

Madison Christian Community

Advent Lutheran Church

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An Ecumenical Partnership

Community of Hope, UCC

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Because of you, our church changes lives!

Thank you for your faithful commitments and contributions! Marking **50 years of the MCC partnership**, we recognize and celebrate the difference **God's** work through this church makes in our own lives, as well as for our **neighbors** near and far, and for all of **creation**.

In Your Life

Whether part of the MCC for 50 years or connecting in relationships more recently, almost all of us experience the central time of being church together—having our lives renewed and invigorated, being grounded again in faith is **on Sunday mornings**, with education hour and worship. This is the central focus of **your staff**, who are heartily dedicated to make these experiences meaningful and joy-filled. Prayers unite and our voices rise in song, our hurts are tended and hearts inspired. You almost certainly delight in new relationships as well as the old, smiling at the activity of our children and eagerly greeting new faces as **we embody the promise of Jesus: All Are Welcome**.

Of course, what you receive from our church isn't limited to when you can gather on a Sunday. Many are part of **affinity groups**, including more recent additions like the 55+ Potluck, Perspire for younger guys, and Hope young adults. You may have shared with spiritual companions or discussed Bible readings with a beer in your hand or continued to expand your horizons of racial justice after the Big Read. Our youth continue forming **amazing relationships** and expanding their sense of self on Boundary Waters canoe trips. The MCC has also long excelled at developing rich **cross+generational connections**, like those exemplified by Confirmation mentoring. We **respond in times of need** with help and care for each other. With electronic communications, even when life is busy with other things in other places, you are **kept in more contact with this community** and enriched in vital ways.

Because of you, our church changes your life and lives of your siblings in the congregation.

In the Community

Perhaps the strongest way we envision our church changing lives is the **good you do in the community**. That includes more than 4000 pounds of produce from our food pantry gardens that has already gone to hungry bellies with more than a month of growing season remaining, as well as to benefit livelihoods for Chrysalis clients with mental illnesses. It's in meals we serve at Porchlight. It's our efforts for jail ministry and support of Madison-area Urban Ministry programs like Just Bakery. It's our dedication to the immigrant community through the Dane Sanctuary Coalition. In various ways, **you directly and indirectly support many programs** for charity, justice, and making our city what it should be.

But it's not just what we give away. **Our building and grounds** itself is **a resource to serve others**, from fostering life for preschoolers to supporting those recovering from life's traumas and tragedies, of children learning languages or sharing the beauty of music. We keep striving to offer hospitality. In this and your own commitments, we are church in service to our community.

Because of you, our church changes lives around us.

Around the World

We know that it's not just local. We are part of **the larger church** – the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Wisconsin Conference and United Church of Christ. The year-round work of our quilters will offer comfort to 193 new recipients this year. We celebrate improvements of lives in Haiti. We respond to offer relief after natural disasters. Besides relationships in Guatemala last year, we are strengthening ties to Palestinians in the Holy Land.

Because of you, our church changes lives across the planet.

In Creation

One of the important and unique aspects of our identity at the MCC is that we remember that church isn't just your relationship with God. It's not only how we interact with human neighbors. We are **family with all of creation**. We witness this in our prairie restoration and efforts to minimize our ecological footprint, with cheerful chickens and migrating monarch butterflies.

Because of you, our church changes lives for all God's creatures.

Where Have We Been?

This 50th year of the MCC has included recollections of sparse times, when we couldn't pay mortgages and deliberated hours into the night how to proceed. We also celebrate **our remarkable stability right now**. In the past year, we cared for your staff with 3% raises in recognition of their hard work. By reducing costs through efficiency and wise purchasing, we were able to invest more directly in your ministry. We broadened our gaze to look further with outreach. This is the closest moment of our MCC partnership so far, as you enjoy the benefits of having two pastors, of unified administration and leadership, of so much of our work together. And the world is **witnessing what this model of being the church offers**, seeing us as pioneers for the road ahead.

Where Are We Going?

From this strong moment, **we are able to look to 2020 and to the start of the next 50 years**. Our growth includes **expected expenses** of health care and costs of living, furnace replacements and technology upgrades, and expanded programming and service to a world in need.

In coming weeks, you'll also hear more about this special moment in our life together as we discuss **expanding our mortgage for capital projects** to ensure our building is sound and solid so that it can serve your life for years to come and be in service to others. We have some necessary upkeep, with siding and windows. We have care for creation in upgrading lighting efficiency. We have increase of welcome through making bathrooms all-gender accessible. We have already enhanced hospitality with parking lot and landscaping improvements. The process has been diligent and careful, and we will invite your input soon.

Because of You...

At this time of year, **we recommit to our shared work as members** of the Madison Christian Community. That includes your availability for volunteer roles as you **prayerfully reexamine your time and talent commitments** in the online scheduler. It also shapes our potential as you renew **your financial dedication with pledges** and consider legacy gifts to come. There is much to be celebrated, and much to anticipate. We will join together as we share our commitments in worship on All Saints Sunday, November 3 and as we give thanks during education hour on November 24. Already now, we say thank you: Because of you...

...Our Church Changes Lives!

The 2019 MCC Stewardship Team

Betty Custer, Ellen Ermer, Larry Henning, Rita Olson,
Pastor Sonja Ingebritsen, and Pastor Nick Utphall