Celebrating Success
Madison Interfaith Coalition Working for Justice
2013-2014
WISDOM Prophetic Declaration

We are people of faith united by our passion for justice, commitment to community and a practice of hope. We stand together understanding that our lives and destinies are intertwined.

• We come together because God calls us into relationship with one another, with our communities and with the world around us.
• We come together from across the state, across faith traditions, across race, class, gender and ethnicity, and across many divides that might ordinarily keep us apart.
• We come together around core faith convictions that affirm our direction and shape our vision for the future.
• We come together to act for justice, build power and to transform our communities, cities and state.

We stand together in our faith:

• We believe in the God-given dignity and infinite worth of each and every human life.
• We believe that we are each and all part of a sacred community, to which we have responsibility and from which we gain sustenance.
• We believe that our faith calls us to work for justice and liberation, standing against all forms of oppression and inequity.
• We believe we are called to be stewards of the natural world in all its bounty and diversity.
• We believe in shared abundance and stand against the dominant culture of reckless consumption and consumerism for some and deprivation for others.
• We believe in the triumph of love and hope over hate and fear.

We build power and act together, drawing courage and inspiration from our faith. We believe God has called us to live, speak and act courageously in accordance with our faith beliefs. Together we will create the community we seek for ourselves, but also build the power we need to transform the world around us. We will build the relationships and strategic capacity we need to powerfully engage and impact public decisions.

Together we declare:
Where there is division, we declare unity.
Where there is hatred, we declare love.
Where there is lack, we declare abundance.
Where there is desolation, we declare renewal.
Where there is discouragement, we declare hope.
Where there is lack of strength, we declare power!

For more information on WISDOM, contact David Liners: (414) 736-2099 or davidl_wisdom@sbcglobal.net
About MOSES

MOSES (Madison Organizing in Strength, Equality and Solidarity) is a grassroots, interfaith organization working in the Madison area that unites congregations, individuals and non-profit organizations to build a better community. We join together to take action on social justice issues affected by public policy, beginning with the problem of mass incarceration in Wisconsin.

We are the newest affiliate of WISDOM, a state-wide network of organizations like ours. MOSES had its formal commitment ceremony in November of 2012, meaning we are one year old on November 16, 2013. We welcome faith communities, individuals, and other partners to join MOSES to build community and address issues of social injustice.

We seek to:

• Deliver a message of hope, healing, and unity that reaches beyond the divisions of race, creed, and social-economic barriers.
• Build solid relationships with one another and with the greater community.
• Identify and take action on root causes of poverty, oppression, and injustice.
• Empower and train leaders to respond to injustices at the local, state, and national level.
• Be agents of change that build upon and create strong and just communities.

To create change, MOSES uses:

• Connection: Relating to each other and to those in our community, including those different from ourselves;
• Education: Helping communities better understand the public policy issues that affect our lives;
• Training: Enhancing our abilities to act as leaders;
• Advocacy: Speaking with a common voice so public policy better reflects our common values;
• Action: Moving beyond the walls of our congregations to make our presence felt and to transform our communities.

Working Locally, Throughout the State of Wisconsin, and Across the Nation
MOSES is part of a powerful statewide organization, WISDOM, ten other congregation based organizations around the state which work to live out their values in the world. WISDOM is a member of the Gamaliel Foundation, a national network that works to address issues of justice. While MOSES maintains its own board of directors, bylaws, and finances, and selects its issues locally, our partnership with WISDOM and Gamaliel allows us to work together at the state and national level when needed.

MOSES is Non-Partisan
As an organization that works to address systemic change, we are often engaged in public policy affairs. However, we do not endorse candidates or parties. We believe in the need to build relationships with all elected officials, state and local, and in the need to hold public officials accountable no matter what party they represent.

Congregational/Organizational Members of MOSES

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Fountain of Life Family Worship Center
James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Lake Edge Lutheran Church
Midvale Community Church-ELCA
Memorial United Church of Christ Fitchburg
Unity of Madison
Voices Beyond Bars
First Unitarian Society of Madison, MOSES 11×15 Ministry Team
Friends Society of Madison (Quakers)
Logos Deliverance Ministries
Call to Action Madison
Holy Wisdom Monastery
Snowflower Buddhist Sangha
Southwest Wisconsin UCC Association, Division of Social Concerns
Plymouth Congregational UCC, Board of Social Concerns
Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
Zion City International Church Ministries
Breaking Barriers Mentoring

The following entities have formally endorsed the 11×15 Campaign:

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
The Wisconsin State Journal
The Wisconsin Council of Churches
LaCrosse Area Synod of the ELCA
Greater Milwaukee Synod of the Lutheran ELCA
Dear members and supporters,

What a powerful and energetic first year it has been for MOSES! First, we had to grow our base of congregations and individuals whose hearts were set on increasing justice in our communities. One year ago, at our commitment ceremony, we had 10 congregations who had committed as MOSES members. It is wonderful to say that as of November 2013, we have 19 congregations/organizations in Madison and Fitchburg whose members are actively participating in MOSES activities, along with 20 dedicated individual members! Along with those new entities and individuals came impressive knowledge, commitment, skills and additional financial resources to keep MOSES moving forward. But it first took many people willing to go out and give MOSES/11x15 presentations to groups large and small.

Next we had to get our house in order. During this past year, we have drafted and approved our bylaws and budget, elected our officers, and implemented executive, finance, and communications committees, as well as our first annual banquet committee. (I will forever be grateful for the 40 individuals who participated in our four hour Saturday morning meeting to do much of this work.) And so many others have stepped forward to volunteer their presence, ideas and resources for other activities.

During all of this, of course, MOSES was deeply active in the 11X15 Campaign along with other WISDOM affiliates. We ALWAYS were able to meet our commitments. Please see the description of our key activities of the year in this yearbook.

I am overwhelmed with gratitude when I think about all MOSES has achieved and the generosity and inspiration in the hearts of our members.

A deep bow of gratitude to all of you,

Carol Rubin
President, MOSES

Message from the President

“I am overwhelmed with gratitude when I think about all MOSES has achieved and the generosity and inspiration in the hearts of our members.”
Reflections for MOSES, from Minister Caliph Muab-El

I came to MOSES after a rather tragic chain of events that could have easily ruptured the very core of my being, forcing me into a state of hopelessness, despair, shame and sorrow. After being one of the youngest men in Wisconsin sentenced to 15 years, at the age of 15, to the adult prison system. I did the entire 15 years, ten of which were in solitary confinement, and of that ten years, I sat seven years in a Super Max, on 24 hours of lockdown a day. Ironically, that experience taught me a lot about myself. It prepared me for great things, albeit, at that time I had no clue what was in store for me.

Through Voices Beyond Bars, and my mentor Jerome Dillard, I was connected to Carol Rubin, who turned out to be a great friend and mentor as well. I came to MOSES with a curious mind, inexperienced in many ways. MOSES began to embrace me with open arms, kind hearts and gentle spirits. They exposed me to valuable trainings through WISDOM and Gamaliel. These people are community organizers at its finest, but, more importantly, they inspire people like James Morgan and myself to be the very best we can be. They trained us to be fierce, forces to be reckoned with in community organizing professionally, and they hold us accountable and have great expectations for us. It is as if our pasts never existed.

The most valuable of tools given to me by MOSES are a second chance, a clear sense of direction, and even more important, a purpose.

— Minister Caliph Muab-el
Vice President, MOSES

About WISDOM

WISDOM is a statewide network of congregation-based community organizations that work to live out their values in the world. WISDOM works on immigration reform, public transit, criminal justice and other issues.

WISDOM’s oldest member organization, MICAH (in Milwaukee) was founded in 1988. Other WISDOM organizations in the state include:

- RIC (Racine County)
- CUSH (Kenosha County)
- SOPHIA (Waukesha County)
- ESTHER (Fox Cities & Oshkosh)
- JOSHUA (Green Bay & Brown County)
- NAOMI (Wausau area)
- JONAH (Eau Claire area)
- AMOS (LaCrosse area)
- RUTH (Manitowoc)
- MOSES (Madison area)

Each local organization is represented at the decision-making tables of WISDOM. MOSES (like all WISDOM organizations) is a 501(c)3 organization. Donations to MOSES are tax-exempt. MOSES does NOT endorse candidates or get involved in partisan politics. We have members from all political parties, and we believe in the need to hold public officials accountable, no matter what party they represent.
What is the 11X15 Campaign?

11X15 ("eleven by fifteen") is a small name for a big campaign. The longer name is: 11X15 For Safer, Healthier Communities.

It is our challenge to the state of Wisconsin to reduce the prison population from its current size (about 22,000) to 11,000 by the end of the year 2015. It is a big goal, but not an impossible one.

Initially, 11X15 was about creating awareness that our current criminal justice system is not working. Lives, families and opportunities are destroyed. It is expensive and it does not achieve the goals of public safety or of rehabilitation. 11X15 demonstrates that there are proven alternatives to incarceration that are appropriate for many (not all) people who have been sent to prison, including alcohol and drug abuse and mental health treatment, and diversion (TAD). In 2013, WISDOM convinced the state to increase TAD program funding by 150%.

For 2014, the campaign will work on:

**Sentencing reform:** Prison sentences are longer in Wisconsin than many other states; Wisconsin is one of only 11 states that treats all 17-year-olds as adults to be sent to adult prison.

**Post-release opportunities:** Individuals who have been incarcerated should not be permanently punished upon release through CCAP and discrimination; they need jobs and a chance to transition to healthy, productive lives.

**Those currently incarcerated:** We need to re-establish the possibility of parole, earned release, and compassionate release for elderly and seriously ill prisoners; we need to stop the overuse of solitary confinement.

**Continued increase in TAD funding:** It has been shown to work and save money everywhere it is tried.

11X15 will reduce Wisconsin’s bloated prison population, end the racial disparities in the criminal justice system, and treat mental health and addiction problems as public health issues, not cause for incarceration. To learn more, go to wwwprayforjustice.org.

**Why are Faith Communities so interested in this?**

Hundreds of Wisconsin religious leaders, from many faith traditions, have signed an open letter to the people of Wisconsin that says, in part: “Our religious traditions teach us that justice is related to restoration, not solely to retribution. The biblical mandate, ‘to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God’ (Micah 6:8) invites us to balance justice with mercy, and to move beyond retribution to restoration. We believe that the justice system must work to restore: to restore victims to wholeness, to restore our communities, and to help those who have offended to be restored to a productive role in our society.”

11X15 is not just for people in the faith community. We are open to all people of good will who believe that now is the time to stand for a healthier, safer community for all people. 11X15 calls our state to re-examine its priorities, values and practices, and to restore balance to our justice system.

A few things to think about as you consider 11X15:

- The Department of Corrections now has a $1.3 billion annual budget (in 1990, it was $200 million).

- A reduction of our prison population to 11,000 would take us back to 1995 levels.

- Though we have the same population, Wisconsin imprisons more than twice as many people as Minnesota, and we pay more than half a billion dollars more for it every year.

- A recent study shows that the state of Wisconsin saves $1.93 with every dollar it spends on community-based alternatives to incarceration.

- About 6% of Wisconsinites are African-American; yet more than 50% of Wisconsin prison inmates are African-American. The system is deeply flawed and unfair.

- The majority of Wisconsin prisoners are non-violent. Most of those suffer mental health and/or addiction issues. Mental illness and substance abuse are public health issues and are not best solved through incarceration.
MOSES Leadership Award

Congratulations

Professor Emily Auerbach
Project Director of the UW Odyssey Project

Emily deserves our appreciation and deep gratitude for all she has contributed, not only to the individual lives she has touched, but to this entire community.

I've had the pleasure and honor of being a student in the Odyssey Program. Meeting Emily for the first time was a bit intimidating because I had heard she would, with a stern and yet loving embrace, require myself and others to believe in ourselves. I'd heard that she would encourage us to accept the challenge that self analysis requires and the reward of a higher education.

Thirty of us from different backgrounds, struggles, and traumas of life were melded into a family by the example she set: compassion, generosity, empathy, the comittment to make our lives better for ourselves, and the human family as a whole. Emily Auerbach is for me and hundreds of others a "Phenomenal Human Being."

For its first honoree, MOSES has shown much "wisdom." Emily deserves our appreciation and deep gratitude for all she has contributed, not only to the individual lives she has touched, but to this entire community. She has shown that her commitment to others is not couched in mere feel-good rhetoric, but exemplified by the work she does. I know personally that this "work" is one of her greatest joys. Know that you are greatly loved and appreciated by many, beyond measure.

— James Morgan
Graduate 2013, Odyssey Project

Emily Auerbach is an award-winning English Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She serves as Project Director of the UW Odyssey Project, a free, life-changing college humanities course for low-income adults. In addition, Auerbach is co-host of University of the Air, a one-hour program broadcast statewide on Wisconsin Public Radio on Sundays, 4–5 p.m., featuring interviews with faculty in a variety of disciplines. She is the Project Director of the “Courage to Write” series of radio documentaries and written guides on women writers.

The UW Odyssey Project helps adults overcome adversity and achieve dreams through higher education. Recognizing a change in self-worth as a crucial step in breaking the cycle of poverty, the Odyssey Project first offers an empowering course in the humanities designed to help students recognize their own gifts. Next the Project helps its graduates confront the many obstacles they face as they continue their educational journey toward becoming self-relaint, contributing members of society.

The UW Odyssey Project changes lives for adults near the poverty level. Now in its tenth year, this inspirational project has empowered more than 250 low-income adults to find their voices and get a jumpstart at earning college degrees they never thought possible. Graduates of the program have journeyed from homelessness to UW-Madison degrees, from incarceration to meaningful work in the community.
An Exciting Year of Energy, Action and Commitment

On November 18, 2012, MOSES had its Commitment Ceremony when its first ten member congregations assembled to each commit to supporting MOSES in spirit, energy and funding. MOSES introduced itself to a packed house of community members at Fountain of Life Church, with gospel music and inspiring speeches.

Many of us were in the standing-room-only hearing room in the Capitol November 29th when Human Impact Partners and WISDOM presented the “Healthier Lives, Stronger Families, Safer Communities” Report concluding that if a large amount of funding was invested in Treatment Alternative and Diversion (TAD) programs, over 3,000 individuals per year could be diverted from prisons, and 21,000 would be eligible for diversion from county jails, resulting in safer and healthier communities in Wisconsin. In the two weeks following the presentation, the Wisconsin State Journal ran two front-page articles, including a strong endorsement of the 11X15 Campaign.

We are committed to training, and it occurred throughout the year. Four MOSES members were at the WISDOM annual retreat in January in Green Lake. WISDOM presented MOSES’ first Leadership Training in February at James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation. In March, representatives from 13 congregations attended a second WISDOM training at First Unitarian Society on Building Strong Congregational Justice Teams. In July, MOSES’ President, Vice-President, and Organizer for the Clergy Council attended Gamaliel’s week-long leadership training in Mundelien, Illinois.

On March 14, more than 125 MOSES supporters were in the crowd of over 900 people at the statewide People of Faith United for Justice Day at Bethel Lutheran in Madison to demand change in the criminal justice system, public transit, and the refusal of Medicaid expansion. The day included a prayer rally on the Capitol stairs and then visits with dozens of legislators in support of enhanced TAD funding, public transit, and Medicaid expansion.
In May, when MOSES members (as usual) attended a large meeting of the Wisconsin State Criminal Justice Council, Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen, Co-Chair of the Council, publicly announced that “WISDOM had done a great job of educating the legislators on the need for increased funding for TAD programming.” The Council unanimously supported a resolution asking for an increase in TAD funding.

Our lobbying continued throughout the spring to increase TAD funding in the budget; eventually the Governor’s office contacted WISDOM to say they would not oppose increased TAD funding. When the Joint Finance Committee announced only four public hearings across the State to discuss the proposed biennium budget, WISDOM had a significant presence at each meeting. MOSES sent 13 representatives to the Wisconsin Dells, where 12 of us testified to the Joint Finance Committee before nearly 500 people, demanding increased TAD funding and telling our stories of how this problem has affected us and the community around us.

When the budget was finalized on June 30, 2013, it included a 150% increase in county funding for TAD programs! It was below the dollar increase that we wanted, but it was clear that our basic message had been heard and that both the Governor and the Legislature understood that Wisconsin’s approach to criminal justice needs to change. In addition public transit was put back into the Transportation Fund and given a 4% increase!

In August, WISDOM held a state-wide gathering in Madison to educate ourselves about additional criminal justice problems and select the issues we would be working on in the coming year. MOSES participants spoke before the assem-

March 14 Day of Action at Bethel Lutheran and the Capitol
bled group, led workshops, actively shared their knowledge and opinions, and helped select our ongoing issues for the next stage of the 11X15 Campaign. The four new state-wide task forces in which MOSES is involved include: 1. Sentencing reform, 2) in-prison issues like lack of parole and earned release and abuse of solitary confinement; 3) post-release issues such as need for transitional jobs and eliminating the permanent punishment of criminal conviction records; and 4) further increases in TAD funding.

MOSES members also participated in conferences, meetings, and one-on-one’s with representatives of the Department of Corrections (DOC), including a lively meeting at Fountain of Life Church with DOC Secretary Edward Wall and 15 high-level DOC managers and directors in September. MOSES members in particular were able to ask very informed questions about lack of parole, abuse of solitary and administrative confinement, inadequate culturally informed DOC prison programming, and post-release challenges — particularly when DOC representatives misspoke or tried to deflect an audience question or comment.

All this (and more) in our first year! Just imagine what MOSES will achieve in our next year.

In Solidarity with Catholics of the Church of Madison

Crossing the threshold of the faith is to be active, trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit present in the Church and who is also seen in the signs of the times. It is to join in the constant movement of life and of history without falling into the paralyzing defeatism that everything in the past was better. It is an urgency to think in new ways, to offer new suggestions, a new creativity, kneading life with “the new leaven of justice and holiness.” (1 Cor. 5:8)

Jorge Bergoglio, opening the 50th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, Buenos Aires, October 2012
Every budget is a statement of values, especially budgets that are made in hard times. When the Governor’s proposed budget included no budget increase for TAD (Treatment Alternatives and Diversion) funding for Wisconsin counties, and proposed removing public transit funding from the Transportation Fund, MOSES/WISDOM knew we had a lot of work to do.

During the first six months of 2013, MOSES/WISDOM worked tirelessly to impact the 2013-14 budget. Numerous individual meetings were held with legislators, all across the state; some legislators had two or three visits from WISDOM representatives. MOSES participants who had never lobbied their representatives became skilled at doing so. We also held group meetings with selected members of the Republican and Democratic caucuses. We had two studies to rely on in arguing the value and cost savings of TAD programs; one from Health Impact Partners, which WISDOM commissioned with a Robert Woods Johnson Foundation grant, and one from the UW-Madison Population Health Institute. Both demonstrated the deep wisdom and cost savings of treatment alternatives and diversion programs as alternatives to incarceration.

When the Joint Finance Committee scheduled only four budget hearings across the State, WISDOM spoke out at each of them. Twelve MOSES members arrived in Wisconsin Dells at 8 a.m. to be sure we were early in line to speak in favor of a TAD funding increase in front of the Committee and the 500 in the audience.

The final budget at the end of June 2013 included a 150% increase each year of the biennium in the TAD funding that goes out to counties, to divert thousands of individuals from jail or prison. Both Democratic and Republican legislators supported an increase. As a whole, the Legislature now understands what TAD funding is, what it can do, and why we will be asking for even greater increases going forward. In October, several Republican legislators drafted a bill proposing $750,000 more be put into TAD programming for mental health problems.

In another WISDOM victory, funding for public transit was placed back in the Transportation Fund and was increased by 4%!

“I am leaving this legacy to all of you . . . to bring peace, justice, equality, love and a fulfillment of what our lives should be. Without vision, the people will perish, and without courage and inspiration, dreams will die — the dream of freedom and peace.”

— Rosa Parks
Support MOSES:
Become a sustaining member.

MOSES is about people of faith coming together to act powerfully to live out our deepest values and to bring racial and economic justice to Madison and Wisconsin. MOSES breaks down barriers of race, economics and religion to build a community of hope.

Together with other WISDOM faith communities, we have continued to work towards lowering the prison population for non-violent people with drug and alcohol addictions and or mental illness. We call this the 11X15 Campaign.

Now, MOSES looks to you to become a Sustaining Member. Our goal, to bring compassion and fairness to Madison and Wisconsin, is not an easy one. As you know, MOSES is committed to justice work for the long haul — and we need our members to come together to make sure we have the needed resources to make this commitment.

Why does MOSES need sustaining members? MOSES’s voice is needed today more than ever. MOSES’s voice must be heard in City Hall, at the State Capitol, and on our streets. The voice of compassion and fairness must ring out. Wisconsin needs to hear that people of faith are people who care about racial and economic justice; that MOSES will stand up for our children, our elderly and those who are in need.

With your help, MOSES can have its own staff that can reach out to every sector in our city. MOSES can continue to provide world-class leadership training to our members. MOSES can be less dependent on foundations and grants. MOSES can be a beacon for justice that shines across all barriers.

MOSES’s strength comes from our numbers and from our solidarity. Just imagine: if MOSES had 200 members giving an average of $15 each month, MOSES would have an additional $36,000 every year to dedicate to the struggle for racial and economic justice.

Donations may be sent to:
MOSES
P.O. Box 7031
Madison, WI 53707

For information on enrolling in the monthly giving program visit www.mosesmadison.org.

Thank you for your support!
Thank you for your support
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— Dalai Lama
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Thanks for all you do!!

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“Together we seek to be a force for good in the world.”

First Unitarian Society of Madison is a progressive community with a focus on social justice, music and education. Stop by any Saturday at 4:30 p.m., or Sunday at 9 or 11 a.m.—you’re always welcome!
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- Advocacy for the closing of the School of the Americas
- Anti-war
- Social Justice

Working with: 11X15 Campaign to decrease incarceration rates, MOSES, Sojourners, WISDOM, 350.org,
Benedictine Women of Madison, Ecumenical Catholic Community, and many more........

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Integrity/Dignity of Madison supports the work of “Moses”. We are an Ecumenical Christian faith Community of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and trans-gender people of God. We are nationally affiliated with the Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches.

Our ministry has been in the Madison area for over 35 years. “All are welcome”.

We meet on the 2nd Saturdays of the month for Liturgy and Eucharist from September thru May, 6:00 p.m. at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church at 6205 University Ave. Madison, (at the edge of Middleton). We also gather for other events such as open forums, potluck, or for outside speaker events, typically on the 4th Saturday of the month. We have celebrated Same Sex Couple's commitment/anniversary ceremonies.

We are working for ‘Full Marriage Equality’ in the State of Wisconsin. For more info see: http://IDmadison.org or call Jim or Bill (608) 669-2886.

Congratulations, Moses!

God is still speaking
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