

Common Destiny

A Public Meeting

**Sponsored by ESTHER
an inter-faith justice ministry in the Fox Valley**

**Saturday, Oct. 11, 2008, at 7 p.m.
St. Therese Church, 213 E. Wisconsin Ave., Appleton, WI**

**You're invited to attend a Public Meeting to learn more about the
political stands of Wisconsin and national legislators on key issues.
Congressional and state candidates will be present to discuss
three of ESTHER's principle areas of concern:**

***Comprehensive immigration reform**

***Treatment instead of prison**

***Quality health care for all**

ESTHER is one of nine congregation-based justice ministries in Wisconsin affiliated with WISDOM as well as the national Gamaliel Foundation. Eighteen congregations in the Fox Valley region participate and help support ESTHER's efforts.

Appleton: Emmanuel United Methodist; First United Methodist; First Congregational UCC; First English Lutheran; St. Bernard Catholic; Sacred Heart Catholic; St. Therese Catholic; St. Thomas More Catholic, Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist. **Neenah:** St. Paul's Lutheran, St. Mark's Lutheran, St. Gabriel Catholic; St. Margaret Mary Catholic; Fox Valley Islamic Society. **Menasha:** St. Patrick Catholic; **Omro:** St. Mary Catholic, Casa ESTHER; **New Holstein:** Gloria Dei Lutheran.

We, the undersigned, support ESTHER's principles and the Common Destiny Public Meeting:

Rev. Maynard Beemer
Luis Bello
Nancy Bourassa
Sara Companik
Dave, Jean Conover
Gary Crevier
Rev. Joseph Ellwanger
Dora Fabian

Maria Fabian
Tom Galica
Marcelo Garcia
Peter Geniesse
Ernesto Gonzales
Jack, Gloria Grandone
Richard Harris
Carlos Herrera

Roland Klug
Rev. Joe Mattern
Barbara Mittlestadt
Sr. Barbara Pfarr
Mohammed Rashid
Penny Robinson
Michele Rupp
Rev. Joel Schlachtenhaufen

John Stone-Wilms
Yolanda Tesch
Lyle Verstegen
Mary Jo Widener
YOUR NAME
YOUR NAME
YOUR NAME
YOUR NAME

Please consider adding your name to the list of those who back our principles and support **Common Destiny**, a Public Meeting set for 7 p.m. Saturday, October 11, 2008, at St. Therese's Church, 213 E. Wisconsin Ave., Appleton, WI

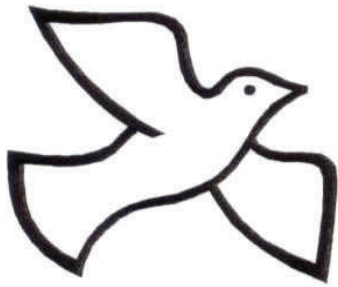
The cost is just \$10 for you to endorse our common efforts. Please make your check out to ESTHER and submit it to ESTHER, 140 S. Green Bay Road, Neenah, WI 54956. The deadline is Sept. 15.

Sincerely,

Maynard Beemer
Maynard Beemer
ESTHER president

CONGREGATION

[illegible]



ESTHER

Empowerment, Solidarity, Truth, Hope, Equality, Reform

140 S. Green Bay Road Neenah, WI 54956

From the Desk of the Organizer Joseph W. Ellwanger August 1, 2008

ESTHER Supporters Asked to Help Place Ad Announcing Public Meeting in *Post Crescent*

In an effort to widely publicize ESTHER's October 11 "Common Destiny" Public Meeting at St. Therese Catholic Church, Appleton, ESTHER leaders are asking all supporters of ESTHER to contribute to a quarter-page *Post Crescent* ad that would appear in the Sunday, September 28, edition.

Contributors to the ad would be asked to invest \$10 toward the ad and in the work of ESTHER and to permit their name to be used in the ad as a supporter of the ESTHER public meeting. Contributors who wish to remain anonymous may indicate that on their contribution form.

Attached is a copy of the ad as it will appear in the *Post Crescent*, as well as a contribution form that may be filled out and returned to the ESTHER office, 140 S. Green Bay Road, Neenah, WI 54956, or turned in at an ESTHER meeting. Checks are to be made to ESTHER.

ESTHER Religious Leaders Caucus at St. Patrick, Menasha ~ August 13

The ESTHER Religious Leaders Caucus will meet Wednesday, August 13, 12:00 noon, with lunch, at St. Patrick Catholic Church, 324 Nicolet Blvd., Menasha.

Besides the usual sharing of concerns and community/ESTHER events, the religious leaders caucus will focus on Chapter 10 of *Doing Justice* by Dennis Jacobsen. The chapter underscores the need for careful, committed organizing alongside of the vision and the passion.

Copies of *Doing Justice* are available from Joseph Ellwanger at \$12.00, from bookstores, or from the publisher, Fortress Press.

Rostered religious leaders of member ESTHER congregations are urged to participate in the monthly meetings of the Religious Leaders Caucus, and leaders of non-member ESTHER congregations are always welcome.

For more information, contact Rev. Joel Schlachtenhaufen, 722-9152 or Fr. Bill Hoffman, 882-3081, Co-Chairs of the caucus.

One-on-One/Core Team Training Saturday, September 13

A One-on-One/Core Team Training will be held on Saturday, September 13, 9:00 am—noon, at St. James United Methodist Church, 100 W. Capital Drive, Appleton, with Joseph Ellwanger, ESTHER Organizer, serving as the trainer.

The training will give participants the opportunity to witness a one-on-one conversation carried out by the trainer, followed by an opportunity for trainees to do a one-on-one. A basic tool of congregation-based organizing, the one-on-one conversation not only reveals people's deep-felt concerns and passions, but also helps to deepen relationships in a congregation and in ESTHER.

In addition to one-on-one training, the September 13 workshop will also assist congregational leaders in forming and maintaining an ESTHER Core Team in their congregation. A well-functioning core team will assist a congregation in reaching out to its neighborhood sharpening the vision of justice in the congregation, and assisting ESTHER in the implementation of justice initiatives.

Members of all ESTHER congregations, as well as non-ESTHER congregations, are welcome. For more information, or to sign up for the training, contact Mark Klaisner, Pastor of St. James United Methodist, 739-1445, or Joseph Ellwanger, ESTHER Organizer, 414-736-2480.



71 Attend Workforce Housing Event July 22

A total of 71 persons, representing many different perspectives, came together for the Fox Cities Workforce Housing Event II on July 22 at the Paper Discovery Center. The event was sponsored by ESTHER, Appleton Housing Authority, Fox Cities Housing Coalition, Housing Partnership of the Fox Cities and the Outagamie County Housing Authority.

Almost all of the 12 presenters and panel participants agreed that density of housing and diversity of residents are best for families and for communities. Bill Perkins, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development, stated that it is a moral imperative that our country find a way to provide affordable housing for all of its citizens.

Some steps along the way that were suggested for Fox Cities and for ESTHER to take, in order to provide affordable workforce housing in the area included: Establishment of local housing trust funds; state legislation permitting local municipalities to work together more effectively; mandatory inclusionary zoning; utilizing housing crises as opportunities to move toward workforce affordable housing; producing cooperatively a real-life development that showcases the possibility, and the positive value of diverse housing with market-rate and affordable housing mixed together.

ESTHER and community activists who are ready to work toward inclusive workforce housing in the Fox Cities are asked to attend

The next meeting of the Workforce Housing Task Force, Monday, August 4, 6:30 pm, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 140 S. Green Bay Road, Neenah.

For more information contact Maynard Beemer, 738-9566.

200 Gather for Interfaith Dialog July 27

Over 200 people of faith from the Fox Valley gathered under a huge tent on the grounds of the Fox Valley Islamic Society's mosque on July 27, to dialog on the theme: "Walking the Walk of Loving Our Neighbors."



The impressive panel of religious leaders from the Fox Valley who shared from the Scriptures and the history of their respective traditions included leaders from the Sikh, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Jewish religions. All of the speakers concurred that their religion taught that love of neighbor is an essential part of loving God.

The vision and the invitation of the Islamic Society for this interfaith dialog, the bountiful array of tasty, international foods, and the significant turnout of interested people on a pleasant Sunday afternoon, were clear evidence of a desire to overcome the religious divisions and the hostilities of the past and the present and to talk together and work together for the justice and peace that nurtures "the beloved community."

Mohammed Rashid, President of the Fox Valley Islamic Society, and moderator for the interfaith gathering, stated at the end of the program, that the Fox Valley Islamic Society had found that one of the best ways for them to walk the walk of loving their neighbors was to actively participate in ESTHER and to work together with 17 other faith communities for justice in the Fox Valley and beyond.

Interfaith Dialog Continued

The question at the end of the gathering was not whether such an interfaith dialog and celebration had value, but how could it be made even more effective.

Keep Ads Coming for 2008 ESTHER Ad Booklet

Sara Companik, ESTHER Finance Committee member, has prepared packets for ESTHER Board members, core team leaders, and clergy leaders to equip them to solicit ads for the 2008 ESTHER ad booklet. The packets include a model invitational letter, an ad order form, and a 2007 ad booklet.

If you did not get the ad solicitor's packet, or if you have questions, contact Sara Companik, 731-0663, or Nicole Hull, ad book compiler/editor, 734-7100.

Potential ad buyers include a person's congregation, the businesses with which congregations have contracted, and agencies/professionals related to the ad solicitor or their congregation.

Newsbytes

- Maynard Beemer, ESTHER President; Joe Ellwanger, ESTHER Organizer; and Paul Holte, pastor of St. Paul Lutheran, Neenah, participated in the installation of Stephen Dietzler, as pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran, Neenah, on July 15. Other ESTHER leaders attended the service. The ELCA East Central Synod Bishop Jim Justman, cited ESTHER in his sermon, as an example of how congregations can reach out beyond themselves and become engaged in working for the common good of the whole community.
- Gloria Grandone, ESTHER Immigration Committee member and member of St. Margaret Mary, Neenah, represented ESTHER at the worship celebrating the 50th ordination anniversary of Joe Ellwanger, on Sunday, July 13, at Hephatha Lutheran, Milwaukee. Ellwanger was ordained on July 13, 1958, at St. Paul Lutheran, Birmingham, Alabama, where he served as pastor in the African American community, 1958-67. The other parish he served was Cross Lutheran, Milwaukee, 1967-2001.
- Jim Mahan, Outagamie County Supervisor, told members of the ESTHER TIP Commit

tee at their meeting on July 15, that Outagamie County, with assistance from various sources, is moving forward with a plan to establish a drug treatment court in early 2009. TIP Committee members are looking for ways to help support that plan.

- The ESTHER Religious Leaders Caucus, in its July meeting at Casa ESTHER, Omro, discussed the plight of some 300 immigrants and their families affected by the ICE arrests and deportations at the meat packing plant in Postville, Iowa. The group heard reports from eye witnesses to the raid and its aftermath and proceeded to take up a spontaneous offering of \$325 that has been sent to the religious coalition that is trying to respond to the physical/legal/spiritual needs of the people affected. A tentative estimate of the funds needed is \$750,000.
- A panel of ESTHER leaders met with Fox Valley Community Foundation proposal reviewers on July 18, to respond to their questions concerning ESTHER's capacity-building proposal submitted in June. The final decision of the Foundation Board will not be made until August 24.
- Interviews with five applicants for the position of ESTHER Organizer were conducted on July 28, with the hope of hiring an Organizer in September.

Strength for the Journey

Elayne Lastofka, member of First English Lutheran, Appleton, and ESTHER/community activist, called me recently filled with excitement: "Have you heard that Outagamie County is likely to approve the use of something like \$600,000 in forfeited bail money for treatment alternatives to incarceration? We need to be at the County Board meeting when that comes up, to be sure to support it."

The call excited me for several reasons:

I was excited that a member of their ESTHER issues committee and of an ESTHER congregation, was in touch with what was happening in her community, felt deeply about the injustices in the judicial/correctional systems, supported treatment alternatives to incarceration, and wanted to act on behalf of change in the justice system.

I was excited that I could tell Elayne that three judges and a county supervisor, who have been participating in meetings of ESTHER's TIP

ESTHER
St. Mark's Lutheran Church
140 S. Green Bay Road
Neenah, WI 54956

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ESTHER

August 2008

Strength for the Journey Continued

Committee, have reported that development and are very supportive of using the bail forfeiture money for treatment alternatives to incarceration and are eager to initiate a drug treatment court by the beginning of 2009.

I was excited that I had an answer for the Fox Valley Community Foundation interviewer, when he asked, "What has ESTHER really accomplished since its inception, in the way of systems change?" I could respond: "We have talked up the rationale for treatment alternatives to incarceration. We have appeared before Outagamie and Winnebago County Board budget hearings for the last three years, asking for expansion of treatment alternative programs. We have seen an actual growth in these programs in both counties. And we are about to see the establishment of a drug treatment court in Outagamie County."

The ESTHER Calendar

Mon., August 4 ~ 5:30	Health Care Committee @ St. Mark's Lutheran, Neenah
Mon., August 4 ~ 6:30	Housing Task Force @ St. Mark's Lutheran, Neenah
Tues., August 12 ~ 6:30	Immigration Committee @ St. Mark's Lutheran, Neenah
Wed., August 13 ~ noon	Religious Leaders Caucus @ St. Patrick Catholic 324 Nicolet Blvd., Menasha
Tues., August 19 ~ 6:30	TIP Committee @ St. Mark's Lutheran, Neenah
Wed., August 27 ~ noon	Leadership Board @ 1st Congregational UCC, Appleton