



VOICE

A HOME AT THE HEART OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON SINCE 1907 | FALL 2015



PART OF GOD'S FAMILY WHEREVER WE GO

Cody and I met freshman year at Madison in the Lakeshore dorms. It wasn't long after we found each other that we stumbled into Pres House one fall Sunday afternoon. The two of us quickly made close friends. We joined small groups, attended Breaks with a Purpose, and Cody became a member of the Pres House Council. Soon we were calling Pres House our family, our home away from home.

After graduating in 2011 and tying the knot in 2012, we made the decision to move out to Colorado Springs, Colorado. Soon we were pressed with the daunting task of finding a new church family. Not knowing anyone else in the area, how were we to start the searching process? We used the Internet, of course. Google pointed us to a small Presbyterian church called Covenant that was about three miles from our apartment. Little did we know how much God's hand was in that Google search.

From the minute we walked in the door, we were welcomed by members and staff. People were so genuine and open-hearted. We immediately felt God tugging at our hearts that maybe this was our new church family. After a week or two of attending, we joined a Home Group of other young families, where we would get together every month and share a meal with each other. Through that group, we found an incredible support system and made amazing friends.

It wasn't long before we were hooked. Over the past three years, Cody and I have become more and more involved. I have always enjoyed hanging out with youth, so it was natural for me to become a youth leader for the middle school and high school students. I love showing them God's love and teaching them that being your silly awkward goofy self is totally okay. Cody has recently become an Elder and is bringing a "younger" voice to session. He also helps out on Sunday mornings with the audio visual needs.

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HEALTHY LIFESTYLES MICRO-COMMUNITY

In the Healthy Lifestyles micro-community our priority is to develop and support healthy lifestyle choices in a variety of ways throughout the semester. We encourage one another to exercise on a regular basis and to eat healthy, nutritious food. Every month we plan an activity as a group that focuses on one of our micro-community goals. For instance, this past month we decided to participate in the Aruna Project 5K run. Each member of the micro-community contributed in various ways to the planning for the event since we decided to make it a building-wide event in order to encourage other PH Apartment residents to stay active as well. The event planning included figuring out effective ways to motivate residents to join us for the race, printing out posters, delivering flyers to each apartment, and offering raffle tickets for those who signed up to join our group. It was a fun process to work together and organize this event while promoting ways to stay healthy. Finally, on October 10, we successfully crossed the finish line of the Aruna Project 5K and helped raise over \$100 for a great cause! Thank you for your support! ♣



Micro-community Members: Molly Pearcy, Maria Estevez, Erin Lawrence, Chrystel Paulson, and Natalia Cañas

LIFE SKILLS WORKSHOPS FOR STUDENTS IN RECOVERY

This fall the Next Step Program at PH Apartments is partnering with UW student organization Live Free to host a series of Life Skills Workshops for students in recovery. Once a month, Live Free dedicates one of their Tuesday night meetings (held in Pres House Apartments Lounge) to host a guest speaker from Connections Counseling. Topics for the fall include Yoga (September), Conflict Resolution (October), Creativity and Emotions/Self-Care (November) and Stress Management (December). ♣

On Friday October 9, the PH Apartment Scholars piled into two vans and headed east to Schuster's Family Farm. The 14 students in attendance broke themselves into small groups and headed into either "Phase One" or "Phase Two" of Schuster's "Large Corn Maze." Some remembered to get clues to help them along the way. Others struck out with only confidence and fading daylight on their side. Giddy laughter gave way to "This way" and, "No! This way!" or "Didn't we already go past that?" A few shouts of "Help! We're Lost" could be heard in the night air as darkness fell. Eventually, everyone emerged. Some claimed it was "a piece of cake." Some didn't believe they'd ever get out. Some were just relieved to finally make it to a port-a-potty. With their great challenge behind them and a perfect starry October sky overhead, everyone gathered around the bonfire, roasted some marshmallows and hotdogs, and just enjoyed being away from books and school and stress for a little while. ♣

CORN A-MAZE-ING!



BADGER
FAITH & SERVICE
CORPS

MAKING A
DIFFERENCE

Honestly, I applied to Badger Faith and Service Corps for the rent scholarship at PH Apartments, but learning about what Nehemiah does has been amazing. Nothing I write will do justice to all that Nehemiah is and does for the community. I haven't spent nearly enough time to even start to grasp the magnitude of the impact they have, but the little I've been able to glimpse in the past couple of months has definitely been a huge blessing to me.

The things that bring it all together are their heart for justice, transformation, and hope. Ultimately, this organization empowers the African American community in South Madison in various aspects of their lives. Unlike many other Band-Aid solutions and ephemeral initiatives that fade over time, Nehemiah invests in the community in a holistic and permanent way. Programs like ACE (Academic Center for Excellence) showed me their long-term approach to transformation by investing in the education of youth. The Re-Entry program helps incarcerated men and women transition back into society.

I don't get to participate directly in all the programs that I want to but, just the fact that I get to work in the same office as the staff who coordinate these programs and share these stories has been pretty awesome. ♣

—Nelson Cho is a Communication Arts Major currently living at Pres House Apartments and serving as a Badger Faith and Service Corps intern at Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership Development. Find out about this Pres House partner: <http://nehemiah.org>

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So much about our new church family reminds us of the wonderful family we had found in Pres House. Maybe it was the welcoming open arms, or the community focus, or the smaller intimate setting. Maybe it was finding a community of believers who seek to walk in relationship with Christ and each other, and who desire to bring His kingdom to Earth through works of love. Whatever it was, there is no doubt that God has led us home once again. ♣

—Kira and Cody Hanson



DECK THE WALLS!

The new Lower Hall at Pres House is a fantastic space for students and young adults to meet for meals, coffee, discussion groups, and more. It is also a great space to show art.

We are grateful to local artist Barry Sherbeck for lending us a large collection of beautiful pieces of art that fill Lower Hall with color and depth. The exhibit is made up of work created over the past several years for various group art exhibitions at several local Madison galleries and Overture Center for the Arts. You can see all of the pieces hanging at Pres House by visiting in person or on our website: <http://preshouse.org/art-at-pres-house/>

Barry is a photographer, visual artist, writer, and curator. He was born in Wisconsin, grew up in the Middle East where his parents were missionaries, attended high school in Pakistan, and attended college in Texas, Madison, and India. Barry has been creating and exhibiting fine art for several years, coordinating and curating over 15 group exhibits. Barry attended InterVarsity meetings at Pres House and studied in the lounge in the early 1980's. Barry and his wife, Carol, have two daughters and they worship and serve at Christ Presbyterian Church. Barry serves several area organizations including Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership, Pres House, and Christians in the Visual Arts.

Barry says this about his art:

"The artist Pablo Picasso once said, "It takes a long time to become young," and "It took me a lifetime to paint like a child." Long before Picasso lived or painted, Jesus said, "Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

What are little children like? They're awesome. They don't start out with cumbersome assumptions. They ask questions. They observe. They look up at the wide world. They listen. They

distill. They synthesize. They try. They fail, they try again, and they succeed. They incessantly learn. They're hungry. They want to know why. They giggle. They trust.

The childlike impulse of pure curiosity is the fruition of becoming "like a child" in our approach to life and faith, even as adults. This posture means we can encounter understanding we otherwise never would if we "knew too much," as adults are so prone to do. Like children, we need to embrace not-knowing-it-all.

Mystery is good, and so is paradox. We find only by losing. We become great only by becoming servants. We live only by dying. We believe only by crying out, "Help my unbelief." We harvest deeper layers of faith only through honest doubt. Yes, really.

The quest of seeking makes possible the satisfaction of finding. The discipline of looking leads to the joy of seeing, which informs the art of understanding, which sometimes leads to wisdom. Truth is rarely at the surface, rarely obvious, rarely low-hanging fruit. (In fact, beware of the low-hanging fruit.)

The act of creating is a natural response to the gift of being created in the image of the best artist.

In my exploration of visual art, I often discover things I didn't know I was looking for. Even my very own images often have things to teach me, slowly, over the span of many years. I keep re-learning that light is brightest near its source, and that while darkness doesn't go out of its way for light, light is quite happy to shine into darkness. And I remember that children tend to like light a lot more than darkness. Therefore, so do I."

The art installed in Lower Hall is for sale, and you are invited to purchase a piece to donate to the Pres House permanent art collection. If you do so, a permanent label will be created acknowledging your gift along with the title and description of the art. If you would like to make a purchase "in honor of" or "in memory of" someone special, this can be included on the permanent label. You are also welcome to purchase a piece for your own home or art collection.

If you are interested in leaving a lasting legacy on the walls at Pres House, visit our website at <http://preshouse.org/art-at-pres-house/>.

BUSY, BUSY, BUSY

Lower Hall is getting a lot of use! In addition to filling up with students streaming down after worship for Sunday night suppers, the space is busy throughout the week. Every other Tuesday night and Saturday morning the space is packed with residents from the Pres House Apartments who take the short walk through the tunnel from their apartment into Lower Hall for free dinner or brunch. What is the most common comment we hear from residents? "Thank you! The food and space are amazing!" Once a month members of the Pres House church community have their own Family Dinner—a very popular time to take a break from the busyness of campus life and enjoy a meal together.

Sunday night suppers are provided by local area churches. There are ten supporting churches that bring warm meals and friendly smiles to campus. The food and intergenerational connection is truly a gift from God for students. Many churches have started taking advantage of our new kitchen to do some of the prep and cooking here at Pres House rather than bringing everything hot from somewhere else.

Food for other events is often prepared by the newest addition to the Pres House staff—Chef Pierre! Pierre has culinary school training and has cooked in a variety of settings. Chef Pierre works part-time for Pres House making tasty meals to support various programs. He enjoyed cooking a special feast of prime rib, mushroom ravioli, and twice-baked potatoes for the Lower Hall

Dedication Celebration in late September.

We also open the space for other student groups on campus. Every Monday–Friday from 8:30 to 11:30am a group of students runs a coffee ministry called A Just Brew. They make fine coffee to order with an exacting brewing process for each individual cup. The coffee is free. They invite visitors to make donations, and 100% of the proceeds are donated to International Justice

Mission, a well-respected organization that fights modern day slavery around the world. On many Thursday nights Lower Hall is the meeting space for Genesis—a newer, parachurch campus ministry with ties to Christ Presbyterian and Covenant Presbyterian. At various times during the semester a student-run organization called Campus Kitchen collects extra food from dining halls around campus and then uses what they collect to make free meals for students on campus who have a hard time affording food. And we even hosted a pop-up lunch put on by old friends and basement tenants—the Catacombs Coffeehouse (see article)!



COFFEE CONNECTIONS

By Mary Murphy

My name is Mary Murphy, I am 25 years old, and from Neenah, WI. This is my first year living in Madison, and as a graduate student in the School of Library and Information Studies. I am specializing in data management to work towards becoming a medical information specialist. When I'm not studying, I enjoy listening to the street performers on State Street, shopping at the farmers market on the square, and trying out the local coffee houses in the area.

I joined the Pres House Grad Coffee Tours to connect with other graduate students on campus, outside of my program. The group meets at a different coffee house each Thursday and Pastor Mark provides a box of thought-provoking questions—some spiritual and some silly, to spark the morning with meaningful conversation. One student randomly choosing a question for the day, and off we go. It's a great way to start the day with good coffee, good company, and good conversation. I have really enjoyed making the habit of taking a break from my busy life to sit, relax, sip coffee (or tea), and enjoy the company of others, while solving the problems of the world. ♣



LOWER HALL DEDICATION

On Sunday, September 27, 2015, we dedicated Lower Hall and celebrated the completion of the "Bring Back the Basement" campaign. It was a lovely occasion shared with current members, donors, and alumni. Many thanks to all who contributed to the beautiful new space. ♣



Support Pres House

Throughout this newsletter you have read about the exciting activities happening at Pres House. Ministry at Pres House is possible only through generous donations from alumni, friends, and churches.

Please give today

by using the enclosed envelope or send your contributions to Pres House at 731 State Street, Madison, WI 53703. You can also give online at www.preshouse.org/donate.

CATACOMBS LUNCH POPS UP AGAIN

For one day in late October, brothers Ben and Jonny Hunter were again cooking in the basement of Pres House and serving \$3 vegetarian lunches made from scratch from local ingredients. Lower Hall was filled with people who had been volunteers and customers at the Catacombs Coffeehouse back in the 1990s and early 2000s. The basement space looks totally different now than it did back then, but the commitment to justice and good food at this event was the same.

For thirteen years the basement of Pres House was home to the Catacombs Coffeehouse—a Christian-inspired coffee shop and café run by a faithful volunteer board of directors, a few staff, and lots of volunteers. It was a gathering space, a live music venue, and a place to get an affordable, tasty meal. In 2006 Pres House ended the partnership with the Catacombs in order to renovate the Pres House chapel building, develop a new financial model, and make a strategic shift in programming. Almost ten years later we were very pleased to host a Catacombs Pop-Up lunch.

The Catacombs Pop-Up lunch was prepared by Underground Food Collective. After starting out cooking in the Pres House basement, Jonny and Ben Hunter went on to launch a highly regarded restaurant, catering, and food business in the Underground Food Collective. Jonny was recently named a semi-finalist for a James Beard Award for best chef in the Midwest, and received Madison Magazine's Chef of the Year Award. Coffee at the event was provided by Just Coffee that also got its start in the basement of Pres House. All profits from the lunch were jointly donated by Pres House and Underground Food



Collective to the Double Dollars FoodShare Program that helps people receiving federal food assistance benefits to use those benefits to purchase healthy, locally grown fruits, vegetables and other products at farmers' markets in the Madison area.

Current undergrad students who were still in elementary school during the Catacombs heyday ate alongside former students who hadn't been back in the space for years. All enjoyed the fantastic lunch. Stay tuned—perhaps the Catacombs will "pop up" again sometime! ♣



Did you know that one of Madison's favorite coffee roasters, Just Coffee, started in the basement of Pres House? Matt Early, co-founder of Just Coffee, attended the Catacombs Pop-Up Lunch in Lower Hall at Pres House on October 27 and shared the story of the beginning of Just Coffee:

"It was incredible to be back in the Pres House serving coffee recently with our friends from Underground Food Collective. The Pres House and the Catacombs have a very special place in our hearts and our history. In 2000 I was a member of the campus group Community Action on Latin America which had an office in the basement at Pres House. Some of us CALA members began a sister relationship with small communities of coffee farmers in Chiapas, Mexico. As we struggled with the challenge of finding ways to work with them, we decided to start Just Coffee. We had an idea of roasting and selling coffee in Madison while paying the farmers a better price

and telling their stories to people who were interested in finding a better way to trade. All of the initial planning for our business happened in that basement room and when we were finally ready to launch—in 2002—we needed customers desperately. The Catacombs, being so integral to our beginning, stepped up to be our first cafe customer. Now in 2015 we work with 15 different farmer co-ops, have 30 employees, and have many cafe accounts—although none as cool as the old Catacombs. Even though we have grown and the Pres House basement space has changed over the years (actual light and windows) the old sense of camaraderie was very much still present as we served up lunch and coffee. We are grateful to the Pres House for giving us the opportunity to give a little something back to the space that launched our business."

—Matt Early, co-founder and co-owner, Just Coffee. www.justcoffee.coop



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GROWING IN FAITH

This fall we were honored to have our former student intern Hannah Weinberg-Kinsey share about her time as a Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) during Worship Service. Hannah spent one year in Zambia (Africa) doing volunteer work and growing in faith. You can listen to her sermon on our website at <http://www.hipcast.com/podcast/HYcrmfh4> ♣