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NEWS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Minnesota Council of Churches

March 3, 2010



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To make a tax deductible contribution to the Minnesota

Advocate

Travel Money Available for March for America

March 21, 2010, Washington, D.C.

Join this interfaith rally for just, humane immigration reform. THE FIRST 20 FAITH COMMUNITY PEOPLE (any synagogue, church, meeting, mosque, congregation, spiritual community, etc.) who commit to fly to DC for both the March 21 demonstration and the March 22 lobby days will be reimbursed up to \$200 for the flight. (Offer applies to Minnesota and neighboring states).

To take advantage of this offer, email jgutterman@churchworldservice.org with your name and the name and address of the faith group you are a member of (synagogue, church, meeting, mosque, congregation, community, etc.). More information at www.changetakesfaith.org.

Hunger Affects Everyone!

In 2009, there were about 3 million food shelf visits statewide and 61 million pounds of food were distributed to Minnesota families by food shelves. Give today to Minnesota's largest annual food drive, MN FoodShare's March Campaign. MN FoodShare is a program of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, co-sponsored by the Minnesota Council of Churches. To learn more about how hunger affects everyone watch http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9QI1hFjQ5k&feature=player_embedded# or visit <http://www.mnfoodshare.gmcc.org/march.php>.

Become a JRLC District Leader

Want to be more involved in your community? Or work harder for social justice in Minnesota? Become a JRLC District Leader. The objective of being a JRLC District Leader is to build, strengthen, and help mobilize the JRLC network in your senate district to promote social justice and the common good of all Minnesotans, as reflected in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions. District co-Leaders are encouraged. What are the responsibilities involved with becoming a District Leader for JRLC? Visit www.jrlc.org.

Upcoming Events

Help Resettled Refugees Take Root

Thursday, March 11, 2010, 6pm to 8:30pm

MN Church Center, 122 Franklin Avenue W, Minneapolis, MN 55404

Imagine you are a refugee fleeing persecution, arriving in Minnesota knowing no one. You are greeted at the airport and helped in your first months by a team of Muslim and Christian volunteers working together. In your homeland you only knew people of your own religious tradition, or your experience with other

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religions was one of distrust and persecution. But here your interfaith sponsors help you find a home, a job and make a successful transition to self-sufficiency. Gradually you build a new life of hope, safety, peacefulness and connection.

Taking Root is a new innovative program at MCC that allows Minnesotans the opportunity to help create community by joining an interfaith co-sponsorship group to welcome a refugee family arriving in Minnesota 2010. Co-sponsoring a refugee family involves a variety of responsibilities, but holds enormous benefits. Each group will be responsible for a variety of tasks from finding furniture for the new apartment to driving the refugees to appointments. Minnesota Council of Churches staff will guide and support the groups throughout the process. The commitment is for four months, but the friendships can last a lifetime.

Join us on Thursday March 11, 2010 to learn about the sponsorship process and how you can be part of welcoming the stranger. For more information contact Gail Anderson, Director of Unity and Relationships, at (612)230.3210 or gail.anderson@mnchurches.org or visit <http://www.mnchurches.org/programs/christian-unity/TakingRoot.html>.

Young Adult Legislative Advocacy Training

Thursday March 11, 2010, 6pm to 8pm

Hamline University, The Hub (Lower Level of Bush Student Center), 1536 Hewitt Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104-1284

Join us for a special training event by young adults for young adults who want to engage in legislative advocacy at Day-on-the-Hill. Come for the free dinner and stay for valuable information on how to speak with your legislators, current local justice issues, and techniques for an interfaith approach to advocacy. This event is sponsored by the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, Hamline University Religious and Spiritual Life Programs and co-sponsored by the New Fire Movement of the National Council of Churches. To RSVP or for more information contact Alison Killeen at Alison@jrhc.org.

3rd Annual SPIN Interfaith Passover Seder

March 21, 2010, 5pm to 8pm (4:30pm check in)

Temple of Aaron Congregation, 616 S. Mississippi River Boulevard, Saint Paul 55116

Join adult and youth leaders of several religious traditions for the 3rd Annual SPIN Interfaith Passover Seder sponsored by the Saint Paul Interfaith Network (SPIN). The Seder expresses the universal longing for freedom, justice, and transformation in our lives and in our world through ritual, readings, song, and a shared meal. Cost: \$15, \$10 for youth (18 and under), for light vegetarian dinner. Pre-registration and pre-payment required by March 16th deadline. To [register](#) please visit http://www.spacc.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={45E882A0-44F5-4344-80C1-5DE05E3627BA}. For more information contact Rabbi Amy Eilberg, rebamy@eilberg.com.

Register for JRLC's Day-on-the-Hill

Thursday, March 25, 2010, 8:30am to 4pm

Morning session at the RiverCentre, followed by rally and meetings with legislators at the MN State Capitol, MN State Capitol

Be part of a unique interfaith lobby day focusing on poverty, healthcare, judicial fairness, housing and taxation. Register now for the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition's Annual Day on the Hill. To [register](#) visit www.jrhc.org/day-on-the-hill.

News

Meet the New Taking Root Organizers

MCC is excited to introduce our two community organizers for our Taking Root Program. Farheen Hakeem and Lynea Geinert.

Farheen Hakeem is a well-known community organizer in the Twin Cities, coming from African American Men and Women in Need as an organizing consultant. She also has extensive experience working in the Muslim community through girl-oriented youth programs, and was featured on the front cover of the New York Times in November of 2007 for her work. A former math teacher, Farheen holds a Bachelors of Mathematics from Oberlin College and lives in South Minneapolis with her foster child. Farheen will be organizing primarily in the Muslim community. She can be contacted at 612-230-3244 or farheen.hakeem@mnchurches.org.

Lynea Geinert has 20 years experience working as a manager of volunteer programs and organizer in the Christian community. Most recently she worked for an organization serving low-income families, many of which were new to America. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Christian Ministries from Bethel University and is currently working on a Master's Degree in Congregational Mission and Leadership at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. Lynea is also a candidate for Diaconal Ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Lynea can be contacted at 612-230-3243 or Lynea.Geinert@mnchurches.org.

For more information about this innovative program which builds interfaith relationships while supporting refugee resettlement see our website at <http://www.mnchurches.org/programs/christian-unity/TakingRoot.html>.

MCC's Family Has Grown

We are so appreciative of our great staff! Meet a few of the new members to MCC's team. Tar Paw started in February as the Refugee Specialist: Refugee Cash Assistance. She left a position at UPS to come to MCC. Saeed Hussien began March 1, as the new Somali-speaking Resettlement Case Manager for the Taking Root program. Previously, Saeed worked as a Resettlement Case Manager with Catholic Charities for 10 years. Alesia "Lee" Thompson began as an intern for the Minnesota Interreligious Initiative. Lee is a business analyst with her own consulting service. To learn more about the MN Council of Churches or to contact any of these individuals visit www.mnchurches.org.

Thank You for Helping Us Welcome the Stranger!

Thanks to you Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services was able to provide a warm welcome to our first three "free case" families with no connections to or family in the US. For many of the children this is their first experience of a permanent home. Refugee Services is currently seeking donations of household cleaning supplies such as dish soap, all purpose surface cleaners, laundry detergent, brooms and dust pans, waste baskets. For more information contact Dan Huynh at (612) 230.3227 or dan.huynh@mnchurches.org.

Resources

Invite a Guest Preacher from a MN Council of Churches

Connect your congregation to the church by hosting a guest preacher from MCC. Topics include faithful citizenship, the gifts and challenges of building unity in the church with other faiths, welcoming the stranger and more. For more information contact Takara 'Spaulding' Henegar at takara.spaulding@mnchurches.org.

INSPIRATION OF THE WEEK

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.

~Dale Carnegie

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