



With One Voice

ESTHER – Faith Communities United for Justice

April 2011

Justice in the State Budget

Every two years our organization speaks to the values we hold dear (and that we would like to see reflected in the state biennial budget) at the Joint Finance Committee Hearing nearest us.

Two years ago we spoke before the committee in Appleton and called for funds to be set aside for treatment options for non-violent offenders. We also called for in-state tuition rates for immigrant students that graduate from high school.

The first measure saved money for our state, the second increased revenue to the UW system. Both were issues of justice.

This year, we face a proposed budget that attacks many areas that we value.

Education funding, access to health care will be limited, there will be an increased burden on low-income people and families, job training programs have been cut, worker rights have already been hit, public transportation will be moved out of the transportation fund (while funding remains in the designated fund) to make way for new roads, immigrant students will lose the in-state tuition gained two years ago, legal immigrant residents be cut off from medical assistance and food share...all of these areas and more will see not just cuts, but drastic cuts.

Looking at this overall budget, it would be impossible for our organiza-

tion to single out one or two issues.

We aim to stand for justice, build strong communities, and offer hope to the most vulnerable (and to those that are tempted to just give up).

This is an unacceptable budget, placing the burden on the poor, marginalized, and oppressed while extending cuts to our revenue through tax breaks for the most wealthy.

We see clearly that those who drafted and support the proposed budget lack the priorities that we value, which is why we have come together to take action.

We have started a campaign, **Pray for Justice in Wisconsin**. Go to the website www.prayforjusticeinwi.org to read WISDOM's statement on the budget, find statements from various faith traditions, and see what others are planning across Wisconsin.

More than **400 people of faith** came together on March 15th in Madison, prayed, rallied, marched to the Capitol and met with legislators from across the state to call for justice in our state budget. Prayer services, forums, and action events are being planned.

As people of faith we are called to stand for justice. We must walk with the poor, marginalized, and oppressed! Look for more ways to take action on the next page.

Check out prayforjusticeinwi.org!

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Visit us on the Web at www.esther-foxvalley.org



Religious Leaders Caucus Luncheon

Date: Thursday, April 28, 2011

Time: Noon-1:30 p.m.

Location: First Congregational
UCC, 724 East South River Street,
Appleton.

ESTHER encourages religious leaders (clergy and lay leaders) in our area to attend the caucus. Caucus meets monthly. Location of the Caucus rotates monthly.

Meet the new editor

With this edition of “With One Voice,” Sister Jean Peer-enboom is taking over as editor.

Sister Jean is with the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross, Green Bay. Her ministry is volunteer coordinator at St. Vincent de Paul of Appleton.

She is a native of Appleton, having grown up in Sacred Heart Parish and graduated from Xavier High School. She has a bachelor’s degree in communications from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, a master’s in managerial communications from Concordia University-Wisconsin, and a certificate of theological studies from St. Norbert College, De Pere. She has spent 35 years working in the editorial departments of newspapers in Appleton, Portage, Beloit, Davenport (Iowa), Madison and Green Bay. Upon leaving the Green Bay Press-Gazette in 2007, she became volunteer coordinator at the New Community Shelter, Green Bay. She began at the Appleton St. Vincent de Paul in September.

She lives in Appleton with three other sisters from her community. She joined ESTHER in March.

Take Action!

Joint Finance Committee Hearing – April 7th

Please join other ESTHER members in making our views known at the Legislature’s Joint Finance Committee hearing in Stevens Point.

When: Thursday, April 7 10:00 AM- 6:00 PM –
SAVE THIS DATE

Where: The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, 1015 Reserve Street, Stevens point

Transportation: We may have a bus, if not, we will be arranging carpooling. Look for more information to come very soon.

Let your voice be heard: Go to the ESTHER website and share your written testimony on the state budget. We will print off all of the testimonies, bundle them together, and submit them to the Joint Finance Committee in Stevens Point on April 7th.

Get Involved:

Interfaith Prayer Service: Tuesday, April

12th 5:30-6:30 PM

Emmanuel United Methodist Church (740 East College Avenue), Appleton

An Interfaith Prayer Vigil lifting up concerns for how justice and our faith values are being impacted by the proposed Wisconsin State Budget.

Wisconsin State Budget and Your

Health! A Community Forum: Thursday,

April 14th 6:30 PM at First Congregational Church (137 Algoma Boulevard), Oshkosh.

Come to hear from local leaders working in the health care field about the impact the state budget will have on the health of children, families, seniors, disabled persons, and individuals in our community. Learn how to take action before important decisions are made in the budget.



The Faces of Immigration discussion

A local look at topics raised in the Fox Cities Reads Book: “The Devil’s Highway” by Luis Alberto Urrea will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. April 6 at the Appleton Public Library.

You are invited to a panel discussion that will reflect on the impact of immigration in our community. Panelists are:

- Unnamed - one immigrant’s story of crossing; fearful and poignant.
- Connie Raether - a one family, one mother, one daughter’s painful choices with immigration.

If you want to go

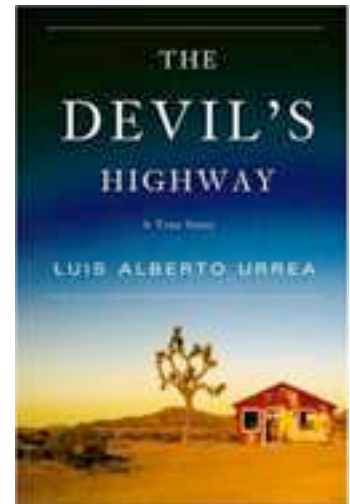
What: The Faces of Immigration, book discussion

Where: Appleton Public Library, Lower level Room C

When: Wednesday, April 6th 6:30-8:00 pm

- Marcelo Garcia - migrated from Ecuador and now is a US citizen living and working in the Fox Cities.

Event is organized by ESTHER with the Appleton Public Library and Fox Cities Reads as co-sponsors.



Madison Action Day was exciting, moving, a great success!

ESTHER and JOSHUA (about 60 of us) joined people of faith from across Wisconsin, including folks from all of the WISDOM affiliates, members from Wisconsin Council of Churches, Lutheran Office on Public Policy of WI, Madison Area Urban Ministries, and the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee. All together we totaled more than 400 strong!

We were inspired, we learned, we rallied, we marched, and we visited with legislators to ask that our values as people of faith be respected in the shaping of public policy for our state. If you missed the event, you can still watch inspiring video the keynote



speaker, Bishop Burnside (ELCA), and powerful message by Rev. Steve Savides (First Congregational UCC, Appleton) on the ESTHER website. www.esther-foxvalley.org

One-on-One Training

**Saturday, April 9th
from 9:00 a.m.-Noon**

First Congregational Church
137 Algoma Boulevard,
Oshkosh

Learn the importance of building relationships and how to intentionally initiate a relationship in a way that helps you and the person you are reaching out to understand their passions, motivations, and interests. Connecting with one another is the most important aspect working for justice.

Training is open to all!



Benefits of Membership in ESTHER

- The satisfaction that comes from knowing that your support helps ESTHER continue and extend its important work
- Receipt of ESTHER's monthly newsletter and announcements of up-coming events
- Recognition at ESTHER events, in our newsletter, and in our annual report.
- **Note:** By filling out the form on the reverse side of this sheet, you can easily have your contribution debited from your bank account each month.

ESTHER 2011 Membership Drive

ESTHER is about people of faith coming together to act powerfully to live out our deepest values and to bring a greater sense of equality, hope, and commitment to the common good in the greater Fox Valley and throughout Wisconsin.

In a short time, ESTHER has already had an impact on the Fox Valley. ESTHER has held community forums on a variety of issues that affect our region. ESTHER has trained dozens of grass-roots leaders. ESTHER has established itself as an organization that can bring people together and that can act effectively to improve our communities.

Together with WISDOM affiliates across Wisconsin and through the work of faith communities from many traditions, we have won Treatment Instead of Prison for non-violent people with drug problems. We have fought to end predatory practices by the payday lending industry, and we worked for fair treatment of immigrants.

Now, ESTHER looks to you to become a Member. Our goal, to bring compassion and fairness to the Fox Valley and Wisconsin, is not an easy one. As you know, ESTHER is committed to justice work for the long haul – and we need our members to come together to make sure we have the resources to meet our commitment.

Why Does ESTHER Need Members?

ESTHER's voice is needed today more than ever. ESTHER's voice must be heard in City Hall, at the County Courthouse, in Madison, and on our streets. The voice of compassion and fairness must ring out. Wisconsin needs to hear that people of faith care about racial and economic justice, that ESTHER will empower our children, our elderly, and those who are in need in our communities.

Members are recognized at three levels of annual financial support:

- Member (\$25-\$119)
- Sustaining Member (\$120-\$999)
- Underwriter (\$1,000 or more).

For Sustaining Members and Underwriters, payments may be made in monthly installments by electronic funds transfer. Will you join us? There's an enrollment form on the reverse side of this flyer.

An affiliate of the statewide  *WISDOM network.*

ESTHER Individual Membership Form



Name _____

Additional Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Congregation / Affiliation _____

☐ I would prefer to keep my donation anonymous.

ESTHER Individual Membership Levels

• *Member*: \$25-119 • *Sustaining Member*: \$120-999 • *Underwriter*: \$1,000 or more

Membership is easy with Electronic Funds Transfer. It saves time and resources!

Yes! I would like to become a Sustaining Member or Underwriter by enrolling in the monthly giving program.

To start or renew your membership at the Sustaining Member or Underwriter level using an automatic payment option, fill out this form with your voided check and return it to: ESTHER, 140 South Green Bay Road, Neenah, WI 54956.

Ongoing monthly payments through Electronic Funds Transfer

- Checking Account: attach a VOIDED CHECK
- Savings Account: attach a SAVINGS DEPOSIT SLIP

Monthly amount \$ _____ (\$10 minimum)

Please select date of withdrawal: ☐ 1st of month OR ☐ 16th of month

I authorize my financial institution to transfer the amount indicated from the stated account to ESTHER. This authorization shall remain in effect until I notify my bank (or ESTHER) that I wish to discontinue the regularly scheduled transfer of funds. A record of each charge will be indicated on my regular bank statement.

Signature (for EFT) _____ Date _____

Or, become a member through an annual gift.

Yes! I want to be a member of ESTHER and I am enclosing a check with my annual donation.

To or renew your membership using the single-payment option, fill out this form and return it with your check to: ESTHER, 140 South Green Bay Road, Neenah, WI 54956.

I have enclosed a check for: ☐ \$25 ☐ \$120 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ Other _____

REMEMBER: Your Contribution to ESTHER is Tax Deductible

For questions, call (920) 216-0891.

Thank you for supporting the work of ESTHER!

ESTHER

% 140 South Green Bay Road
Neenah, WI 54956

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
Postage Paid
Neenah, WI
Permit # 16

April 2011 Newsletter

Contact us -

Email:

esther.foxvalley@gmail.com

Phone: 920-216-0891



Choose to have this newsletter sent via email. This makes it easy to forward our information to others in the community and conserves resources. Contact us: esther.foxvalley@gmail.com



ESTHER Upcoming Dates and Events

Date	Event	Location
April 6 – 6:30pm	Faces of Immigration – Local Panel	Appleton Public Library
April 7 – all day	Joint Finance Committee Hearing	Stevens Point, WI
April 9 – 9:00-Noon	One-on-One Training	First Congregational, Oshkosh
April 11 – 11:30am	Workforce Housing Task Force – East Central Regional Plan	ECRP Office, Menasha
April 12 – 5:30pm	Prayer Service for a Just State Budget	Emmanuel UMC, Appleton
April 12 – 6:30pm	Immigrant Rights Task Force	Emmanuel UMC, Appleton
April 14 – 6:30pm	WI State Budget and Your Health - Forum	First Congregational, Oshkosh
April 19 – 6:30pm	Transportation Task Force	First English (dwntwn), Appleton
April 27 – Noon	ESTHER Leadership Board Meeting	First Congo UCC, Appleton
April 27 – 4:30pm	Communications Team	First Congo UCC, Appleton
April 28 – Noon	ESTHER Religious Leaders Caucus	First Congo UCC, Appleton

Contact Us



ESTHER

140 South Green Bay Road
Neenah, WI 54956

Contact your organizer:

Stephanie Gyldevand

Phone: 920-216-0891

esther.foxvalley@gmail.com