

**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 18 denominations with approximately 2,200 congregations and over one million church members statewide.

### **2014 Accomplishments**

**Equipping Leaders** - The Council's signature educational event each summer is the Washington Island Forum, which in 2014 drew 170 pastors and lay leaders from 21 states representing 12 faith traditions to hear Forum presenters Martin Copenhaver and Lillian Daniels focusing on "Twenty Questions: Why the Church Needs to Ask More Questions than it Answers." The Council also hosts regional events throughout the year on a variety of timely topics to equip clergy and lay leaders for effective ministry, including a two-year pilot to provide boundary training for clergy on behalf of several WCC members.

**Hunger at our Doorstep** - the Council updated its popular study guide *Hunger at Our Doorstep* this past year, which was sent to every congregation in the state in the early fall. It is available as a free, downloadable resource from the Council's website at [www.wichurches.org](http://www.wichurches.org)

**New denominational partners** - the Council welcomed the Coptic Orthodox Church as the 18<sup>th</sup> denominational member of the WCC. Over the last several years several new denominational partners have joined our ranks, including the Mennonite Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and the Armenian Orthodox Church. The Catholic Diocese of Green Bay has joined as our third Observer from the Roman Catholic Church.

**Poverty** - the Council joined three statewide partners in hosting regional forums to raise the

issue of poverty during the fall, 2014 elections. Forums were held in Madison, Milwaukee, Eau Claire, Stevens Point and Appleton. Over 750 pastors and lay leaders attended these events. In addition, over 1,000 local religious leaders signed the interfaith statement, "Faithful Citizenship: A Response to the Scandal of Poverty in Wisconsin" which was shared with candidates for state and federal office.

### **Looking Ahead to 2015**

**Washington Island Forum** - 2015 Forum Presenter John Bell from the Iona Community in Scotland will address "Re-Appropriating the Word" June 22-25. For more information about the Forum and all WCC educational events, go to [www.wichurches.org/events](http://www.wichurches.org/events).

**Winter Forum** - The Council has launched a two-day winter forum in the Wisconsin Dells to complement the summer Washington Island Forum. The 2015 Forum is Feb. 27-29. Shane Claiborne, a young, dynamic Christian leader and prolific author will speak to the topic, "Another Way of Doing Life" centered on the counter-cultural witness of the Gospel.

**People of Faith United for Justice Advocacy Day** - will take place in Madison on Wednesday, April 29. Join over 1,000 other people of faith as we hear about pressing issues facing our state and visit with our state legislators. More information, including on-line registration, can be found at [www.wichurches.org/events](http://www.wichurches.org/events)