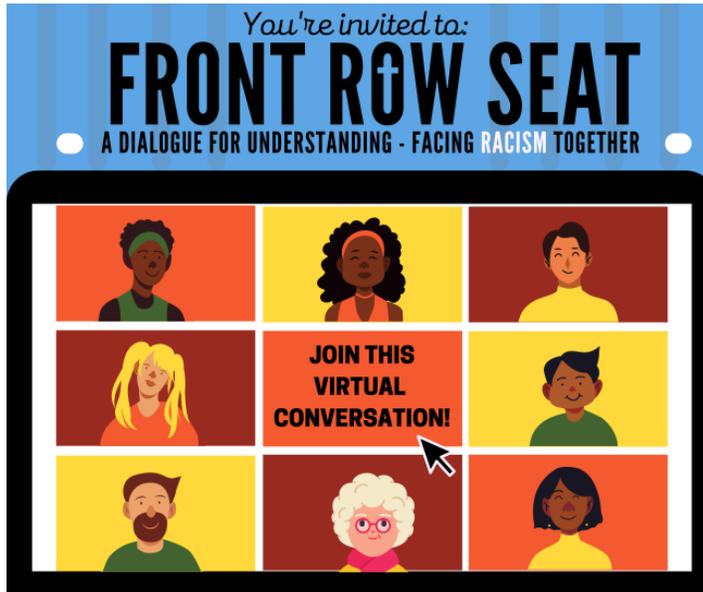


MILWAUKEE GOOD NEWS

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Front Row Seat—Building Connections



A year into the COVID era, many people have felt more isolated than ever. Because of this, building connections has been especially important; we have continued to be intentional about bringing people together regularly through FRONT ROW SEAT - A Dialogue For Understanding - **Facing Racism Together**.

Virtual Front Row Seat Events

We have been holding monthly virtual Front Row Seat events, each with a slightly different focus. For example, one recent panel featured multi-ethnic couples discussing the unique challenges they've faced. A recording of that panel discussion is available at www.basicsinmke.org/front-row-seat

Youth Front Row Seat

We also helped to sponsor a Front Row Seat designed for youth. This was an in-person student-led event partnering Southbrook Church in Franklin and Parklawn Assembly of God in Milwaukee. Young adult panelists modeled the dialog, and then the students gathered for discussion and worship.

Here is a sampling of some feedback from our recent events:

- “Reconciliation requires our engagement with those who don't look like us. Listen first, speak when necessary. It is more important that we relate to others as individuals than to categorize each other into groups.”
- “The stories resonated with my own experience. I came away trying to think of how to be more purposeful in engaging dialogue in my church.”

If this sounds intriguing, read on to find out what is coming up next with Front Row Seat!

Front Row Seat - Ebony and Ivory: A Conversation In Parallel – April 24th, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

This Front Row Seat will have a slightly different format, focusing on questions around current events and trends, and how we are to respond as followers of Christ.

For this event, to change things up a bit and deepen the discussion, we will split up break out discussions by race - black people with other black people, white people with other white people, with each group led by a moderator, tackling difficult questions. We will come back together and for the panel discussion, the moderators will discuss some of what was shared in their groups.

Front Row Seat – Nelson Mandela: The Official Exhibition

For our summer Front Row Seat events, we will center our time on the Nelson Mandela Exhibit sponsored by the Milwaukee Public Museum and America's Black Holocaust Museum. “Nelson Mandela: The Official Exhibition” *will be making its US debut right here in Milwaukee!* This immersive and interactive exhibition features previously unseen film, photos, and the display of more than 150 historical artifacts and personal effects on loan from the Mandela family, museums, and archives worldwide.

The exhibit seeks to answer the question: “A century on from his birth, what does ‘Nelson Mandela’ mean today, in a world where inequality and injustice are still rife?” and provides fresh insight into the people, places and events that formed his character and the challenges he faced.

Those who would like to participate in the summer Front Row Seats will go and see the exhibit at the Milwaukee Public Museum on their own at some point before the event, then the discussion will be tailored around the themes and experiences of the exhibit! Join us for this unique Front Row Seat!

Visit www.basicsinmke.org/front-row-seat, for more details about Front Row Seat, and to sign up to receive notifications when registration opens for each event! ■



Welcome New BASICS Chaplain/Minister to Milwaukee—Dawn Bowers-Winters!



Dawn Bowers Winters

Dawn was born and raised in Milwaukee, graduated from Washington High School and left for the US Army two weeks after high school graduation. She was a radar repair specialist and a chaplain’s assistant in the Army.

Dawn had been praying for a job where she could help others, preferably with those in the inner city or with fellow veterans. God answered her prayer with the opportunity to be hired by Mental Health America of Wisconsin to work as a Certified Peer Support Specialist at the R&R House, a respite for veterans in the state of Wisconsin.

Then God blessed her to become a Chaplain and Minister to Milwaukee through BASICS, where she is able to help those in the inner city as well as her fellow veterans.

Dawn has always been interested in learning more about the Word of God, growing in the Word and encouraging others to do the same. She serves as the Director of Christian Education for Abundant Faith Church of Integrity. She currently facilitates an adult class consisting of church leaders.

Dawn has five children ages 29 to 40 years old and five grandchildren ages 4 to 17 years old. In her free time, she enjoys the attending arts performances and visiting museums, caring for her flowers and plants and traveling.

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10 ■

Finding Spiritual Refreshment by Andrea Hopgood



Andrea Hopgood

After completing a 2-year Soul Care Cohort, I felt that many more ladies could benefit from the soul searching, spiritual realignment I received. After a quick post on Facebook that read, “Ladies are you in a season where you feel stuck in life, in faith, in who you really are? Is your soul longing for a place of spiritual refreshment?”, a group of 14 ladies made a 1-year commitment to meet at my home once a month to care for their souls.

tions, tears and personal realizations. But one that stands out to me is being able to help one of the ladies learn how to recognize God’s voice. This is not a skill that happens overnight, but the long-term nature of the group has given me to the time and opportunity to mentor her in this. Walking alongside her in a mentoring relationship has been so rewarding!

A new group of ladies started their 1-year journey last October. In the future, I will also offer 2-day Soul Care Retreats. If you have any questions or if you would like to be added to the Soul Care list, please provide your contact information, (first and last name, email address, mailing address and cell number) to andrea@basicsinmke.org.

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Matthew 11:29 ■

Each month, our time begins with a home cooked meal and “how have you been” conversations. Many ladies cherish this time because they are single; this is the only time they have a family-style meal. As we transition to teaching, an interactive ice breaker lays the foundation for the topic of the evening.

Our teaching times are designed to have a Bible teaching component as well as opportunities for robust conversation. Each month, we approach lessons differently. For example, during one teaching, we entered into Dorcas/Tabitha story (Acts 9:36-42) using the Lectio Divina scripture reading approach. Lectio Divina allowed the participants to experience God’s Word in a different way than they otherwise might.

In addition to our monthly meetings, there is a private Facebook group that allows us to interact with each other throughout the month. I post Bible verses for them to read and journal about.

As this group approached their 1-year celebration, they announced they were not going anywhere – they wanted a second year! It has been an honor to walk with them on the second year of their journey. There have been many God moments, deep conversa-



Showing God's Love on New Year's Eve by Frank Woods



Frank Woods

Our annual New Year's Eve Outreach event took place on the afternoon of December 31st in the neighborhood of the Genesis Lighthouse (13th and McKinley). While taking into account the necessary COVID restrictions, we were set up to allow participants to experience and enjoy a lunch with God while providing for winter needs and a word of encouragement.

Joined by ministry partners from Calvary Lutheran, Scott and Jane Gobeli, and a host of brothers and sisters in Christ, we prepared to welcome our

neighbors. With a heated tent that was generously donated and set up the day before, we arranged tables along the walls situated with care needs; organized by gender, age, and seasonal wear.

Due to COVID, our intention was to keep a flow of traffic moving through the tent and back out toward the food serving area. Well-stocked with warm drinks, loaves of bread, muffins, and spiritual conversation, we anticipated many people coming together. Our top chef Sherry Quakkelaar and server Jose Molina helped to provide bowls of Chili or Pork soup to those awaiting the hearty meal.

The Genesis Lighthouse is surrounded by The Guest House shelter, the Maria Cogs Resource building and Repairers of the Breach, who all cater to the people of this impoverished neighborhood. We wanted to celebrate and lift up these often unseen people in the spirit of God's love, demonstrated by tangible acts of service.

Many recipients showed their gratitude and appreciation toward those serving and were thankful for the much-needed resources being showered upon them. Although the snowfall prior to the event made things a bit slushy, many received boots, gloves, socks, scarves, and coats to help withstand the cold.

Brandon Taylor, a fellow minister, gave the charge to the saints to keep trusting God's faithfulness and rallied the troops to keep fighting the good fight.

Pastor Dan Quakkelaar gave a clear presentation of the Gospel to beckon unbelievers to turn from their sin.

Praise and worship filled the air and serenaded the participants while ushering in a sense of His presence.

And as I begin to introduce Rob Honey, another minister, the Spirit of God moved me to give my testimony, gaining the attention of the returning citizens incarcerated across the street in Marshall Sherrer, a minimum-security Department of Corrections facility. They were screaming affirmations and Hallelujahs from the yard! **Praise God indeed!!!**

Throughout the day, multitudes came between small interludes of calmness until the day was well spent. We concluded our time with a Thanksgiving offering of praise through prayer to our LORD GOD for allowing us all to participate in what He is doing in the city through his people for His glory alone, even in COVID season!

The New Year's Eve Outreach happens every year - save the date for NYE 2021, and contact deanna@basicsinmke.org to receive notifications for that event along with other serving opportunities. ■



Hot drinks and chili, pork soup and muffins on a cold day



Handing out Bibles and clothing

Working Together in Harambee

BASICS' MPS Covered in Prayer has been building a relationship with Holmes School in Milwaukee. We support the schools we are connected with mostly through prayer walks, but we are always on the lookout for other opportunities to help bless and support staff and students.

A friend of BASICS recently reached out to us, saying that Layton Ave Baptist Church would be receiving a large shipment of food boxes containing fresh produce, milk, dairy and cooked meats from the USDA Farmers to Families program and would make some available to us if we knew of a need.

BASICS Minister to Milwaukee Jane Turner contacted the Holmes School principal who confirmed that there was a definite need for the food. So we arranged volunteers to transport the food from the church to Holmes School.

The school publicized the distribution to their families, and on a blustery early spring day, volunteers stood on the corners outside of the school to hand out the boxes of food.

Holmes School is in the Harambee neighborhood in Milwaukee. "Harambee" is a Swahili



word meaning working together, pulling together, helping each other, caring and sharing. BASICS was privileged to be able to work together with amazing volunteers from many Milwaukee area churches, including Brookfield Lutheran, Elmbrook, Southbrook, New Testament Central City and Meadowbrook!

The Body of Christ in Milwaukee came together to serve, and because of that, the love of Christ was extended to 100 families through boxes of nutritious food and most importantly, prayer!

Contact deanna@basicsinmke.org to receive notifications for our upcoming serving opportunities!

"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind." Philippians 2:1-2 ■



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with any events or announcements you'd like shared on our Facebook site.

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