety of an unpaid bill or need. Our loan recipients range in age from 23 to 90 years old. Their requests include car repairs, rent, medical bills, glasses, and to pay off high interest loans. One of our loan recipients is a 72-year-old veteran who was facing eviction two years ago. AHF assisted him with two months' rent to keep him from becoming homeless. We have worked with him to develop

and maintain a financial plan. With our encouragement, Joe has applied for and received grants from three different social agencies which have helped him to reduce his outstanding debts. He believes that, with our continued assistance, he will be able to maintain his apartment and eventually become debt-free.

Changing the current system of high interest loans with mind boggling language surrounding finance charges remains a long-term systemic change AHF is working on. For now we are providing hope and help (not charity) for those caught in the financial snares set for those living on economic margins.

At the Roots LLC

At The Roots LLC is a peer-run mental health and substance use support center. Our mission is to elevate the voices of lived experience and promote healing through community and connection. JONAH has been an integral partner in this mission. Our partnership and work with JONAH have given us access to funding, helped us make connections, and acted as a support for us in the work we do. Being a part of JONAH has allowed us to walk through doors not previously open, sit at tables we'd previously not been invited to, and connect with minds and hearts we'd yet to meet. So many committees and organizations have meetings about meetings and never actually do anything. But JONAH is different. JONAH is about action and about changing the communities around us for the better - just like At The Roots LLC. This is why we're grateful for our partnership with JONAH and the incredible game-changers and connection-seekers that are doing the hard work every day to help us all live better in the Chippewa Valley. – Renee Sommer

Chippewa Valley Street Ministry

We have communications with JONAH and



work on homelessness and the Affordable Housing Task Force for homelessness prevention. We hope to work together soon with rental needs and working with landlords. We have benefited with this partnership as it is good to have supportive partners in the community because JONAH understands what people are going through and can provide better support and work on a daily basis so unhoused people have their needs met.

- Karen Peterson

Community Table

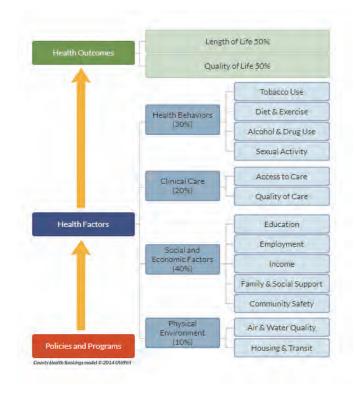
With our partnership we serve as a member of the Affordable Housing Task Force. We collaborate well and highly recommend involvement. Collaborating with JONAH keeps us in the know and we are able to gain perspective and share with other collaborations and community members. – TJ Atkins, Executive Director

Eau Claire City-County Health Department

Eau Claire City-County Health Department collaboration with JONAH 2021-2022

There are a variety of factors that impact a person or community's ability to be healthy. Personal health behaviors such as eating well and exercising account for only about 30% of a person's opportunity to live healthy and well. The widely used Health Outcome Model from University of Wisconsin shows at least 50% of health outcomes are connected to these social, economic, and environmental factors. These factors can include income, housing, education, and access to healthcare -- some of our most basic needs. These factors are known as the social determinants of health and greatly impact how long and well we live. We know the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted and brought attention to the inaccessibility of some of these basic needs, and how they affected different

populations across Eau Claire County .



The Eau Claire City-County Health Department and JONAH have maintained a long-standing partnership centered around a shared commitment to health and health equity, meaning everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as heathy as possible. Our shared focus on addressing the social determinants of health and engaging the community around these efforts is more important than ever.

Some our shared work this past year includes:

- Continuing work with JONAH to identify and address barriers to related accessing and understanding COVID-19 information. The Health Department offered information related to testing, vaccine, and changes in population safety measures. Members of JONAH have been engaged throughout the COVID-19 response conducting outreach and education efforts as trusted members of the community. They provided feedback and experiences of the individuals served to help address barriers to testing, vaccine, or general resources.
- Addressing incarceration as a public health issue – JONAH and the health department continue to collaborate around the social and economic factors that

connect health and incarceration. Health department staff met regularly with LIFT project partners to reduce barriers to housing for people with conviction history focusing on providing community education on the issue - lifting the voices of those impacted and highlighting the connection to the social determinants of health and health outcomes.

Participating in the Building Relationships
 Training to promote better listening and
 understanding of the self-interest or
 personal drivers among different topics of
 health and levels of community
 engagement.

The health department is excited to continue its relationship with JONAH and to find ways to use each other's strengths as we strive for a healthier Eau Claire. – Cortney Sperber, Policy and Systems Division Manager

LGBTQ+ Center

This past year, Chippewa Valley LGBTQ+
Community Center has continued to enjoy sharing its office space with JONAH, and growing our involvement with one another. Individuals active in our organization were able to develop skills through the one-on-one training provided by JONAH and we have worked together to develop our office volunteer program to make sure there's always a friendly face when people stop by to visit. We value the opportunities we have had to collaborate with this organization, and look forward to seeing where the next year takes us!

- Kayla Johnson, Executive Director

National Alliance for Mental Health (NAMI) - Chippewa Valley Chapter

NAMI has recently gotten connected with a part of JONAH involved with issues around mental health in which we are currently finding a lot of common ground. One area of focus is certified peer specialists which is resource that we want to make more recognized and available in our community. We are hopeful that our involvement with JONAH will prove beneficial in improving mental health in our community.

- Barb Habben, Education Program Coordinator

Rain/Postcard Project: Postcard Art with Heart

by Amy Renshaw

2022 was the second year for the Chippewa Valley Community Postcard Project. Area residents expressed their commitment to racial justice and their creativity by designing an estimated 300 postcards. Collages of the postcards will be displayed at businesses and churches throughout the area this fall.

The Postcard Project invites you to choose a question about racial justice to respond to on your card with drawings, words, shapes, colors, or a collage (stick figures or just plain words are welcome!):

- What can I do to build race, amity, & friendship in the Chippewa Valley?
- How can I overcome a prejudice I have about people of a certain group?
- What can I do to connect with someone from a race or culture other than mine?
- What skills or strengths can I use or develop to help create racial justice?
- What would the Chippewa Valley look like if people of all races and cultures were welcomed with justice, compassion, and appreciation?

The project is an outreach of the Race Amity Interfaith Network (RAIN), a collaboration of people from diverse faiths working together to take action for racial justice and unity for the betterment of our community. RAIN grew organically out of an online discussion group on the topic that was initiated by the First Presbyterian Church and coordinated by John Wagner.



As a sponsor of the Postcard Project, JONAH provides helpful support and encouragement, for which the project team is most grateful. Other generous sponsors are Uniting Bridges of Eau Claire, Black and Brown Womyn Power Coalition, Chippewa Valley Equality Initiative, CVLGBTQ+, and BaredFeet.

Postcard Project art-making tables could be found at a variety of area events, including UWEC CultureFest, Pride Day, the Banbury Place Art Crawl, Juneteenth, a 150th Birthday Celebration, an event at the Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, and book sales at the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library. RAIN contributed to some events by displaying materials about interfaith cooperation throughout history.

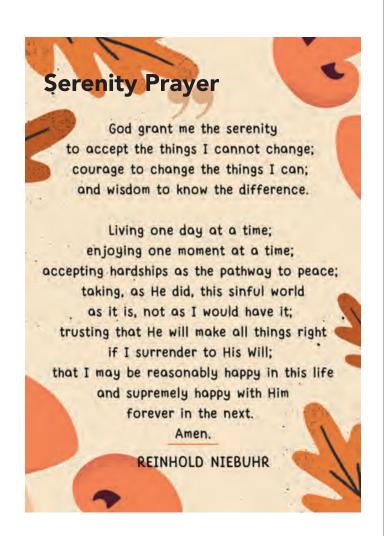
The RAIN and the Postcard Project team are happy to continue sponsoring tables and collecting postcards throughout the year. If you'd like to add the fun of art to your event, please email cvpostcard@gmail.com or call Amy Renshaw at 715.712.1111. Or simply mail your 4x6-inch decorated postcards to 930 Galloway St., Mailbox #4, Eau Claire, WI 54703.

Thank you for your support of racial justice and friendship in our diverse community!

Wisconsin Public Education Network (WPEN)

I am thankful that I have formed relationships with many organizations in Eau Claire. Eau Claire is rich with those that take the time to make our environment fun, safe, and loving. JONAH, for me, is one of these organizations. It reaches so many aspects of what and who we are as a community. I serve on the Child Poverty Task Force. As an organizer for the WI Public Education Network, JONAH interfaces with my work in rural Wisconsin on a daily basis. The coalition work that is happening now will only make us stronger in the future.

- Chris Hambuch-Boyle, NW WI Organizer for the WI Public Education Network



Financials

The JONAH 2021 financial report is provided to give you an overview of our finances through December 2021. As in past years, our major expenses are in staffing and monthly WISDOM affiliation dues.

A key income factor in preparing our budget is the financial support from our Sustaining Members. Our sustainers commit to monthly giving through automatic monthly donations. In addition, we have local congregations that provide support through yearly dues. Our sustaining members and congregations, along with others who generously donate throughout the year, allow JONAH to continue working to build bridges and bring equity and justice to our community. We thank all of you who have so generously given!

If you are not a sustaining member of JONAH, we would ask that you consider becoming one today! As we plan for future work in our community, these monthly commitments ensure that we meet our financial obligations and allow us to plan for years to come.

JONAH		
Year to Date Profit and		
January - December 2021	1	
Income		Total
INCOME		
Congregational Dues		5,850.00
Interest Income		5,830.00
Support - Business		4,823.13
Support - Community		1,849.42
Support - Congregational		1,100.00
Support - Individual		28,434.11
Support - Legacy & Memoriam Giving		15,000.00
Support - Sustainers GEMS		8,227.77
Support - Unrestricted Grant		7,500.00
Total INCOME	\$	72,789.64
PAYMENTS & REIMBURSEMENTS		·
Annual Event		320.00
Event Celebration Auction		1,194.72
Event Yearbook		10,633.32
Reimbursement for Services		3,000.00
Total PAYMENTS & REIMBURSEMENTS	\$	15,148.04
Total Income	\$	87,937.68
Gross Profit	\$	87,937.68
Expenses		
Charitable Contributions		1,500.00
Contracted Services		
Bookkeeper		4,550.00
Total Contracted Services	\$	4,550.00
Events /Meeting Expense		
Other Events		91.19
Total Events /Meeting Expense	\$	91.19
Office Expenses		
Advertising & Marketing		1,716.43
Insurance		552.64
Office Rent		1,204.53
Office Supplies/Expenses		305.95
Online Processing Fees		416.36
Printing		1,405.08
Software		250.17
Total Office Expenses	\$	5,851.16
Professional Fees and other payments to IC		
Benefits		
Cell Phone		600.00
Internet		550.00
Mileage		1,850.00
Payroll Taxes - JONAH		3,905.87
Total Benefits	\$	6,905.87
Professional Fees		
Communication Fees		4,549.98
Organizer Fees		31,100.00
Total Professional Fees	\$	35,649.98
Total Professional Fees and other payments to IC	\$	42,555.85
Volunteer and Donor Relations		317.47
WISDOM Expenses		10.000.00
Affiliation Dues		12,000.00
Database Fees Total WISDOM Expenses	<u>s</u>	480.00 12,480.0 0
Total Expenses	\$ \$	12,480.00
Net Operating Income	\$	20,592.01
net Operating income	•	20,392.01

JONAH Profit and Loss Restricted Funds Through December 31, 2021																	
		ordable ousing		Carrie wcomer	Child Poverty	HD Covid Vaccine Grant	H Sch	lersrud holarship Fund	lmı	nigration sk Force	Kresge Grant	Men Hea		Suicide Prevention	Tenant Landlord Resource Center		TOTAL
RESTRICTED FUNDS INCOME					-												
Restricted Income		5,657.27		7,801.62	1,750.00	5,000.00		1,500.00		893.64	23,849.30	2,0	00.00	2,500.0	60,722.27		111,674.10
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS INCOME	\$	5,657.27	\$	7,801.62	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$	1,500.00	\$	893.64	\$ 23,849.30	\$ 2,0	00.00	\$ 2,500.0	\$ 60,722.27	\$	111,674.10
RESTRICTED FUNDS EXPENSES Restricted Expenses		3,072.27		3,099.99	125.00	2,000.00				198.96	23,849.30				16,282.63		48,628.15
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS EXPENSES	\$	3,072.27	\$	3,099.99	\$ 125.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$	0.00	\$	198.96	\$ 23,849.30	\$	0.00	\$ 0.0	\$ 16,282.63	\$	48,628.15
RESTRICTED FUNDS BALANCE	\$	2,585.00	\$	4,701.63	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$	1,500.00	\$	694.68	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,0	00.00	\$ 2,500.0	\$ 44,439.64	\$	63,045.95

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Reflections

Prayers

Prayer for Meeting

Lord God,

We come to you today asking for your guidance, wisdom, and support as we begin this meeting.

Help us engage in meaningful discussion; allow us to grow closer as a group and nurture the bonds of community.

Fill us with your grace as we make decisions that might affect the members of our community. And, continue to remind us that all that we do here today, all that we accomplish, is for the the pursuit of truth, for the greater glory of you, and for the service of humanity. We ask these things in your name.

- Adapted from prayer by Ted Torbeck, Xavier University

Prayer for Clear Intention

Forgive us God for our tendency to judge others with whom we disagree. Help us to see that what is important to you is not our views on different topics but our actions toward those in need. In your name we pray. Amen.

A Prayer from the Bahá'í Tradition

O Thou kind Lord! O Thou Who art generous and merciful! We are servants of Thy threshold and are gathered beneath the sheltering shadow of Thy divine unity. The sun of Thy mercy is shining upon all, and the clouds of Thy bounty shower upon all. Thy gifts encompass all, Thy loving providence sustains all, Thy protection overshadows all, and the glances of Thy favor are cast upon all. O Lord! Grant Thine infinite bestowals, and let the light of Thy guidance shine. Illumine the eyes, gladden the hearts with abiding joy. Confer a new spirit upon all people and bestow upon them eternal life. Unlock the gates of true understanding and let the light of faith shine resplendent. Gather all people beneath the shadow of Thy bounty and cause them to unite in harmony, so that they may become as the rays of one sun, as the waves of one ocean, and as the fruit of one tree. May they drink from the same fountain. May they be refreshed by the same breeze. May they receive illumination from the same source of light. Thou art the Giver, the Merciful, the omnipotent.

—'Abdu'l-Bahá

Prayer of Disturbance

Lord make me a channel of your disturbance. Where there is apathy, let me provoke,

Where there is silence, may I be a voice, Where there is too much comfort. and too little action. Grant disruption. Where there are doors closed and hearts locked, Grant me the willingness to listen. When laws dictate and pain is overlooked . . . When tradition speaks louder than need. . . Our own church . . . Our own poor . . . Disturb us, O Lord, Teach us to be radical, Grant that I may seek rather to do justice than to talk about it; To be with as well as for the poor; To love the unlovable as well as the lovely; To touch the passion of Jesus in the Pain of those we meet; To accept responsibility to be church. Lord, make me a channel of your disturbance.

— Gina Kohlhelpp

Blessing for the Earth

Blessed are all creatures who walk along your surface or swim in your waters or fly through your air, for they are all our relatives.

Blessed are all people who share this planet, for we are all one family and the same spirit moves through us all. Blessed is the sun, our day star, bringer of morning and the heat of summer, giver of light and life.

Blessed is the moon, our night lamp, ruler of the tides, protector of all women, and guardian of our dreams. Blessed are the stars and planets, the time-keepers, who fill our nights with beauty and our hearts with awe. O Great Spirit whose voice we hear in the wind and whose face we see in the morning sun, blessed is your

Help us to remember that you are everywhere, and teach us the way of peace.

A Prayer written by Helen Weaver from Earth Prayers

O our Mother the Earth, blessed is your name. Blessed are your fields and forests, your rocks and mountains, your grasses and trees and flowers, and every green and growing thing.

Blessed are your streams and lakes and rivers, the oceans where our life began, and all your waters



2022-2023 JONAH Yearbook

that sustain our bodies and refresh our souls. Blessed is the air we breathe, your atmosphere that surrounds us and binds us to every living thing.

Reflection Prompts

"Who I will be is deeply related to who you are. In other words, we are each impacted by the circumstances that impact those around us. What hurts you hurts me. What heals you heals me." – Jacqui Lewis (inspiration from the African concept of "ubuntu," which means "I am who I am because we are who we are.")

"Each one of us matters, has a role to play, and makes a difference. Each one of us must take responsibility for our own lives, and above all, show respect and love for all living things around us, especially each other."

– Jane Goodall

Group Reflection

Take a silent moment together, maybe journal individual thoughts, on:

- Why are we here?
- Why are we in this work?
- Are our present actions truly in line with our mission and goals?
- Are there others that should be part of our conversations?
- Are we doing the deepest and best work we can?
- Where can we strive to do better?
- Where are we holding ourselves back?
- What do we need to listen to?
- What are we getting out of this work for ourselves?
- Can we improve our relationships between each other?
- Are all voices heard, are tensions and triggers supported?
- What unspoken agreements about how we work need to be spoken?

Practices

Building Bridges, (song) by Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp Building bridges between our divisions I reach out for you won't you reach out for me? With all of our voices and all of our visions Listen we can make such sweet harmony

Listen we can make such sweet harmony

4-7-8 Breathing:

This is an excellent reset tool and anxiety reducing technique

Breath in through your nose for 4 counts, hold the breath for 7 counts, breath out through your mouth for 8 counts. Repeat 3 – 4 times.

A Gathering to Self,

By Sandra Anderson - Life & Soul Coach, LUT, R.M., K.T

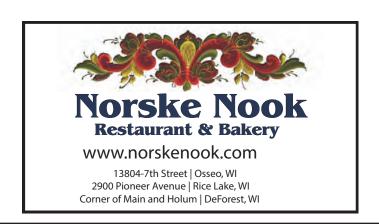
Mindfulness Practice

Take a moment and set the intention that you will be present, centered and grounded.

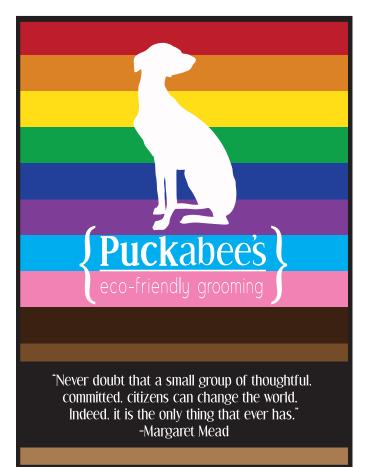
- 1. GROUND. Feel feet on the ground. Get present now. Look around space.
- 2. BREATHE: Take 3 4 cleansing Breaths. Pay attention. Fill the lungs full and release.
- 3. BODY: Direct your mind's eye to feel the bottom of right foot. Hang about for few seconds. How does that feel? Repeat same with left foot. Shins. ...knees... sit bones, etc
- 4. CLEARING EXERCISE: This can be done anytime, anywhere. What is important is your intention. Gives freshness to the next moment or day. This can be made more precise, adding of your choice. Simply ask God / the Universe/your Guardian Angel to clear you: Please clear my mind... Clear my mind. Please clear my body.... Clear my body... Clear my body. Please clear my soul... Clear my soul... Clear my soul... Clear my psychically. Please clear my Home... Clear my home... Work area... boat... bed... planet, etc.

Silent Meditation

Sit in silence and focus inward on your breath and your body's signals and sensations. Each silent meditation session teaches you how to find greater Awareness and Acceptance.









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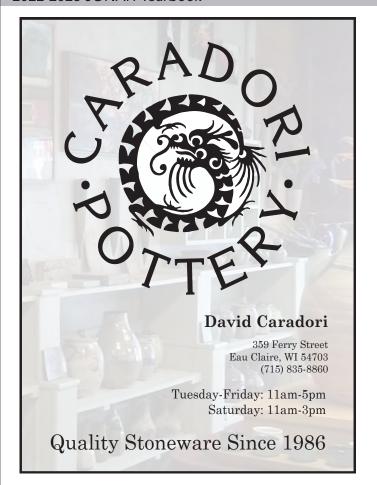
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JONAH of the Chippewa Valley's

Affordable Housing Task Force

Our Mission: To facilitate culture change in Eau Claire City and County so that all stakeholders are informed about the lack of safe, good quality, affordable housing and are motivated to take actions to address it through public and private initiatives.

Meeting Time + Location:

Monthly on the 1st Thursday, 5:30-7pm, at Grace Lutheran Church (202 W. Grand Avenue, Eau Claire)

Task Force Core Team:

Susan Wolfgram - wolfgram.susanm@gmail.com Judi Moseley - moseleyjudi@gmail.com Paul Savides - paul.avides@gmail.com

An open and accepting Spiritual community. A retreat-like setting in the city. We are a vibrant spiritual community embracing the oneness of all, radiating peace, love, joy and abundance. of Eau Claire Centered in Divine love, we co-create an enlightened world of harmony and abundance Unity of Eau Claire 1808 Folsom Street Proud to be one of JONAH's Eau Claire, WI 54703 715-836-0010 original covenanting faith groups. www.unityeauclaire.org





Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance (CVTA) is a united voice for transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians in Eau Claire and neighboring counties of West Central Wisconsin.

www. Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance.com

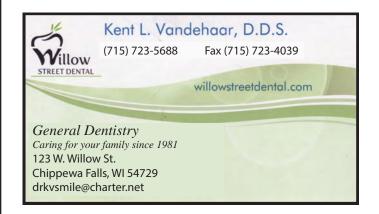
chippewavalleytransitalliance@gmail.com

Find us on **f**





Chippewa Valley Street Ministry works on the street and in the elements with community members who are unhoused. CVSM also assists individuals and families experiencing extreme poverty. Food, clothing, and other essentials are provided at no charge and provided respectfully to maintain the dignity of each person. For more information, contact CVSM via our Facebook page or website, chippewavalleystreetministry.org









Child Poverty Task Force

It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

- Frederick Douglass



Photo: Center for Disease Control

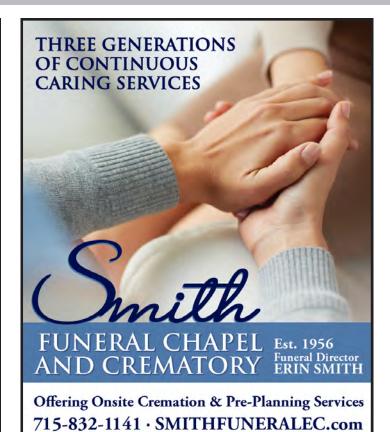
Our Mission:

To promote public, private, and legislative awareness of poverty and racial disparity, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's), and their far-reaching impacts on society.

Poverty is the worst form of violence. - Mahatma Gandhi

Please contact your representatives! Ask them to vote yes for federal and state legislation supporting families with children.





"There is great power in silence. There are things that words can't express or explain or that words just are not good enough. And in those instances silence really is the great gift and especially to be with other people in silence. Our message is that this is not how it has to be, that there are a lot of us who want peace, who don't want to see war anymore and a way of saying maybe no one in the Ukraine will actually see us here in Eau Claire, but maybe. But it's our way of saying to the folks in Ukraine we stand with you." Rev. David Huber, JONAH Interim President



Vigil for Ukraine March 2022

Frequently Asked Questions About JONAH

I have a problem! How can JONAH help?

If you or a community you care about is facing a problem, injustice, or inequity here in the Chippewa Valley, JONAH is here to work with you as an advocate and a resource. Our grassroots model keeps you and your community at the center of all problem solving. JONAH will work with you to evaluate the situation and connect you with appropriate community members and leaders. We can help you develop effective ways to converse with them, and can also provide training on how to be a leader in addressing challenges. Please, contact our organizer if we can be of help or support to you.

How does JONAH decide what issues it works on and policies it supports?

JONAH is a grassroots organization, which means that its local members and collaborators, ordinary members of our community, determine what issues JONAH pursues in its advocacy. The beginning of any JONAH advocacy project may result in any number of ways, be it a direction from our board of directors, collaboration with another agency or non-profit organization, or a request for help from an individual about a community problem.

I am not a member of a faith community, can I still participate in JONAH?

Yes - JONAH's mission seeks to connect and work with all people of common values to build a stronger community. So if you hold our common values (found on page 2), you should absolutely participate in JONAH in whatever way works for you.

What does it mean that JONAH does "faith-based civic-engagement" and "congregational-based community organizing"?

In short, it means that JONAH collaborates with existing faith communities that share the above values to promote and support work that can bring about enduring, positive change in our community. However, we also work with groups and communities that are not faith-based, but who also share similar values. JONAH has been shaped and led by a diverse group of members or many different faith-based organizations around the Chippewa Valley including churches, congregations, religious orders, mosques, temples, synagogues, and associated groups. This is because despite any differences, members of these faith communities share the common values of love, hope, stewardship, and justice.

Is JONAH a political organization?

Sort of - JONAH does take stances on issues that affect the lives of individuals and our whole

community. JONAH is intentional about supporting ordinary people participating in the decision-making process. Examples of "political" issues JONAH has advocated for are: expanding bus services, improving recycling practices, expanding drug courts, ending child poverty, creating affordable housing options, improving the criminal justice system, and reforming immigration policy

Does JONAH participate in partisan politics or support political parties or candidates?

No - JONAH does not participate in partisanship. JONAH's mission requires that people come together, and as a result JONAH has engaged with legislators and community leaders from all political persuasions. More than that, while issue discussion and advocacy is protected by law, as a federally recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization JONAH is strictly forbidden by law from supporting or opposing and political party or candidate.

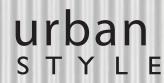
What are WISDOM and the Gamaliel National Network, and what is JONAH's relationship to those organizations?

WISDOM (statewide) and the Gamaliel National Network (nationwide) are both non-profit organizations that do essentially what JONAH does, but on larger scales. They both connect primarily with religious congregations to empower ordinary people to form a common voice and effectively participate in issues of political, environmental, social and economic justice. JONAH is 1 of 11 WISDOM affiliates. In addition to collaborating with WISDOM and Gamaliel on issues that expand beyond our community, JONAH receives training and technical assistance from WISDOM and Gamaliel which help us work and organize effectively.

How is JONAH funded, and how does JONAH spend its budget?

JONAH's income comes from four sources: dues paid by member religious organizations, grants, grassroots funding events, and community donor support. None of JONAH's budget is from any branch of government. JONAH's expenditures are by and large for staffing and training. Organizing people and building relationships is labor-intensive and demanding of time. JONAH's paid organizer has the responsibility to create effective connections, manage meetings, coordinate with other organizations and the board, as well plan messaging and communications. The paid organizer is supported by a part-time communications coordinator. Training fees go towards the regular training for the paid organizer as well as sponsorships for folks who can't afford the training, to ensure we can build community leaders.





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"Alone we can do so little: together we can do so much."

-HELEN KELLER

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2022-2023 JONAH Yearbook Jamf



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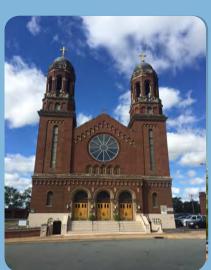
St. James the Greater

The Catholic Parishes of the Eau Claire Deanery as a group are a member of JONAH. We are supportive not only of works of charity, but also of justice. A major way we do this is to function ecumenically through JONAH. Our purpose is to carry out the role of justice in contemporary life, based on Sacred Scripture and Tradition.



St. Joseph (Rock Falls)

St. Joseph's (Elk Mound)







Sacred Heart / St. Patrick's Parish

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