



Wisconsin Council of Churches Annual Report wichurches.org

Tracing its roots back to the early 1940's with an inter-denominational ministry for young people, the Wisconsin Council of Churches (WCC) began in 1947. We now relate to church bodies representing approximately 2,000 congregations and over one million people of faith statewide. Together, we pray and work for the unity and renewal of the church and the healing and reconciliation of the world.

2018 Highlights

Equipping Leaders –Individuals and teams explored with Dwight Zscheile how church traditions and practices could be clarified, translated and renewed to make sense in today's contexts at the *Winter Forum*. At June's *Washington Island Forum*, Anna Carter Florence invited participants to find new things to see and hear in sacred text and human drama based on her newly published book, *Rehearsing Scripture*. A regional training on immigration, webinars on becoming ambassadors for the *End Child Poverty* movement and hunger advocacy were also part of our work to equip faith leaders in 2018.

Unite to End Racism – Three buses brought over 130 participants to an April rally and day of action in Washington DC in which we visited with every Wisconsin congressional office. Along the way, we began building personal relationships across denominations to strengthen faith-based racial justice work in Wisconsin.

New Member –The Council welcomed Life Center Madison, a nondenominational church, as a regular member.

Public Statements–The Council issued statements on gun violence (*A Lenten Call to Action on Gun Violence*) and immigration & public theology (*On the Misuse of Scripture to Justify Injustice*).

Annual Meeting – December's Annual Meeting featured a keynote conversation between Rev. Otis Moss III and youth activist Tatiana Washington, as well as lively music led by Rev. Felix Malpica and the installation of Executive Director Rev. Kerri Parker.

Looking Ahead

2019 Washington Island Forum – This year's Forum theme is "A Revolution of Values: The Bible, the Poor, and a Moral Imagination for Faith in Our Common Life." Our speaker is Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, author of *Reconstructing the Gospel*, *Strangers at My Door*, and *The Awakening of Hope*, among other works. For more information about the Forum and other Council events, visit the Events tab on our website, wichurches.org.

Allies in Advocacy – The Council is offering resources to help churches engage their neighbors – and their stories – ensuring that important truths are told in the halls of power. A half day advocacy training offered in February with national expert Breon Wells complements our biennial **People of Faith United for Justice Advocacy Day at the Capitol**, in early April.

Faith & Gun Violence Initiative – In January, middle and high school students from around the state gathered near Green Lake to shape their stories around gun violence and share them in meaning-making ways. These reflections will become the centerpiece of a new resource the Peace & Justice Commission is developing for the churches to study and have faithful discussion about gun violence which leads to action rooted in Gospel values.

Public Policy Priorities – The Council's advocacy office is monitoring policy issues relating to hunger, poverty, gun violence, and immigration especially closely this year, so we can help faithful people make sense of them and respond. Our framing ideas for our entire ministry continue to be *Courage, Justice, and Holy Imagination*.