

# WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

[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 13 denominations with approximately 3,000 congregations and over one million church members statewide.

## **2006 Accomplishments**

**Equipping Leaders**--The Council's signature educational event for clergy each summer is the Washington Island Forum, which in 2006 drew 225 pastors and lay leaders to hear Forum Presenter Barbara Brown Taylor. The Council also hosts regional events throughout the year on a variety of timely topics to equip clergy and lay leaders for effective ministry.

**Hunger on Our Doorstep**--the Council's new congregational study-action resource was published in March, 2006 and mailed to every congregation in the state. Focusing on the needs of food insecure families in Wisconsin, this resource equips local congregations to make a difference in alleviating hunger locally and addressing the root causes of the problem here in Wisconsin.

**Death Penalty Education & Advocacy**--In response to the death penalty advisory referendum on the November, 2006 ballot, the Council produced an educational resource about the death penalty that was mailed to every member church in the state. Congregations were encouraged to host adult forums to discuss the pros and cons of the referendum from our faith perspective.

**New Wine, New Wineskins Spirituality Conference**--this one day event in November explored our society's thirst for spirituality, and the role of Christian churches in responding to this movement of the Spirit in our day.

**New Members**--The Council welcomed the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) as the first African American denomination to join the WCC. Benedictine Women of Madison were received as Associate Members.

## **Looking Ahead to 2007**

**Universal Health Care Project**--The Council has produced an adult education resource, *Health & Hope: What Can We Do About Wisconsin's Health Care Crisis?* This was sent to every member congregation in Wisconsin. Through a series of community forums, adult education classes in local churches, and meetings with state legislators throughout Wisconsin, the Council is raising the importance of meeting the health care needs of all Wisconsinites.

**Ecumenical Lay Ministry School**--in the fall of 2007, the Council will sponsor, in collaboration with four partners (the ELCA South Central Synod, the Presbytery of John Knox, the UCC Wisconsin Conference and the UMC Annual Conference) a one day event for past and current participants in denominational lay ministry schools to raise the importance ecumenical engagement as a part of our Christian vocation.

*Submitted by Scott D. Anderson, Executive Director*