

Report of Activities Fall 2012

The North Carolina Council of Churches

For more than 75 years, the North Carolina Council of Churches has given witness to our oneness in Christ and enabled us to work together on issues of justice, compassion, and peace. Our members are the North Carolina judicatories of eighteen Christian denominations, plus eight congregations which joined when not part of a member judicatory. Recent and ongoing Council work includes:

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES & ADVOCACY

- **Campaign Against Amendment One**, worked in an unprecedented coalition with secular and faith-based organizations in an effort to defeat this discriminatory Amendment.
- ***Becoming the Church Together: Immigration, the Bible and Our New Neighbors***, published and distributed this biblically-based curriculum; 1,500 printed copies are in circulation and more than 300 additional copies have been downloaded.
- **2012 Conference on the Common Good**, hosted this annual gathering focusing this year on the Papal Encyclical which has been the theological basis for Catholic social teaching.
- **emPOWERed**, offered congregations a comprehensive energy program including congregational energy audits, volunteer-led pre-weatherization projects, and an information clearinghouse through North Carolina Interfaith Power & Light. The program is ongoing.
- **Abraham Jam**, sponsored a program of music and poetry at Duke University representing the three Abrahamic faiths.
- **2012 Critical Issues Seminar**, developed a daylong event focused on food as a social justice issue and brought together people from around the state to discuss and learn about **Eating Well: For Ourselves, For Our Neighbors, For Our Planet**.
- **Jack Crum Conference on Prophetic Ministry**, co-sponsored an annual gathering for United Methodists and their ecumenical colleagues to learn, dialogue and respond to issues related to the local history of prophetic ministry and our faith-based values of social justice.
- **Strive to Revive Campaign**, provided free AEDs and CPR training to 33 churches statewide. Funding for additional places of worship is available through Partners in Health and Wholeness.

PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

- ***Eating Well: For Ourselves, For Our Neighbors, For Our Planet***, a multi-generational curriculum that considers food as a social justice issue within a biblical context.
- ***E-news***, a weekly e-mailed update on Council activities and those of like-minded organizations.
- ***Workers are Worth Their Keep -- A Theological Companion to Making Ends Meet After the Great Recession: The 2010 Living Income Standard***, a resource to bring the issue of wages into conversation with theological perspectives of economic justice.
- ***Job Loss -- A Guidebook for Pastors***, an updated version with more recent data to help clergy support and advise parishioners who are out of work.
- ***Acts of Faith: Resources for Prophetic Worship***, a lectionary-based worship resource for NC, available for the full three-year lectionary cycle with an updated web version that is searchable and easy to browse.
- ***Raleigh Report***, a newsletter for faith-based legislative activists. Distribution, primarily by e-mail, is to about 2,000 people.
- ***Church Council Bulletin***, a quarterly newsletter from the Council.
- ***PHW Special Bulletin***, a quarterly newsletter on issues of health and health care access.
- ***Partner in Health and Wholeness Worship Aid***, a lectionary-based resource illustrating the spiritual relevance of healthy living. Available online from the Council's website or in print by request.
- ***Recipes for the Heart and Soul***, a guide to cooking healthily in large quantities. Available online from the Council's website or in print by request.
- ***Partners in Health and Wholeness Fact Sheets***, a resources designed to help congregations incorporate physical activity, healthy eating and tobacco-use prevention into worship services and overall church life.
- ***Farmworker Fact Sheets***, seven resource sheets covering demographics, immigration issues, living and working conditions, and economic impact. Available in both English and Spanish.
- ***Faith and Immigration*** and ***Society and Immigration***, two fact sheets with nearly 20,000 distributed statewide.
- ***For You Were Once a Stranger: Immigration in the US Through the Lens of Faith***, a study guide including materials, reflections and information specific to NC.

- *Immigration & People of Faith: A Toolbox for North Carolina*, a 40-page collection of fact sheets, articles, worship resources and city-specific materials designed with faith communities in mind.
- *NCIPL Monthly Newsletter*, highlighting and updating activities; available through e-mail.
- *Legislative Advocacy Toolkit*, information for people of faith who want to be effective as grassroots lobbyists, especially with the state's General Assembly.
- *Regularly Updated NCCC Website* and *Presence on Facebook*, making the Council's work and resources more easily accessible.
- *Representation in the secular print, broadcast and online media* as representative of the state's organized progressive faith voice.

ONGOING MINISTRIES OF WORSHIP, SERVICE & SOCIAL CHANGE

- Maintaining a **grassroots network of faith-based activists on legislative issues**.
- Lobbying on behalf of **progressive social justice issues at the North Carolina General Assembly** including in support of the Racial Justice Act and in opposition to anti-immigration legislation.
- Taking part in the **Historic Thousands on Jones Street (H K on J) March**, which annually brings together thousands of advocates for a progressive social justice agenda in NC.
- Building partnerships between affiliated churches and health programs across the state as part of the **Partners in Health and Wholeness Initiative** and offering churches tiered certification for their health-related accomplishments.
- Providing **regional PHW staff** in the Triad and in the southeastern Piedmont to support programming ranging from **activities at local farmers markets to the Faithful Families** curriculum, which focuses on healthy eating and physical activity practices in churches.
- Coordinating the **NC Religious Coalition for Justice for Immigrants**.
- Producing an **anti-child labor public service announcement** to air in late 2012 or early 2013.
- Holding six clergy and student **lunches on immigration** on or near NC seminaries and holding two clergy **breakfasts in rural churches**.
- Continuing to support the **implementation of the Affordable Care Act** and to work for a **federal budget that protects the vulnerable**.
- Conducting monthly **Earth Sabbath Celebrations** in Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill and Asheville.
- Educating about and advocating against **fracking** (hydraulic fracturing) and **SCWIP** (allowing power companies to pass unregulated construction costs to consumers). The Council's **Rural Life Committee** formally opposed fracking.
- Promoting **Sacred Foodscapes** (formerly Cool Harvest), which challenges congregations and individuals to reduce their carbon "foodprint."
- Staffing the Peace Booth at the North Carolina State Fair for one day annually.
- Preparing worship and planning resources for congregations and communities to use for the **International Day of Prayer for Peace** and promoting the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**.
- Monitoring and supporting the **Interfaith Dialogue Project**, initiated by the Christian Unity Committee several years ago. Groups in the Triangle and Triad meet regularly around the common texts cherished by Christians, Muslims and Jews. The group in Winston-Salem is creating an on-line Interfaith Academy.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- *The Moral Urgency of Worker Justice featuring Kim Bobo* –September 27, 2012, Duke Divinity School, Durham. A presentation by Bobo, of Interfaith Worker Justice, followed by a panel discussion.
- *Grounds for Hope* –October 7-8, 2012, Myers Park Baptist and Friendship Missionary Baptist churches, Charlotte. Evangelical environmental leader Rev. Richard Cizik speaks at this NCIPL co-sponsored event.
- *2012 Faith & Immigration Summit* –October 12, United Church of Chapel Hill. An ecumenical gathering offered in partnership with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship – NC for faith leaders who work primarily with immigrant congregations.
- *2013 H K on J* –February 9, downtown Raleigh.
- *2013 Jack Crum Conference on Prophetic Ministry* – Date and location TBD.
- *2013 Conference on the Common Good* – February 18, location TBD.
- *2013 Legislative Seminar* – Spring, Raleigh.
- *Launch of the Interfaith Academy* – 2013.

For more information and for many of the resources mentioned above,
visit www.nccouncilofchurches.org or call 919-828-6501.

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