

2017 Fall Justice Events at Madison Christian Community (Advent Lutheran & Community of Hope UCC)

Sunday, September 17th

Art Show Reception following services (*artwork went up September 3*)

Congregants joined together for food and fun following Sunday services as we celebrated the artwork of Dar'Ren Morris who was incarcerated at 19 and sentenced to life in prison.

11:45-12:45 – Fellowship with quesadillas, salad, fruit, and desserts

1:00 -- Judy Adrian gave a guided tour of the artwork

2:00 -- Chaplain Christa Fisher spoke about incarceration in the Dane County Jail

Paper, markers, pencils, and crayons were put out for kids to draw pictures and send notes to Da'Ren at the table near the art wall.

Special thanks to Jim Muehl for his own artwork: The Tree of Justice and to Jackie Muehl for her poetry that describes the tree. The tree will stand in the Shalom room for the duration of the art show, which ended at the end of November.

Sunday, October 8th

9:00 am Education Hour: *My Journey with Dar'Ren*

Judy Adrian, co-author of Dar'Ren's book *In Warm Blood*, discussed how she and Dar'Ren were introduced, the paths that led them to writing the book, and how they work together bound them together as family.

In Warm Blood was available for purchase on the table against the art wall.

Sunday, October 29th

9:00 am Education Hour: *The Criminalization of Black & Brown Children in our Schools*

Rudy Bankston, Restorative Justice Coach in the Madison Metropolitan School District, knows how damaging incarceration is to the mind, body, soul, and spirit. Rudy was sentenced to life in prison at the age of nineteen for a crime he didn't commit. He served twenty years in Wisconsin prisons until his appeal prevailed and was released in 2015.

Rudy joined MCC's education hour for an interactive discussion of a national trend affecting black and brown youth: the criminalization of students of color in our schools. Rudy's books, *Shed So Many Tears* and *Snippets of Soul in Seventeen Syllables* were available for purchase before and after the session and are available at iAmWeClassics.com.

Sunday October 29th

4:00 pm: Screening of: *13th the Movie*

The film explores the intersection of race, justice and mass incarceration in the United States; it is titled after the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which freed the slaves and prohibited slavery (unless as punishment for a crime). A guided discussion followed the movie.

Friday, November 3rd

7:00 pm *Book Discussion*

Judy Adrian, co-author of *In Warm Blood*, will return to MCC to lead a book discussion about *In Warm Blood*. Dar'ren called into the discussion and was able to speak with participants.

Sunday, November 5th

9:00 am Education Hour: *The Jail Tutoring Project*

Tina Hogle presented a session on literacy and incarceration and her life changing experiences as a tutor in the Dane County Jail.



The tree was hung with leaves that each had written on the services and their costs for the Madison Area Jail Ministry. A donation box was placed next to the tree.

The tree has traveled to several congregations in the Madison Area as part of their justice work.

Tree of Sorrow, Tree of Hope, Tree of Justice

Roots angular, scarce
foreshortened, shallow
unfit to nourish survival,
growth doubtful,
threatened by winds, floods, drought.

Trunk confining,
cage-like bark
gaping, wounded,
jagged, vulnerable.

Crown struggles up, out,
branches, twigs, buds
seeking, longing.

Spirit strives to
unfurl leaves
tender, sparse,
here, there

Until the light is
reflected
as justice dawns.



Cell representation

With yellow duct tape, a cell was outlined in actual dimensions on the floor in front of the art wall.

In it, in yellow duct tape, was written:

This is the size of Dar'ren's cell.
He shares it with another man.
Dar'ren is over six feet tall.

Phone calls with Dar'Ren

During the presentation by Judy Adrian, Dar'Ren was able to call her and people in the audience were able to speak with him. Another call was made during the book discussion.