

**Wisconsin Council of Churches Annual Report**  
**By Rev. Scott D. Anderson, Executive Director**  
[www.wichurches.org](http://www.wichurches.org)

*We pray and work for the unity and renewal of the church  
and the healing and reconciliation of the world.*

Tracing its roots back to the early 1940's with an inter-denominational recreation ministry for young people, the Wisconsin Council of Churches (WCC) now encompasses 16 denominations with approximately 2,200 congregations and over one million church members statewide. The Council welcomed the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME) and the Mennonite Church into membership this past year.

**2012 Accomplishments**

**Equipping Leaders** - The Council's signature educational event each summer is the Washington Island Forum, which in 2012 drew 185 pastors and lay leaders from 22 states representing 14 faith traditions to hear Forum Presenter Sara Miles, Director of Ministry at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco and author of *Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion*. The Council also hosts regional events throughout the year on a variety of timely topics to equip clergy and lay leaders for effective ministry.

**Season of Civility** - in the midst of our divided politics, 19 interfaith leaders and over 500 pastors signed a WCC statement calling upon Wisconsin's religious community to enter to enter a Season of Civility. Over 400 pastors and lay leaders attended training workshops utilizing Parker Palmer's *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*.

**Greening our Faith and our Communities** - the Council continues to focus its advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The WCC has also been a partner in the creation of *Wisconsin Interfaith Power and Light*, which is affiliated with a national effort to educate congregations on how to be good stewards of the environment.

**Looking Ahead to 2013**

**Washington Island Forum** - 2013 Forum Presenter Rev. Brian McLaren will address "The Church That is Emerging" June 24-28. McLaren is the author of *A Generous Orthodoxy* and is a visioning leader helping to discern the shape of the church for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For more information about the Forum and all WCC educational events, go to [www.wichurches.org/events](http://www.wichurches.org/events).

**Immigration Reform** - with the U.S. Congress poised to take up immigration reform legislation this year, consider using the WCC's congregational study guide *Becoming Welcoming Communities* on the history of immigration in Wisconsin and contemporary challenges faced by new immigrants in our state. The study guide is free and available on the Council website at [www.wichurches.org](http://www.wichurches.org).

**Send a Book to Prison Project** - Many prison libraries in Wisconsin are dilapidated and out of date. A fresh supply of new books is desperately needed to support the recovery of those in prison. As a mission project, congregations collect recently-published books from an approved list from the Department of Corrections (DOC), then package and deliver them to a local public library where they are shipped to the DOC. Full information is available on the Council's website at [www.wichurches.org/programs-and-ministries/send-a-book-to-prison-project/](http://www.wichurches.org/programs-and-ministries/send-a-book-to-prison-project/)