

**Minutes of December 2, 2018 MOSES Monthly Meeting  
Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society, 2010 Whenona Drive, Madison**

**Next Meeting:** 3:30-5:30, Sunday, January 6, 2019, at tbd

51 people attended, of which 1 was new.

Meeting was conducted by Eric Howland, MOSES President.  
Minutes were recorded by Lucy Gibson, MOSES Assistant Secretary.

**Opening prayer and reflection**

Rev. Sarah Ingham of Prairie UU offered an opening reflection.

**Welcome**

Nominating chair Barbie Jackson welcomed our newly-elected MOSES leaders and thanked outgoing leaders Talib Akbar and Janice Greening for their past service:

- Rachel Morgan – Designated Vice President
- Ann Lacy - Treasurer
- Andrea Harris – Financial Secretary
- Lucy Gibson – Assistant Secretary

We welcomed a new member congregation – Christ Presbyterian Church. CPC member David Straight spoke about how their church decided to join MOSES.

**Racial Justice Circles** - panel discussion by recent Crossroads trainees Frank Davis facilitated this panel discussion by four of the seven training attendees: Rachel Morgan, Jeanie Verschay, Eric and Barbie. Two other attendees, Andrea Harris and Karen Julesberg were unable to attend our meeting. Frank was the seventh attendee.

Frank explained that Crossroads training is a 3-day antiracism training course put on by the Crossroads organization all over the country and hosted annually in Milwaukee by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The Crossroads mission is based on a systematic analysis of racism in its individual, cultural, institutional manifestations. It offers a power analysis of how racism works in systems, and tools. Frank then asked two questions to the four panelists about their experiences of the training.

Barbie: I was completely overwhelmed by the wealth of information...I knew some things, but I had no idea the extent of it....the degree of methodical step

by step disenfranchising of all groups other than white males, during the formation of the country and the continuance of the country. As we've been talking about implicit bias, which is what happens inside of ourselves, but understanding the structures....How does all this affect what goes on in MOSES?...understanding how to take next steps isn't clear to me. I'm glad we're getting some assistance.... we're not intending to be exclusive; in fact, it's our intention to be inclusive.

Rachel: They broke down race and racism as political and intentional...taking the land = colonialism...bringing people of color allowed for capitalism. Orientalism then called for war. It was an intentional concept to keep white people in power (white supremacy). Everything after that has been slow. It took a long time to build it up. I think what I've learned is that the "powers that be" are going to do whatever is in their power to keep things the way they are. What MOSES and other organizations are doing is a new wave and a new consciousness....I think MOSES and other organizations will benefit from this....

Eric: One of the things that struck me was the way wealth has been mined out of poor communities and siphoned into the power structures systematically....MOSES is in the middle of trying to change a central part of structural racism:...If in the US we're trying to create a permanent poorly paid underclass, the criminal justice system is a key piece of making that happen....and there's a punishment for those who don't take those jobs....

Jeanie: It was a powerful experience....the historical tracking of conscious, systemic societal institutional structures....I've been exposed to the information, but not aware of the reinforcing impact...that it's continuing....we (MOSES) will be able to take some steps that aren't so easy....It's important to live the anti-racist, transformational values.

Frank asked another question: What surprised you about this training, and how will you use it to move forward in MOSES?

Barbie: How intentional systems were set up: The impact of that for myself personally is that I learned how to maneuver and manage things in those systems, but I walk into MOSES and it has a system....One of the things I've realized – Rachel taught me, one of the things in her culture is to greet a challenge with silence. Well, if there's a silence, I always feel I have to jump

in and take hold and take the lead and fix it....What surprised me is the need to step back and listen.

Rachel: What surprised me was looking at the board called the Wall of Racism and the Wall of Resistance. We did the Wall of Racism the first day all the way back to Columbus. We had to sit with that for a couple of days because we didn't come up with resistance for a couple of days. The ways of resistance – we'd make a little progress, and then it would morph into something else. Like slavery morphed into Jim Crow, and then into mass incarceration....In some of the great civil rights movements when a great leader was assassinated, no one came in to take their place....In my culture we have to have a long-term strategy (7 generations ahead) that maintains constant resistance. I walked away feeling constant grief...

Eric: The thing that was most personal for me was when we sat with the Wall of Racism for a day-and-a-half before we got into the Wall of Resistance. I could feel the despair from that....The wall went all the way back before Columbus; centuries of racism. That weighed very heavily on me...I didn't expect the joy that came to me in recognizing that there were people that were standing up to that all along....The Wall of Racism was built of skyscrapers, and the city of resistance was, like, tents....There is work being done; that has been done. Even though we're outflanked by "the system," in some ways we're more powerful.

Jeannie: I too was thinking about the history that we're experiencing the results of....The feeling that we have to do something fast is part of our history too....In the last few years, when the leadership of our country – I've been reacting with shock...It helped give me some hope that we can respond in a caring, loving, powerful manner. It also reinforced my desire to participate in many more things in our community. I just got a chance to participate in the Racial Healing training with Richard Davis....I think there are many efforts going on within our MOSES congregations and membership....

Frank: I didn't learn something new, but for me the biggest surprise and learning was how painful it still is for me....The video; the power point; the flag depicted....[Old photo – from 1700s or 1800s] of a teacher looking down on students of a variety of ethnicities...I got angry looking at that....That there are so many people who want to deny the reality....

Frank then invited members to ask questions or comment on the discussion.

Question: How often is this training offered?

Eric: This was hosted by the ELCA synod. They do it once a year, and because of our connection to the synod from MICAH, they invited us to participate. Perhaps they'll invite us again next year.

Question: How do you bring this to this group, and because you all went to it, what's going to be different?

Rachel: Our assignment is to put together an action plan to bring to our organization...

Eric: The training was part education and part personal understanding of where we are in this, and how we fit. The Racial Justice Circles support that, as well.

Jeanie: I think it can't be a closed process; it's getting input from all the members, and we'll try to incorporate them into next steps.

Barbie: We have resources, including some from WISDOM, and Jerry, who's part of the ELCA leadership in Milwaukee, is available.

Alison Mix: Could I ask that the group who went to the training if you or the Executive Committee or somebody would explore the feasibility of bringing the training to us in the future – financial and schedule feasibility – and report back to us.

Barbie: That is part of what we are exploring.

### **One on Ones: Networking for effective organizing**

What are One-on-Ones? Frank explained that they're about relationship building. You do them so you can meet people, learn about them, and they can learn about you. You have to cultivate the relationship over and over again. If you don't, it's not a relationship. We do them to establish a relationship. When you're in a relationship with somebody, you can be open with them, and they with you....You understand the self-interest of the person you're talking to....That's important, because it lets you know what motivates, what inspires, what pushes a person forward; what makes them angry....We also do it to get clarity about the person's motivations – why they're here; whether you actually want to be in a relationship with them....We do it to get information....Self-interest means *inter-esse*, which is Latin meaning self among others. You learn about your self-interest so you know how you'll be motivated among other people.

The rules for One-on-Ones:

1. The time you sit down with the person is 30-45 min. Today we're only going to do 20. 10 min you're talking to the person; the other 10, they're talking to you.

2. Always do it in person; not on the phone.
3. Don't take notes. That would not be personal enough.
4. One-way conversation. 70% of the time you're listening; 30% of the time you're asking questions. Open-ended questions that elicit more information.
5. Have your time and place set up ahead of time.
6. Confidentiality is to be maintained.
7. Motivators should be courageous and curious. Courageous enough to ask that important question; curious enough to ask the questions.

We broke up into groups of 2, and did this for 20 min

## **Upcoming Projects**

### **Madison Action Day**

Eric announced that Madison Action Day will be on March 26, 2019. WISDOM members gather from around the state and end up the day talking to legislators at the State Capitol. Please mark your calendars for this important all-day event.

### **WISDOM outreach to transition team**

Eric Howland reports: Last May, we met with the Democratic gubernatorial candidates and asked them to commit themselves to taking action if they were elected. Tony Evers wasn't there in person, but he committed to take on a bunch of actions on WISDOM-related issues, of which there are 5 addressed by the transition statements submitted by WISDOM to Governor-elect Evers.

1. Close Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility (MSDF) – presented by Eric  
MSDF was built in Milwaukee when the Sheriff said to the State, “I can't afford to house all the people you're revoking and have in the Milwaukee area.” Because of the way the law is written, sheriffs can't refuse people on probation holds unless it's a safety issue in the jail, so the sheriff said it's a safety issue. Then the DOC built their own facility in Milwaukee. It's like a building within a building. The outside looks like there are windows, but there really aren't. They recirculate the air such that if someone has the flu on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor, everyone else gets sick. It's hot in summer, cold in winter. It's been in use for 17 years, and they've had 17 deaths. MICAH and WISDOM have established a task force to close it, so they're asking in their position paper these actions be taken:
  - a) Direct the DOC to eliminate incarceration as a response to suspected or proven technical violations of supervision rules;

- b) Move all of the “alternative to incarceration” programs from MSDF to community-based settings;
- c) Build into the 2019-21 state budget a mandate to close MSDF by December 31, 2019 and to include plans to re-invest savings from MSDF closure to community-based organizations like Project Return that work to connect people returning home from prison with jobs, housing, peer support and treatment.

2. Post release rules and supports (revocation) – presented by Jan Gilbert

The actions MOSES is calling for on this are:

- a) Direct Community Corrections to fully implement the policies passed by the legislature than call for graduated sanctions for technical violations of supervision, as a replacement for incarceration.
- b) Move to eliminate incarceration as a response to alleged and proven “technical violations” of the rules of supervision.
- c) Reinvest the money saved by not incarcerating people for revocations or revocation “holds” to community-based programs that will help people with jobs, housing, treatment and peer support.
- d) Work with the legislature to cap probation, parole and extended supervision sentences to one year, except in rare circumstances.

3. Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) – presented by Ann Lacy

The actions MOSES is calling for on this are:

- a) The 2019-21 state budget should include a \$35 million increase in funding for TAD programs.
- b) \$25 million should be set aside for increasing pre-trial alternatives to incarceration. The money should be allocated to counties in direct proportion to the number of people from each county who are currently incarcerated.
- c) A small percentage of TAD funding is currently used for alternatives to revocation. An increase of \$10 million should be added to this, to provide community-based (not DOC-based) alternatives. This should also be provided in proportion to the number of revocations and revocation holds in each county in recent years.
- d) The budget should propose fixes to TAD legislation which are recommended by many local and state officials: a) to modify the statute so the money can be used for people suffering from mental illness, even if they have no substance abuse problem, and; b) to modify the statute so that

people who were once convicted of a “violent” offense can be eligible for the program on a subsequent “non-violent” offense.

e) The TAD increase should have a significant percentage set aside for thorough and professional evaluation of the overall program and the multiple local programs it funds. Originally, TAD was rigorously evaluated by the UW Population Health Institute. In recent years, evaluation has been assigned to the Department of Justice, but the DOJ was given very limited resources for evaluation.

#### 4. Solitary Confinement – presented by Talib Akbar

The actions MOSES is calling for on this are:

- a. Instruct the new DOC Secretary to end the placement of mentally ill prisoners in solitary confinement.
- b. Immediately end the use of long term “Administrative Confinement.”
- c. Order the Department of Corrections to document how many days inmates in Wisconsin prisons spend in all levels of segregation and order them to immediately reduce by fifty percent the number of days inmates in Wisconsin Prisons spend in segregation within a year.
- d. Immediately begin a process that will end all use of solitary confinement for more than 15 consecutive days in Wisconsin prisons.

#### 5. Parole and Compassionate Release – presented by Alison Mix

The actions MOSES is calling for on this are:

- a) Immediately appoint a new Chair of the Parole Commission, who will change the philosophy and work to move toward release for those who have met the conditions and expectations of the sentencing judge.
- b) Get an immediate outside assessment of all parole-eligible people in Wisconsin prisons, to determine which of them are low-risk and can be returned to the community.
- c) Have the new DOC Secretary order every adult institution to identify all people who are potentially eligible for Compassionate Release, and to assist those people in applying for release.
- d) Immediately reconstitute the Pardon Board, and ask them to identify especially those people who received unreasonably long sentences, especially as youths or young adults, for whom a commutation of sentence would be appropriate.

Eric said that Jerome Dillard interviewed Ed Wall a few weeks ago on WORT. Search on Ed Wall or Jerome Dillard and you’ll find it. The first part of the

interview was about Aaron Hicks, who was just off paper and about to vote for the first time in his life.

Eric also announced that our very own Frank Davis is off paper now. Applause.

John Mix said he's particularly interested in the school-to-prison pipeline. He's reaching out on his own to schools and principals, gathering information about 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading scores. If we're going to stop this pipeline some way, we have to get to the kids while they're in school; ideally, their reading level is up to their grade level. The principal of Thoreau told him when she came there 5 years ago, NONE of the African-American students could read at their grade level; now it's up to 20%....Our system is set up so you learn to learn to read up to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and you're expected to read to learn after that. DOC watches those reading scores to plan prison beds 10 years in the future...." John said, "a representative told me that, and I was enraged, that this is known, and we're not doing something about it."...He's hoping others are interested in exploring this with him, although he realizes we have plenty of issues.

### **Announcements**

- Sustaining contributions – You can set this up through the MOSES website or talk to Ann after the meeting.
- GALA tickets for MOSES Gala on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> You can buy tickets through the website [here](#).
- Yearbook ads (today is the final day to turn in layout).
- Lynn McDonald announced that tomorrow there's a protest at 12:30pm inside the Capitol, and 5:30 outside the Capitol against 5 bills that have been introduced in the legislature to reduce the power of the Governor and the Attorney General, to reduce early voting period from six weeks to two weeks, and to add a third election in the spring to separate the vote for Supreme Court justice from the presidential primary. This has already been done in North Carolina and a similar effort is underway in Michigan.
- Talib just finished a Gamaliel training program. He asked us to donate socks for welcome home kits for formerly incarcerated women. Find out more at [www.thedemeterfoundation.com](http://www.thedemeterfoundation.com)
- Talib has a truck with a "solitary confinement" cell replica built into the back of it. He's going to bring it to the Friends' Meetinghouse next Sunday (December 9) and will talk about it between their two worship services.

- Frank said every two years, the legislature has the budget meetings around the state, and what MOSES normally does as a concerted effort is to try to get people to the one closest to Madison. This will be about March. A lot of times they only give 2-3 weeks' notice about it, so keep it on your radar.

**WISDOM conference calls 605-468-8012**

Old Law: Dec. 8, 8:30 AM (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday) Use code 423950

Solitary: Dec 11, 4:00 PM (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday) Use code 423950

Prison Prevention: Dec 11, 5:00 PM ( 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday) Use code 423950

Post Release: Dec 20, 7:30 PM ( 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday) Use code 423951

**Round-robin introductions and One Word Evaluation (round robin)**

**ROC Wisconsin Prayer**