

CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF THE CROSSING

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WHAT MAKES THE CROSSING UNIQUE?



Participating in activities at The Crossing I've found a way to connect with students who challenge and inspire me. I enjoy the company of some of my closest friends here. I've found this to be an awesome place to grow and learn in my faith by asking questions and listening to the diverse ideas the community brings. Just as importantly, I have made some of my best memories thus far in my college career.—Ana



The Crossing has been the most important part of my non-academic life during my years in Madison, supporting me and helping me grow as a person in countless ways. I cannot imagine my university experience without it.—Travis



In my mind, The Crossing is a unique organization on the UW campus because of the devotion of its leaders and tremendous student involvement. When you combine exceptional people with an open-minded attitude, you have an amazing student resource for growth and experience!—Sara



The Crossing has guided me well, opened up many opportunities for me, and helped me think and get involved in new ways. Leading tons of volunteer events, including our trip to Florida to build houses each winter, and seeing so many students grow and change has been very rewarding.—Phil



The Crossing has been a guiding light for me in a tunnel of intimidating classes, difficult tests, and a large, diverse student body here in Madison. It is my main extra curricular activity. I have enthusiastically expended energy to encourage growth and participation in our worship services and other activities.—Leah



Over the years, I have consistently found the staff and students to honor all our differences and approach them with sensitivity and understanding. This is a place where you can explore the range of Christian expression and interfaith issues AND not have to give up being you!—Kirk

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STUDENT ORGANIZATION IS BUSY!

Under the leadership of President Ana Conside, our student organization has continued to have an active year. At monthly meetings, the leadership team (usually about 10 students) plans activities that include community service, movie nights, and service trips. The purpose of the organization is to develop student leadership as students plan activities to get to know each other, welcome new students from campus, and grow in faith and service.

POLI-FAITH DISCUSSION GROUP

Under the able leadership of student Lisa Valenti-Hein, this group meets weekly at The Crossing. Ten to twelve students have faithfully gathered to share their perspectives, questions, and passions.

SCHOOL OF AMERICAS Last November, ten people from an SOA student group connected with The Crossing joined other university students to travel to Fort Benning, Georgia, to protest the training of foreign military, which has often resulted in human rights violations in South and Central America.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

On Friday, December 3, The Crossing held its first Red Cross blood drive. Student organization members Kirk Rappe, Rianna Vandergaast, and Brianna Sundal organized the event, which aims to introduce other students to The Crossing as well as serve the community.

FRIDAY FILM FLICKS Monthly Movie Nights have been one the most successful and established events of the student organization.

Free dinner and discussion after the movie attract students to come and enjoy each other's company and, depending on the film's theme, students often gain meaningful insight in the discussion.



THIS YEAR'S STUDENT ORGANIZATION

SERVICE AND FUNDRAISING

In November, members of the student organization helped with the Habitat for Humanity Rake-A-Thon, a fundraiser for the

local Habitat Chapter. To fundraise for its own purposes, the Student Org held a babysitting event at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Students advertised the event to the church community, offering babysitting services to kids of any age in exchange for a donation to the Student Org. The event was successful and will be followed by another in February.

Some Crossing students will be joining students from around the Midwest at the annual **MIDWEST STUDENT CHRISTIAN GATHERING** on April 1–3

in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

The title of the gathering is "Raise Your GPA (Guiding Principles from Acts)." Dr. James Fleming will lead the

students on a journey to the ancient lands of the Bible, exploring new discoveries of manuscripts that have added to our understanding of the events, hopes, and fears of the first Christians.



Where Faith Meets Life

THE CROSSING

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ABOUT THE CROSSING

The Crossing seeks to provide a Christian community for the University of Wisconsin–Madison where individuals can explore, understand, and affirm their relationship with God, each other, and the world. Our community is grounded in worship, fed by the study of the scriptures, informed by the disciplines of the university and Christian traditions, maintained by fellowship, and seriously engaged with the problems and possibilities of the world.

Rev. Doug Pierce, Director
Rev. Karla Schmidt, Campus Minister
Rev. Cecil Findley, Campus Minister Emeritus
Katie Scanlan, Building Administrator
Ellen Fast, Communications Coordinator

Are you a past alum of MCM, Wesley, or Wayland? If so, we'd love to hear from you! Please send us a card or an email.

THE CROSSING—A PARTNERSHIP OF MADISON CAMPUS MINISTRY, THE WESLEY FOUNDATION, AND WAYLAND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

AN APPEAL FROM THE WAYLAND FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of Wayland:

I recently talked with the parents of a high school senior who is thinking about attending the University of Wisconsin here in Madison. The family is impressed with the world-class academic reputation of our university but expressed concerns about whether Madison is a good place for their son to begin his college career. They are worried by Madison's reputation as a "party school." They are worried about Halloween riots on State Street and the abuse of alcohol and drugs by many students. They are concerned that their son will be overwhelmed by the sheer size of a 40,000-student university.

Fortunately, I was able to tell them about the Wayland Christian Community, where their son could be living with a diverse group of approximately 20 undergraduate and graduate students, many from other countries. I told them about the caring adult presence of our Wayland Campus Minister, Karla Schmidt. I told them that there will be opportunities for their son's faith to mature in a setting where the Baptist principle of "soul freedom" is practiced. I told them about the evening meal program in which residents and their guests enjoy nutritious meals and fellowship—and they were impressed!

Many of you have experienced the impact of this "Wayland Experience" in your own lives and have generously supported the continuation of our ministry. The Wayland Community is an important element of the ecumenical Crossing Campus Ministry in which churches and individuals from United Methodist, Presbyterian, American Baptist, and United Church of Christ traditions join in mission ministry here at the University of Wisconsin—Madison.

This has been a challenging year for those of us who support and guide the Wayland Community. Repairs and maintenance of our two residence houses have been costly. An oversupply of student housing has resulted in some vacant rooms and a reduction in the rental income, which provides the majority of our financial support.

We, therefore, invite your financial support of the Wayland Community. Our greatest financial need is support for our operating budget. In addition, you may wish to consider a contribution to the Shorty Collins Endowment Fund. This endowment, which honors the campus ministry of this Christ-like man, will be used to support future campus ministry.

Faithfully yours,
Wynn Davies, President
 Wayland Community
 (1950–54)

**WYNN AND
 LOREE DAVIES
 SHARE A MEAL
 WITH WAYLAND
 RESIDENTS AT
 FALL WAYLAND**



"Wayland is...

...comfortable

...a place to ask questions

...a place to be heard

...a place to make friends

**...a place to learn about
 different cultures**

...a place to grow in faith

**...a place to expand your
 horizons**

...a place to explore

...a place to come home to."

Lisa Valenti-Hein is from Appleton, Wisconsin. She is a French major with European Studies and Integrated Liberal Studies certificates. She has a Presbyterian background and is looking into seminary for the 2005-06 school year.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE WESLEY FOUNDATION

As happens in a lot of situations with the church, I was asked to serve on the Wesley Foundation, didn't know how to say no, and didn't really know what I was getting into. What I experienced was a real surprise. I became engaged in a ministry to and with some very special people. These young adults are actively and energetically searching for spirituality in fresh, open, and creative ways. The hidden blessing for me, as I have been involved in The Crossing, is that God through these young adults ministers to me in those same fresh, open and creative ways.

The Wesley Foundation is pleased to be an active partner in THE CROSSING. Through utilizing our building, human and financial resources, we hope to continue offering programs and support in the tradition of past Wesley campus ministry endeavors.

We are proud of our heritage and history. The Wesley Foundation of Madison, Wisconsin, was the second Wesley Foundation established in the United States. Over the years, it has played an important role in the lives of students and faculty/staff. We continue to receive testimonies that highlight this fact like these two we received recently:

My husband and I met at Three Squares at Wesley over 50 years ago, went to the "Lil Wes Ball" and married there—must have been a good thing—we've now been married 51 + years. We enjoyed 3 squares very much plus many other things like "the meal in the upper room" (actually held in the basement)!
—Barbara J. Stowell (Albion, MI)

Eric and I met at Wesley in 1952 (My parents met at Wesley in 1930, my grandfather—M. O. Witney—was one of the "builders." We have wonderful memories, including of our wedding in June 1954—so this check commemorates our 50th anniversary! My father's memorial service was there in 1986 and my mother's Marion Witney, September 5, 2004.
—Elizabeth Bradford (Davis, CA)



The Wesley Foundation continues to be encouraged by the support it receives each year. Please let us hear from you.

Jim Hook, President
Pictured, left, with student Travis Tennesen



"Grace P. Schumpert has remembered your institution in her will. As executor of her estate I am happy to inform you that you will be receiving a check for \$10,470. She loved to sing and would be happy to know that some of these funds could be used to support programs at the foundation."

—Carol Schumpert Sudduth, daughter and executor

What a joy and a surprise to receive such a wonderful gift! It provides encouragement and hope to all of us. It also provides the means to continue offering programs and outreach (including the outreach of presence) that without such gifts might be in jeopardy.

It is not that hard to leave a legacy and perpetuate your values through the crafting of your will. Nevertheless, it remains true that almost 50% of North Americans do not have a will or have not updated theirs in decades.

A will is simply one way to insure you perpetuate your values! To those who have made provision to Wesley or Wayland or MCM, or will consider doing so, we offer our heartfelt gratitude and thanks. We hope at some point in your life we were a blessing to you and want you to know that you are now a blessing to us. We pledge to you we will strive to be good stewards of whatever resources you have gifted us!

Doug Pierce, Director

CROSSING STUDENT WINS HAWKINSON SCHOLARSHIP

UW–Madison senior Tomasz Krzyzostaniak is the recipient of the 2004 Hawkinson Scholarship, which honors students active in social justice. He is majoring in international studies, political science, and history. He recently shared some of his background and experiences:

“Peace and justice have been important to me throughout my life. My parents were members of the Solidarity movement in Poland, so from a very early age I was exposed to people fighting for freedom and justice. I’ve attempted to follow in their footsteps. I’ve seen nonviolent protest actually work. I believe that if the Polish uprising against communism had used violence, it would have failed.

In 2002 I heard Father Elias Chacour speak at the school he founded in Israel whose students and faculty are a mix of Muslims, Jews, and Christians. His story inspired me to visit the school to experience its teachings first hand. I was nervous about the potential for violence there, but Fr. Chacour said, “We’ve had enough peace contemplators, now we need peace makers.” So I went. For two weeks, our group stayed in Ibillin, the village where Mar Elias Educational Institute (MEEI) is located. One student, Naiera, spoke of the discrimination she



faced as an Arab-Israeli. She said she was ashamed that she got angry, but she decided to express her anger by working with Israeli soldiers who suffered post-traumatic stress syndrome.

On returning to Madison, I joined the Pilgrims of Ibillin, an organization supporting the MEEI. I participated in over two dozen presentations explaining and promoting the Pilgrims and MEEI. The Middle East has become my passion! I’m currently studying in Cairo for Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 semesters.

In November 2003, I joined the School of Americas peace vigil in Ft. Benning, Georgia. I was inspired by 10,000 people from all walks of life standing hand-in-hand; a Jesuit priest, an anarchist, a communist, an 80-year-old man with his 5-year-old grandchild, nuns, and university students. I thought, “Here’s a tool we can use to hold our government accountable.” Back in Madison, I helped found a School of Americas Watch chapter.

With a friend, I developed a program called “Zones of Peace.” This is to be a resource center for teachers and students to get materials about peace education and activism. Middleton High School has provided space for a pilot project, and we hope to create a network of these zones.

THE CROSSING AS A SPIRITUAL HOME BY TIMYRA COWLING

College life is absurd. New friends necessarily serve as family, the sardine-sized room that passes for “home” changes every year, and formal presentations on topics from “Helping the Homeless” to “Better Sex How-to’s” are conveniently available in your dorm lounge. While the soul, according to Thomas Moore, needs “rootedness” and “constant attention,” ordinary college life offers it little of either.

Spiritual homes are necessary to nurture the soul throughout life. But with so much uprooting and change during the college years, a spiritual home such as The Crossing is invaluable during this time.

When you seem valued solely for your achievements and test scores, you need to come home to your extraordinary innate worth, not earned with achievements or justified by anything, but proven absolutely by God’s love. When happi-

ness and acceptance are most readily available through drinking and partying, you need to come home to a more fulfilling happiness that simply is and lasts. When you can try dozens of clubs and meet hundreds of friendly people without deeply connecting with any of them, you need to come home to a group that shares your devotion to love and peace.

Of course, there is excitement in the Super Wal-Mart of opportunity available at UW–Madison, but as a recent graduate thinking back through the dorms, classes, and yes, parties, The Crossing stands out as a spiritual home. It is only by extraordinary grace that I found such a home in the midst of ordinary college life.

In the words of a student who emailed me after her first visit to The Crossing while I was a peer minister there, “Thanks, that was just what I needed.”



TIMYRA IS A RECENT UW-MADISON GRADUATE.

CROSSING CHOR

The Crossing was pleased to try a “new initiative” during the fall semester: a performance and outreach choir. Fourteen students came together under the leadership of Nancy Seabold, a gifted Madison area musician, to form this unique group.

Besides weekly practices and solo coaching, there was time for sharing small group experiences over dinner (usually pizza). After rehearsing all semester, the Choir was able to offer two outreach performances at area senior citizen centers. Standing ovations were received from the appreciative audiences at West Madison Senior Center and Madison Senior Center. The choir’s musical program featured a range of global Christmas music with one Hanukkah song.



The choir also led an Advent Vespers worship service at The Crossing (see photo, below). After performing an inspiring array of music, Director, Nancy Seabold shared a message on the gifts of music and creativity as they relate to the Christian faith.

During the spring semester, the choir will take a different form. Choir members will work on solos, duets,

trios, quartets, and ensembles under Nancy’s guidance. This will allow them to strengthen their musical gifts while providing some variety for this spring. If you would like to have a music group or individual participate in your worship service, please contact Doug or Karla at The Crossing.



THE CROSSING CHOIR PERFORMS CHRISTMAS MUSIC AT A VESPERS SERVICE IN DECEMBER. NANCY SEABOLD DI-

WINTER WORK TRIPS

Over winter break, 23 students from The Crossing were involved in building houses. Nineteen students traveled to Florida to work on a Habitat for Humanity Blitz Build. This was the fourth year that The Crossing has participated in this effort, working along side of Florida-area churches. A carpool of four vehicles traveled to Daytona Beach and then to a work site where they were kept busy. This year’s group was co-led by Phil Kollmeyer and Jeni Olsen. Phil, who has been an inspiration for this trip, has gone all four years and has risen to the position of on-site supervisor. Jeni created a devotional booklet and then led a daily reflection time that helped keep a faith-based perspective central to the efforts of the student workers.

Four Crossing students joined eight other university students to become part of a group of twenty that traveled to Honduras to build cement block houses for a group of

Hondurans associated with the Christian Reformed Church. This trip was offered through one of our partners, The Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ, which offered major scholarships to the first ten university students who applied. Crossing graduate student Travis Tennesen served as a student leader of this trip.

Prior to the trip Travis wrote, *“Want to change your life in ten days? My experiences in Honduras did just that for me. There’s no better way to engage with new places and people than by getting your hands dirty as a part of the community. Come to build homes with communities in need, but also to build solid foundations of friendship, cooperation, and compassion in your own heart and the world. Change your life, change the world—Let’s go!”*

Students from both groups will be sharing their reflections in upcoming Vesper services.



VESPERS

Our Sunday evening Vespers service and the no-cost meal that follows continue to be a source of growth, inspiration, and opportunity for students to build community. Strong student leadership is evident



throughout the service. Music is a crucial part of each service, and we are grateful to Clare Norelle and her group of talented student musicians who help guide and direct the music each week. Campus ministers Karla Schmidt and Doug Pierce typically offer the sermons, though on occasion students participate at this level as well.

From time to time, guest speakers are also featured. Through the efforts of Covenant Presbyterian Church, The Crossing was thrilled to welcome Rev. Dr. Peter Gomes on October 24. Dr. Gomes is a noted author and a man that *Time* magazine



called one of the seven best preachers in America. Dr. Gomes is an American Baptist minister and a member of the Faculty at Harvard University where he serves as pastor of the Memorial Church. Dr. Gomes spoke on "Transformations," with Romans 12:2 serving as his text. In his message and encounters with students after the service (see photo left) it is obvious that he has a passion for students and for campus

KATIE SCANLAN ADDS SPIRIT TO THE CROSSING

Katie Scanlan is the new Crossing Administrator, which includes Wesley and Wayland duties and responsibilities. She replaced Deann McPherson in February 2004. Katie initially worked part-time because she was hard at work finishing her studies to obtain a law degree at UW–Madison.

In June, Katie's legal studies were rewarded as she received her Doctor of Jurisprudence degree and was admitted to the State Bar of Wisconsin. Katie brings many gifts to The Crossing, including a keen mind and a gracious and playful spirit. It is typical to hear her say on a chaotic day, when things get out of sorts, "It's all good..." It'll be ok!

Recently, a UW graduate now with the Madison Symphony and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, gave a french horn recital at The Crossing. In his bulletin of acknowledgments he made a point to thank "Katie Scanlan at The Crossing for all her assistance in helping with his recital."

We, too, at The Crossing—staff, students and Board members—want to express our thanks and appreciation to Katie for her hard work and ability to juggle multiple tasks with diligence and grace.



PROJECT: LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Students from UW professor John Harrington's class in the School of Landscape Architecture have taken on the grounds of The Wesley Foundation as a fall class project. Recently, students shared their designs in two three-hour class presentations.

Each student started with a theme: hospitality; reaching in and reaching out, meeting place/intersection, etc., and then proceeded to their design

stage. They each paid particular attention to the challenges and difficulties of the site but also the opportunities the site offered. Director Doug Pierce was invited to attend the presentations and offer comments. He was impressed by the quality, range, inspiration and imagination of each design. Next objective is to begin to seek funding to implement whatever design eventually makes it through another discernment stage with the



THE CROSSING CONNECTS WITH THE UNIVERSITY

The Crossing is pleased to welcome a variety of opportunities to connect with the university community. Below are a few illustrations of how these connections happen.

DIALOGUE INTERNATIONAL

Dialogue International is a group that seeks to promote interfaith dialogue on campus. Recently The Crossing was invited to represent the Christian perspective at a couple of their events. A dinner and discussion on "Breaking the Fast" was organized by the Muslim Students Association on October 21. Director Doug Pierce was invited to join a panel to discuss Religion and Social Justice. UW Pro-

fessor of Drama and Jewish Studies, Robert Skloot and Salih Erschen, Director of the Madison Muslim Dawa Circle also presented.

On November 4, Campus Minister Emeritus Cecil Findley was one of several distinguished **GUEST SPEAKERS** discussing *Dialogue and Tolerance: Towards Global Peace*. This event was held at the Monona Terrace.

SERVICE INSIDE AND OUT

Wisconsin Union Directorate and The Morgridge Center hosted a sack lunch and discussion on November 12 entitled "Service Inside and Out: Alternative Breaks....Service on the

Road." Representatives from WUD, Alternative Breaks Committee, and The Crossing shared experiences and approaches to domestic and international travel.

UW Religious Workers

In December, The Crossing hosted the University Religious Workers meeting. UW Chancellor John Wiley was the featured speaker. The University Religious Workers is the broad umbrella under which all campus ministry programs meet and share information common to all groups. Meetings happen monthly through the academic year and are rotated to various campus ministry sites.

ASM GRANT

The Crossing received a grant from the Associated Students of Madison (ASM) to help underwrite the costs of a feature-length documentary film on the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The film by Martin Doblmeier has been called "Mesmerizing" by the *Chicago Tribune*. The film was shown on January 21.

PEACE CENTER INITIATIVE

Under the leadership of Campus Minister Emeritus, Cecil Findley, The Crossing has been working on a Peace Center Initiative. Through networking efforts it is hoped that we might encourage the University of Wisconsin-Madison to offer first a certificate program and later a degree program in the general area of peace studies. A small group of dedicated individuals including faculty member Dr. Joe Elder, Daniel Gomes-Ibanez, George Shalabi and Ted Shannon, Crossing student and recent religious studies graduate, Matt Ley, and Director Doug Pierce have been working with Rev. Findley on this exciting endeavor. Cecil Findley has long been interested in promoting peace studies at this level.

QUESTA RICA II

Members of Questa Rica II will be making their second trip to Costa Rica in March 2005. Ten students (undergraduate and graduate) are busy planning and preparing for this exciting trip. Dr. Cal DeWitt (a UW professor of environmental studies) has met with the group and shared insights on the faith perspective of John Muir. He also spoke about a biblical and theologically based envi-

ronmental ethic. Dr. Don Waller, a world-renowned biologist, will speak to the group in January about the rich biological diversity of Costa Rica.

In the meantime, the group is busy fundraising, studying, and bonding for their spring trip. Already they have participated in a prairie restoration trip to St. Benedict Center in Madison and had a meal served to them and a slide show presented by last year's group.



MEMBERS OF THIS YEAR'S QUESTA RICA GROUP WITH MEMBERS OF THE MCM BOARD OF DIRECTORS.