

SOPHIA

A Member of WISDOM



ACTING ON FAITH | DOING JUSTICE | CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

2025 YEARBOOK

Stewards of Prophetic Hopeful Intentional Action

Over the years...
your service, dedication and giving has been...

Countless

Number of hours
volunteers and
board members
have contributed.

Priceless

The community that
has developed from
working together for
equity and justice.

1,000 People reached via
member congregation
and organization
monthly newsletters.

460 People attended
SOPHIA
public events.

375 Attendees at educational
events within congregations.

65,000 Hits on SOPHIA
Facebook site.

1,000s Hours spent to make community and congregational
meetings and events happen.

SOPHIA

OUR VISION AND HOPE

SOPHIA envisions a Waukesha County where justice, equality, and dignity are not just ideals but lived experiences for every individual, irrespective of race, gender, faith, or socio-economic background. Our work is profoundly shaped by a mosaic of faith traditions, which call us to respect and celebrate the inherent dignity and worth of every human being.

In this envisioned Waukesha County, SOPHIA **commits to the day when every voice is heard at every table** – particularly the voices of the most marginalized. Injustices are proactively identified and eliminated; diverse communities work in unison for the common good. We understand that the systemic inequalities woven into our social fabric harm us all, whether we are directly impacted or not. SOPHIA is dedicated to dismantling these inequalities, guided by the moral imperatives of our varied faith traditions.

As a faith-based social justice organization, SOPHIA strives to **create an active justice-seeking culture in Waukesha County**, where race and class are at the forefront of our communal commitment to change. A culture where the marginalized, community members, and the policy decision makers all work together for justice for all. SOPHIA's enduring commitment and moral responsibility continues as we enact our faith values and contribute to the betterment of our entire community.

NUESTRA VISIÓN Y ESPERANZA

SOPHIA **imagina un condado de Waukesha donde la justicia, la igualdad y la dignidad** no sean solo ideales sino experiencias vividas para cada individuo, independientemente de su raza, género, creencia religiosa u origen socioeconómico. Nuestro trabajo está profundamente moldeado por un mosaico de tradiciones religiosas, que nos llaman a respetar y celebrar la dignidad y el valor inherentes de cada ser humano.

En este condado de Waukesha con el que sonamos, SOPHIA **se compromete con el día en que todas las voces se escuchen en cada mesa**, particularmente las voces de los marginados. Las injusticias se identifican y eliminan de forma proactiva; comunidades diversas trabajan al unísono por el bien común. Entendemos que las desigualdades sistémicas entretejidas en nuestro tejido social nos perjudican a todos, ya sea que nos veamos afectados directamente o no. SOPHIA se dedica a dismantlar estas desigualdades, guiada por los imperativos morales de nuestras variadas tradiciones religiosas.

Como organización de justicia social basada en la fe, SOPHIA se esfuerza por **crear una cultura activa de búsqueda de justicia en el condado de Waukesha**, donde la raza y la clase están a la vanguardia de nuestro compromiso comunitario con el cambio. Una cultura donde los marginados, los miembros de la comunidad y los tomadores de decisiones políticas trabajen juntos por la justicia para todos. El compromiso duradero y la responsabilidad moral de SOPHIA continúan a medida que promulgamos nuestros valores de fe y contribuimos al mejoramiento de toda nuestra comunidad.

SOPHIA Members

Ascension Lutheran Church
www.ascensionelca.org

Church of the Resurrection Lutheran Church
www.churchoftheresurrection.org

Community of the Living Spirit
www.communitylivingspirit.com

First Congregational United Church of Christ
www.FirstUCCWaukesha.org

First United Methodist Church
www.fumcwaukesha.org

Galilee Lutheran Church • www.GalileeLC.org

Heritage Presbyterian Church
www.heritagechurchmuskego.com

Lake Country Unitarian Universalist Church
www.lcuuc.org

La Casa de Esperanza
www.lacasadeesperanza.org

Southminster Presbyterian Church (USA)
www.southminsterchurch.org

St. Luke's Lutheran Church
www.stlukeslutheran.org

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.welcome2stmarks.com

Unitarian Universalist Church West
www.uucw.org

United Unitarian Universalist Congregation • www.uniteduuc.org

How We Are Organized

SOPHIA functions through a **Board of Directors** with representation from each member congregation or organization. The board meets monthly.

Member organizations establish **Core Teams**, which meet regularly to advance issues and keep SOPHIA grounded in the concerns that matter most to its members. Important to this work is a practice of regular **one-on-ones** between individuals inside and outside SOPHIA which build the power of relationships.

Task forces are created as needs and

leadership arise. Contact President or Task Force Chair for meeting times, or to be added to the email list.

SOPHIA **advocates** for equitable solutions to community problems, seeking systemic answers that empower groups and individuals.

Leadership training is a major component of congregational based organizing. Members of SOPHIA engage in leadership training opportunities at the local, state, and national levels.

Through the **Religious Leaders Caucus**,

pastors and other religious leaders meet to build relationships, to reflect on the matters of faith and community concerns, and to help shape the work of SOPHIA.

SOPHIA is **non-partisan** and does not endorse candidates. SOPHIA members represent all political parties. Our work is to hold all public officials accountable, no matter what party they represent.

SOPHIA supports itself through dues paid by congregations and member organizations, individual donors, grants from foundations, and fundraising events. SOPHIA is a 501(c)(3) organization. Charitable contributions to SOPHIA are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

SOPHIA

A Member of WISDOM

100 East Broadway,
Waukesha, WI 53186

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Immigration Reform
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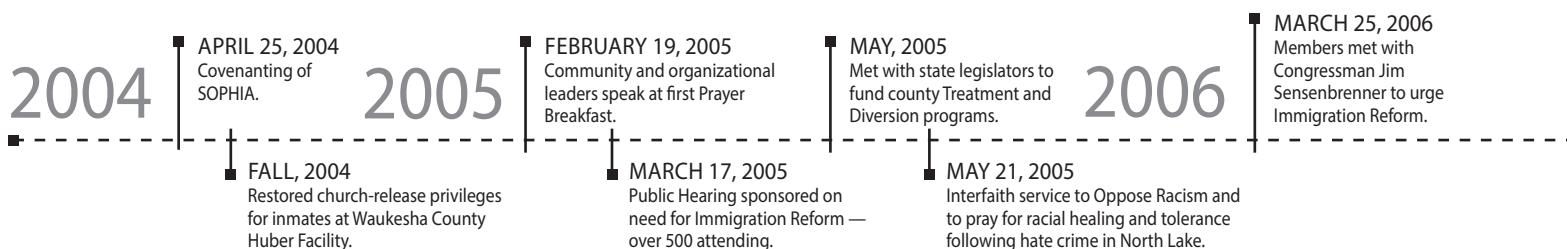
Como estamos organizados

SOPHIA funciona a través de una **Junta Directiva** con representación de cada congregación u organización que son miembros miembro, esta junta directiva se reúne mensualmente.

Las organizaciones miembros establecen **equipos centrales**, que se reúnen regularmente para avanzar en los problemas y mantener a SOPHIA

centrada en las preocupaciones que más importan a sus miembros. Lo más importante para este trabajo es una práctica regular **de uno a uno** entre individuos dentro y fuera de SOPHIA que construyen el poder de las relaciones.

Los grupos de trabajo se crean a medida que surgen las necesidades y el liderazgo. Comuníquese con el presidente o el presidente del grupo



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The strength of our shared values...

I am honored to serve the Waukesha community as President of SOPHIA. I look forward with great enthusiasm to engaging with SOPHIA's members in the sacred work of justice. As a social worker for 35 years, I witnessed the critical need for systemic change. I saw firsthand how inequities within our social systems weighed heavily upon people's lives and their ability to function. These inequities impacted their children, limited their potential, and even shortened their lives. I vowed that in retirement, I would dedicate my time and energy to changing those systems. Realizing I couldn't accomplish this alone, I joined SOPHIA—a decision I only regret not making sooner.

As a faith-based organization, we are guided by the wisdom of our faiths and the strength of our shared values. The work of social justice also requires both bold action and humility. Most importantly, it requires collective action. To make meaningful progress toward systemic change, we need each of you to support SOPHIA in any and every way you can, because real people are suffering now.

La fuerza de nuestros valores compartidos...

Es un honor para mí servir a la comunidad de Waukesha como Presidenta de SOPHIA. Espero con gran entusiasmo colaborar con los miembros de SOPHIA en

SUSAN

MINGESZ

PRESIDENT,
SOPHIA BOARD
OF DIRECTORS



la sagrada labor por la justicia. Como trabajadora social durante 35 años, fui testigo de la crucial necesidad de un cambio sistémico. Vi de primera mano cómo las desigualdades dentro de nuestros sistemas sociales afectaban considerablemente la vida de las personas y su capacidad para funcionar. Estas desigualdades afectaban a sus hijos, limitaban su potencial e incluso acortaban sus vidas. Juré que, al jubilarme, dedicaría mi tiempo y energía a cambiar esos sistemas. Al darme cuenta de que no podía lograrlo sola, me uní a SOPHIA, una decisión que lamento no haber tomado antes.

Como Organización Religiosa, nos guiamos por la sabiduría de nuestras creencias y la fuerza de nuestros valores compartidos. La labor por la justicia social también requiere acción, audacia y humildad. Y lo más importante, requiere acción colectiva. Para lograr un progreso significativo hacia un cambio sistémico, necesitamos que cada uno de ustedes apoye a SOPHIA en todas las formas posibles, porque hay personas reales que están sufriendo ahora.

de trabajo para conocer los horarios de las reuniones o para agregarlo a la lista de correo electrónico.

SOPHIA **aboga** por soluciones equitativas a los problemas de la comunidad, buscando respuestas sistémicas que empoderen a grupos e individuos.

La capacitación en liderazgo es un componente principal de la organización basada en congregaciones. Los miembros de SOPHIA participan en oportunidades de capacitación en liderazgo a nivel local, estatal y nacional.

A través de la **Junta de Líderes Religiosos**, los pastores y otros líderes religiosos se reúnen para construir relaciones, reflexionar sobre asuntos de fe y preocupaciones de la comunidad, y ayudar a dar forma al trabajo de SOPHIA.

SOPHIA **no es partidista** y no respalda a los candidatos. Los miembros de SOPHIA representan a todos los partidos políticos. Nuestro trabajo es hacer que todos los funcionarios públicos rindan cuentas, sin importar el partido que representen.

SOPHIA se mantiene a sí misma a través de cuotas pagadas por congregaciones y organizaciones miembros, donantes individuales, subvenciones de fundaciones y eventos de recaudación de fondos. SOPHIA es una organización 501(c)(3). Las contribuciones benéficas a SOPHIA son deducibles de impuestos en la mayor medida permitida por la ley.



www.sophiawaukesha.org

SOPHIA 2025

A new chapter with SOPHIA: Organizer, Advocate, and Mom on a Mission



**JACLYN
FOLEY**
SOPHIA
COMMUNITY
ORGANIZER

If you've been to a SOPHIA meeting recently, chances are you've met me or at least heard my 13 month old son chiming in. I'm Jaclyn Foley, the new SOPHIA organizer, and while I'm still settling into my role, one thing is certain: my son is on track to become a social justice pro before he even hits kindergarten.

A little about me. I'm a Carroll University alum with a degree in Communications and a minor in Political Science. Before taking on the organizer role in SOPHIA, I spent four years in California while my husband served in the Marine Corps. During that time, I worked for Save the Children, leading after school literacy programs for elementary school students. That experience reinforced my passion for nonprofit work and advocacy, which led me to SOPHIA.

SOPHIA has long been a driving force for justice in Waukesha County, and I'm honored to be part of that mission. This year, my focus is on strengthening our task forces and committees, with a key priority on revitalizing the Immigration Task Force to stand in solidarity with at risk communities while fostering education and awareness for both ourselves

and the public. I'm also working to grow the number of affiliates within SOPHIA, ensuring that our network continues to expand and amplify our collective voice.

From affordable housing to criminal justice, SOPHIA's agenda is both ambitious and necessary. The challenges we tackle aren't small, but neither is the passion of the people involved. I've already seen firsthand how dedicated this community is, and I'm excited to build on that momentum.

2025 is going to be a big year for SOPHIA, and I can't wait to see where we go together. If we haven't met already, let's grab coffee and talk about how we can make an impact collectively.

Feel free to reach out to me at Organizer@sophiawaukesha.org

Un nuevo capítulo con SOPHIA: organizadora, defensora y madre con una misión



**JACLYN
FOLEY**
SOPHIA
ORGANIZADORA
DE LA
COMUNIDAD

Si ha asistido a una reunión de SOPHIA recientemente, es probable que me haya conocido o al menos haya escuchado a mi hijo de 13 meses participar. Soy Jaclyn Foley, la nueva organizadora de SOPHIA, y aunque todavía me estoy adaptando a mi rol, una cosa es segura: mi hijo está en camino de convertirse en un profesional de la justicia social incluso antes de llegar al jardín de niños.

Un poco sobre mí: Soy una exalumna de la Universidad de Carroll con un título en Comunicaciones y una especialización en Ciencias Políticas. Antes de asumir el papel de organizadora en SOPHIA, pasé cuatro años en California mientras mi esposo servía en el Cuerpo de Marines. Durante ese tiempo, trabajé para "Save the Children", dirigiendo programas de alfabetización después de la escuela para estudiantes de la escuela primaria. Esa experiencia reforzó mi pasión por el trabajo sin fines de lucro y la defensa de derechos, lo que me llevó a SOPHIA.

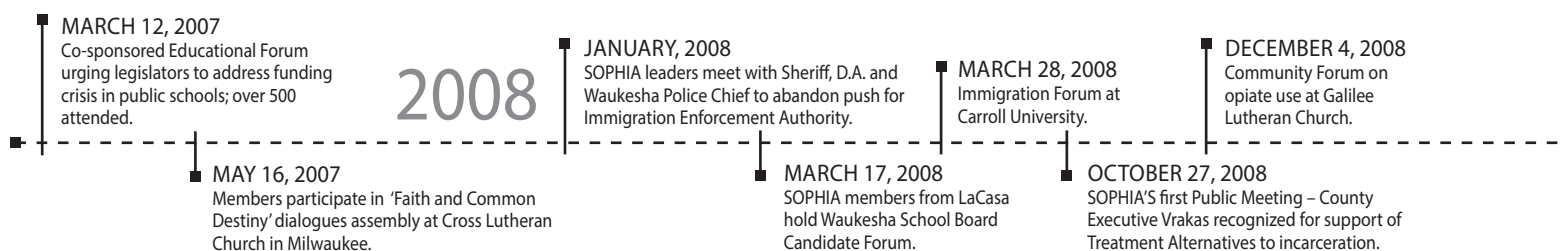
SOPHIA ha sido durante mucho tiempo una fuerza impulsora de la justicia en el condado de Waukesha, y me siento honrada de ser parte de esa misión. Este año, mi objetivo es fortalecer nuestros grupos de trabajo y comités, con una prioridad clave en revitalizar el Grupo de Trabajo de Inmigración para solidarizarnos con las comunidades en riesgo y, al mismo tiempo, fomentar la educación y la concientización tanto

para nosotros como para el público. También estoy trabajando para aumentar la cantidad de afiliados dentro de SOPHIA, asegurando que nuestra red continúe expandiéndose y amplificando nuestra voz colectiva.

Desde viviendas asequibles hasta justicia penal, la agenda de SOPHIA es ambiciosa y necesaria. Los desafíos que abordamos no son pequeños, pero tampoco lo es la pasión de las personas involucradas. Ya he visto de primera mano cuán dedicada es esta comunidad y estoy emocionada de aprovechar ese impulso.

2025 será un gran año para SOPHIA y no puedo esperar a ver a dónde vamos juntos. Si aún no nos hemos conocido, tomemos un café y hablemos sobre cómo podemos generar un impacto colectivo.

No dudes en comunicarte conmigo a Organizer@sophiawaukesha.org



2024 Donors

We are honored to have the support of the following individuals, corporations, foundations, and congregations who donated to SOPHIA in 2024.

Jeff Alberts	Bruce & Lisa Hopper
Fr. Joe Aufdermauer	Lindsay Paul Jordan
Sue Bangle	David Liners
Barb Barthel	Margaret Lusiba Johnson
Mary Bartkowiak	Michelle Mader
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Beverly Bradford & Mike Leidel	Jeff Peiffer
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Betty & Dave Groenewold	Penny (Elizabeth) Williams
Stephen Groenewold	David L. Wolken
Elizabeth N. Hoffmann	Karen Zimmerman

Automatic monthly contributions are convenient for both you and SOPHIA!

- Your easy and automatic monthly contribution from your bank account or credit/debit card provides SOPHIA with a reliable, steady stream of financial support.
- Your support is always current. You never have to wonder if it's your time of year to renew.
- Your support is split up into automatic, affordable monthly gifts.

**Become a monthly donor today at
www.sophiawaukesha.org!**

2024 Silent Auction Donors

*SOPHIA thanks all of our Silent Auction Donors
Please patronize these businesses and thank them for their support of SOPHIA.*

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Bryan Becker Clay Werks
Culver's on Grandview –
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**To donate to SOPHIA,
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2009

DECEMBER 17, 2008
SOPHIA member speaks at International Leadership Assembly in Washington, D.C. about need for systemic Health Care Reform.

JANUARY 22, 2009
Candlelight Prayer Vigil in support of Immigration Reform.

FEBRUARY–MARCH, 2009
Education Task Force seeks increased services for children in Waukesha Public Schools.

MARCH 10, 2009
SOPHIA and WISDOM leaders meet with state legislators; more than 300 leaders met with over 100 legislators.

MARCH, 2009
Housing Task Force works for legislation to provide 'tax credit' for employers assisting in Workforce Housing projects for employees.

MARCH, 2009
Health Care Dialogues held in member congregations.

JUNE 1, 2009
SOPHIA members addressed Pewaukee City Council which later dropped Anti-Immigrant Proposal.



▪ www.sophiawaukesha.org ▪ SOPHIA 2025

La equidad racial es uno de los valores centrales de SOPHIA

“La equidad racial es uno de los valores centrales de SOPHIA,” esto presenta la declaración de Equidad Racial (*disponible en el sitio web*). En SOPHIA continuamos nuestro compromiso, iniciado hace 21 años, hacia la equidad racial y la inclusión. El equipo de Equidad Racial continúa asegurando que todas las acciones del grupo de trabajo/comité sean inclusivas.

Si bien el condado de Waukesha sigue siendo predominantemente blanco y cristiano, nuestras ciudades, como Brookfield, se vuelven más diversas cada año. La ciudad de Waukesha tiene una población latina de aproximadamente el 25%. El condado de Waukesha también tiene una importante presencia musulmana, hindú y budista. SOPHIA se esfuerza por construir relaciones con pueblos de todas las razas, religiones, géneros y antecedentes socioeconómicos en el condado de Waukesha.

Racial Equity is a Core Value of SOPHIA

“Racial Equity is a Core Value of SOPHIA” These words introduce SOPHIA's Racial Equity Statement (*available on the website*). SOPHIA continues our commitment, begun 21 years ago, towards racial equity and inclusion. The Racial Equity Team continues to ensure all task force/committee actions are inclusive.

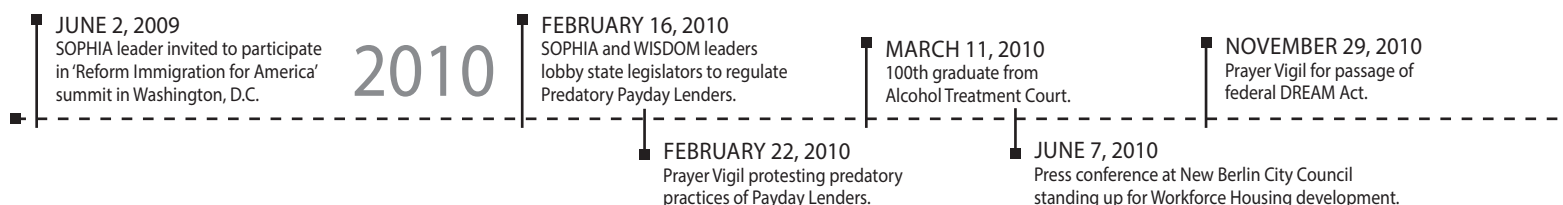
While Waukesha County remains predominately white and Christian, our cities, like Brookfield, are becoming more diverse every year. The City of Waukesha has a Latinx population of approximately 25%. Waukesha County also has a significant Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist presence. SOPHIA strives to build relationships with peoples of all races, faiths, genders, and socio-economic backgrounds in Waukesha County.

Land & Labor Acknowledgement

SOPHIA recognizes historical injustices. We acknowledge that we occupy the ancestral homeland of Indigenous people, from the mound builders (700 BC) to the current day Potawatomi. We acknowledge the past and present harm and injustice caused by colonialism and genocide to the Indigenous Tribes of Wisconsin. We acknowledge the past and continued economic benefits that colonizers have gained from the forced and enslaved labor of African and Indigenous people. The legacy of colonialism and slavery persists today. We are committed to work towards racial equity, inclusion, liberation, and the dismantling of all oppressive social and economic systems.

Reconocimiento a la tierra y el trabajo

SOPHIA reconoce las injusticias históricas. Reconocemos que ocupamos la tierra ancestral de los pueblos indígenas, desde los constructores de montículos (700 aC) hasta los actuales Potawatomi. Reconocemos el daño y la injusticia pasados y presentes causados por el colonialismo y el genocidio a las tribus indígenas de Wisconsin. Tenemos conocimiento de los beneficios económicos pasados y actuales que los colonizadores han obtenido del trabajo forzado y esclavizado de los pueblos indígenas y africanos. El legado del colonialismo y la esclavitud persiste hoy. Estamos comprometidos a trabajar por la equidad racial, la inclusión, la liberación y el desmantelamiento de todos los sistemas sociales y económicos opresivos.



Get the Lead Out!!

On November 13, 2024, the SOPHIA Religious Leaders Caucus (RLC) hosted their annual education event open to all. The topic for the event was **Getting the Lead out of Milwaukee Water**. This event was the culmination of zoom gatherings held on three Wednesdays in October, each focusing on various aspects of water usage, pollution, and safety. Pastor Mary Martha Kannass and members of Hephatha Lutheran Church in Milwaukee gave a powerful presentation on the effects of lead in the water on both children and adults and their hard work in helping to provide relief, education, and care to those affected by lead in the water, soil, and paint.

Deanna Branch, the mother of a **child severely affected by lead poisoning** as an infant, gave an account of the challenges her son and others have faced because of the lead in the water. She decided that she must become an advocate for water safety and be a force of change and challenge those who oversee public works.

Miss Shy McElroy coordinates the congregation's ministry called **COLE** (Coalition on Lead Emergency) that focuses on "lead free baptismal living." This ministry provides education, kits for lead remediation which include water filtration pitchers, and a bi-weekly cooking class on ways to prepare healthy meals, often using food from their safe community garden. Pastor Mary Martha reviewed the Strong Baby Sanctuary work and how COLE provides vital services to the neighborhood and wider community. Two pillars of this work are the Direct Service provided (*charity in the best historical sense of this word*) and Advocacy/Justice efforts. Scripture foundations included Mark 10:13-16 as well as Matthew chapter 25, and Luke chapter 4. Attendees were invited to consider becoming involved in this ministry through hands-on involvement, donations of materials, or providing funds.

The hour and a half passed quickly with many questions and comments on the work being done through Hephatha Lutheran Church. Attendees gained a great deal of information on the challenges of lead poisoning and how we can help future generations live stronger healthier lives.

¡¡¡Eliminemos el Plomo!!!

El 13 de noviembre del 2024, el grupo de líderes religiosos de SOPHIA (RLC) organizó el evento anual educativo abierto para todo el público interesado. El tema del evento fue **"Cómo eliminar el plomo del agua de Milwaukee."** Este evento fue la culminación de una serie de reuniones por Zoom celebradas durante tres miércoles del mes de octubre, cada una de las cuales se centró en diversos aspectos del uso del agua, la contaminación y la seguridad.

La pastora Mary Martha Kannass y miembros de la Iglesia Luterana Hephatha de Milwaukee dieron una poderosa presentación sobre los efectos del plomo en el agua tanto en niños como en adultos y su arduo trabajo para ayudar a brindar alivio, educación y atención a los afectados por el plomo en el agua, el suelo y la pintura.

Deanna Branch, madre de **un niño gravemente afectado por envenenamiento por plomo** cuando era un bebé, habló sobre los desafíos que su hijo y otras personas han enfrentado debido al plomo en el agua. Decidió que debía convertirse en defensora de la seguridad del agua y ser una fuerza de cambio y desafiar a quienes supervisan las obras públicas.

La señorita Shy McElroy coordina el ministerio de la congregación llamado **COLE** (Coalición para la Emergencia del Plomo) que se centra en la "vida bautismal sin plomo". Este ministerio ofrece educación, kits para la remediación del plomo, incluidas jarras de filtración de agua, y una clase de cocina quincenal sobre formas de preparar comidas saludables, a menudo utilizando alimentos de su huerto comunitario seguro.

La pastora Mary Martha repasó el trabajo de "Strong Baby Sanctuary" (Santuario de bebés fuertes) y cómo COLE proporciona servicios vitales al vecindario y a la comunidad en general. Dos pilares de este trabajo son el Servicio Directo proporcionado (*caridad en el mejor sentido histórico de esta palabra*) y los esfuerzos de Defensa/Justicia. Los fundamentos de las Escrituras incluyeron Marcos 10:13-16, así como el capítulo 25 de Mateo y el capítulo 4 de Lucas. Se invitó a los asistentes a considerar la posibilidad de participar en este ministerio a través de la participación práctica, donaciones de materiales o la aportación de fondos.

La hora y media pasó rápidamente con muchas preguntas y comentarios sobre el trabajo que se está realizando a través de la Iglesia Luterana Hephatha y los asistentes obtuvieron una gran cantidad de información sobre los desafíos del envenenamiento por plomo y cómo podemos ayudar a las generaciones futuras a vivir vidas más fuertes y saludables.



REBUILDING THE IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE: Responding to the Need

In response to the escalating threat of mass deportation and the inhumane treatment of immigrants, SOPHIA relaunched its Immigration Task Force in January. Nearly 30 participants attended the first meeting.

Recognizing the need to organize alongside immigrants, the task force has focused on building connections with at-risk people by joining with other groups and individuals already supporting immigrants.

The Task Force strategized around three key actions: Accompaniment, Education, and Advocacy. In order to directly support vulnerable individuals, we have distributed resources such as *Know Your Rights* information, family tool kits, and information on how to access free legal help. We are expanding the distribution of these resources to key locations frequented by those impacted by current immigration policies. Volunteers are currently organizing to drive immigrants, to **Accompany** them *safely in our community*, to medical appointments, grocery stores, gas stations, and other activities of daily living.

Looking ahead, the education portion of the task force plans to organize **Educational forums for the general public** to actively dispel immigration myths, share personal stories from immigrants to humanize the experience, and utilize media to broaden public understanding.

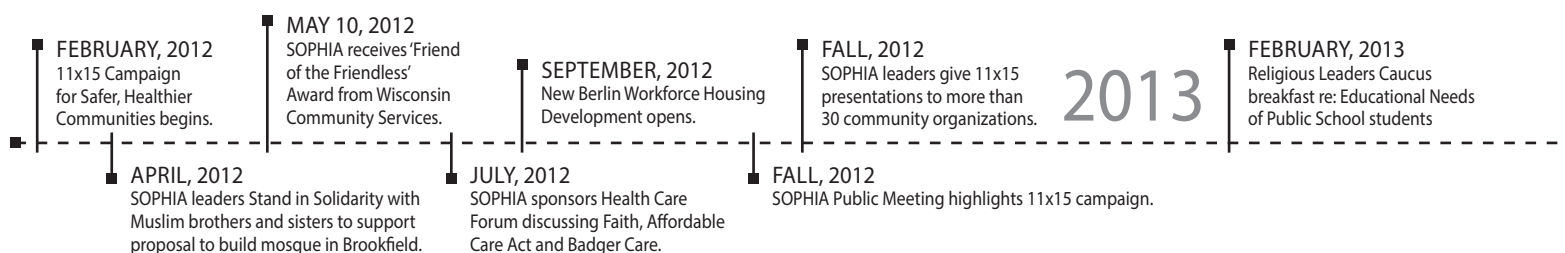
Our Advocacy strategies target systemic change in local and state immigration policies. We recently collaborated with WISDOM and Never Again Wisconsin to host a phone banking session, educating Waukesha residents on the detrimental effects of the 287(g) agreement, which deputizes local law enforcement as immigration officers. Several task force members will participate in Madison Action Day meeting with state legislators regarding necessary changes to immigration policies. As we walk in solidarity with

immigrants, the Immigration Task Force is committed to shifting public opinion, raising awareness, and building a more inclusive community. **Now is the time to take action and push for a Waukesha County that treats all residents with dignity and respect.**

Join us in this critical movement by contacting Jaclyn Foley at Organizer@SOPHIAwaukesha.org.

What would make you leave your homeland?

—war, famine, drought, violent crime,
fanaticism, persecution, lack of opportunities,
reuniting with family, etc.



RECONSTRUCCIÓN DEL GRUPO DE TRABAJO SOBRE INMIGRACIÓN: Respondiendo a la Necesidad

En respuesta a la creciente amenaza de deportación masiva y el trato inhumano de los inmigrantes, SOPHIA reorganizó su Grupo de Trabajo de Inmigración en enero. A la primera reunión asistieron casi 30 participantes.

Al reconocer la necesidad de organizarse junto a los inmigrantes, el grupo de trabajo se ha centrado en construir conexiones con personas en riesgo uniéndose a otros grupos e individuos que ya apoyan a los inmigrantes.

El Grupo de Trabajo elaboró estrategias en torno a tres acciones clave: acompañamiento, educación y defensa. Para apoyar directamente a las personas vulnerables, hemos distribuido recursos informativos como : "Conozca sus derechos", kits de herramientas para familias e información sobre cómo acceder a ayuda legal gratuita. Estamos ampliando la distribución de estos recursos a lugares clave frecuentados por aquellos afectados por las políticas de inmigración actuales. Actualmente, *los voluntarios se están organizando para transportar inmigrantes, acompañarlos de manera segura en nuestra comunidad,* a citas médicas, tiendas de comestibles, gasolineras y otras actividades de la vida diaria.

De cara al futuro, la parte de educación del grupo de trabajo planea **organizar foros educativos para el público en general** para disipar activamente los

mitos sobre la inmigración, compartir historias personales de inmigrantes para humanizar la experiencia y utilizar los medios para ampliar la comprensión del público.

Nuestras estrategias de promoción apuntan al cambio sistémico en las políticas de inmigración locales y estatales. Recientemente colaboramos con WISDOM y Never Again Wisconsin para organizar una sesión de llamadas telefónicas, educando a los residentes de Waukesha sobre los efectos perjudiciales del acuerdo 287(g), que delega a las autoridades locales como agentes de inmigración. Varios miembros del grupo de trabajo participarán en la reunión 'Madison Action Day' (Día de Acción en Madison) con legisladores estatales donde se hablará sobre los cambios necesarios a las políticas de inmigración.

Mientras caminamos en solidaridad con los inmigrantes, el Grupo de Trabajo sobre Inmigración se compromete a cambiar la opinión pública, crear conciencia y construir una comunidad más inclusiva. **Ahora es el momento de actuar y luchar por un condado de Waukesha que trate a todos los residentes con dignidad y respeto.**

Únase a nosotros en este movimiento crítico contactando a Jaclyn Foley en Organizer@SOPHIAwaukesha.org.



HOUSING JUSTICE TASK FORCE: A Year of Advocacy and Action

Over the past year, the Housing Justice Task Force made significant strides in advocating for affordable housing and equitable land use policies.

Through education, outreach, and collaboration with key stakeholders, we worked tirelessly to raise awareness and push for meaningful change.

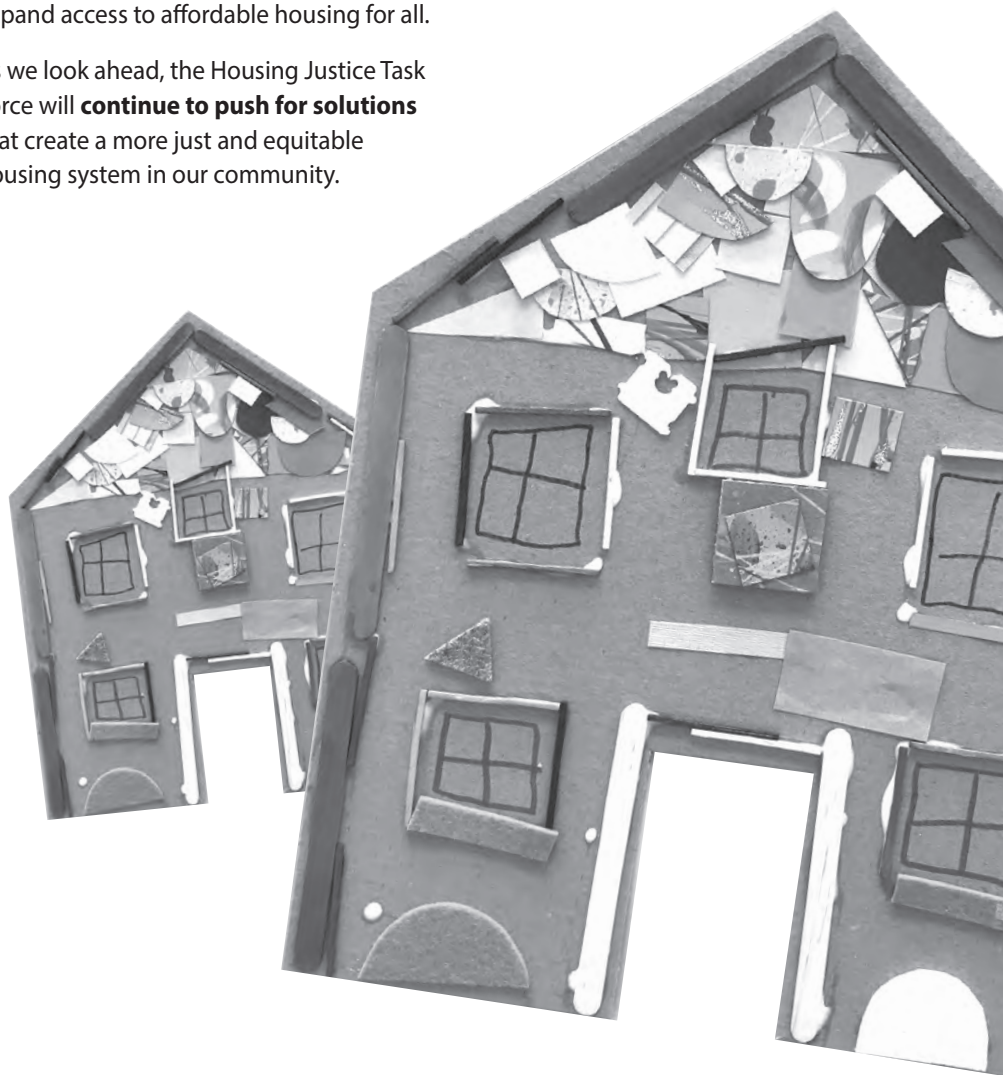
Education and Awareness were our major focus. We partnered with Family Promise of Waukesha County to host an **educational workshop for landlords**, featuring the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council. This well-attended workshop emphasized the benefits of accepting Housing Choice Vouchers and highlighted the importance of Fair Housing practices.

Housing Justice Task Force members also engaged in direct advocacy, **meeting with public officials and organizations** such as the Housing Action Coalition and the Waukesha Housing Authority. Our task force continues to work closely with developers to ensure the best use of land at the UWM property in Waukesha County.

Justice Castaneda, Executive Director of Common Wealth Development, shared his innovative perspective on community development at SOPHIA's 2024 Community Breakfast. Mr. Castaneda focused on sustainability, equity, and justice—which **inspired all attendees and reinforced our mission.**

Additionally, Housing Justice Task Force members have been **vocal in addressing** the drastic federal funding cuts for housing programs under the current administration, including reductions in support for shelters, Housing Choice Vouchers, and Fair Housing enforcement. We all remain committed to advocating for policies that protect and expand access to affordable housing for all.

As we look ahead, the Housing Justice Task Force will **continue to push for solutions** that create a more just and equitable housing system in our community.



GRUPO DE TRABAJO DE VIVIENDA JUSTA: un año de defensa y acción

Durante el año pasado, el Grupo de trabajo de vivienda Justa logró avances significativos en la defensa de viviendas asequibles y políticas de uso equitativo de la tierra. A través de la educación, la divulgación y la colaboración con las partes interesadas clave, trabajamos

incansablemente para generar conciencia e impulsar un cambio significativo.

La educación y la concientización fueron nuestro enfoque principal.

Nos asociamos con "Family Promise" del condado de Waukesha para organizar **un taller educativo para propietarios**, con la participación del Consejo de Vivienda Justa Metropolitana de Milwaukee. Este taller, que tuvo una gran asistencia, enfatizó los beneficios de aceptar los vales de elección de vivienda y destacó la importancia de las prácticas de vivienda justa.

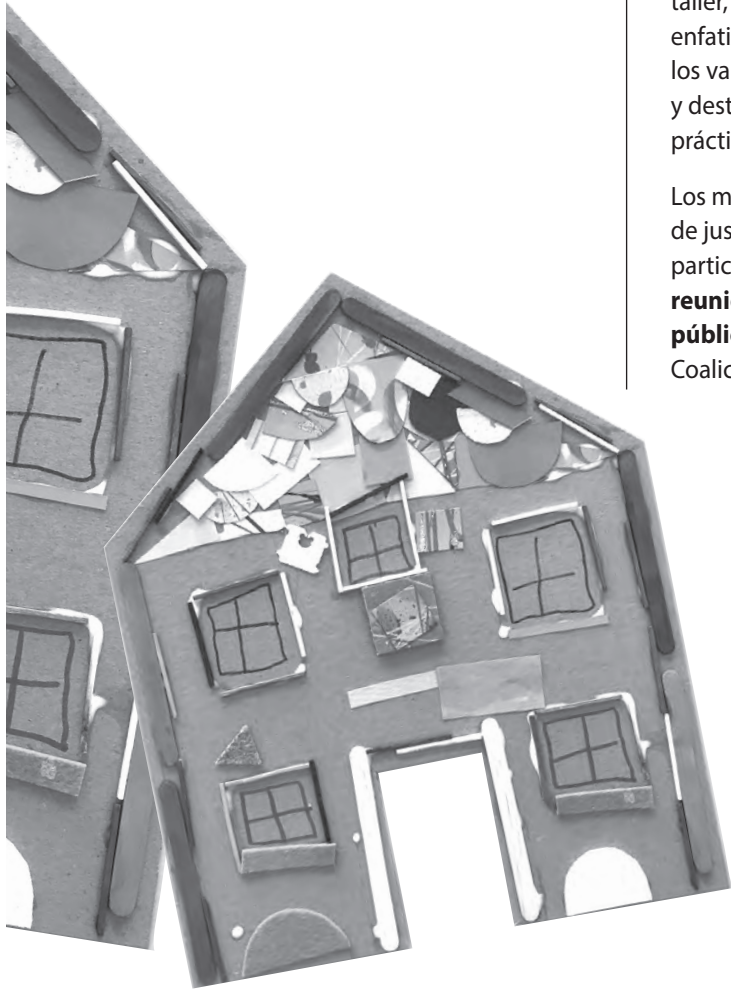
Los miembros del Grupo de trabajo de justicia en la vivienda también participaron en la defensa directa, **reuniéndose con funcionarios públicos y organizaciones** como la Coalición de Acción por la Vivienda

y la Autoridad de Vivienda de Waukesha. Nuestro grupo de trabajo continúa trabajando en estrecha colaboración con los desarrolladores para garantizar el mejor uso de la tierra en la propiedad de UWM en el condado de Waukesha.

Justice Castaneda, Director Ejecutivo de Common Wealth Development, compartió su perspectiva innovadora sobre el desarrollo comunitario en el Desayuno Comunitario de SOPHIA 2024. El Sr. Castaneda se centró en la sostenibilidad, la equidad y la justicia, lo que **inspiró a todos los asistentes y reforzó nuestra misión.**

Además, los miembros del grupo de trabajo de Vivienda Justa **han sido muy directos al abordar** los drásticos recortes de fondos federales para los programas de vivienda bajo la administración actual, incluidas las reducciones en el apoyo a los refugios, los vales de elección de vivienda y la aplicación de la ley de vivienda justa. Todos seguimos comprometidos con la defensa de políticas que protejan y amplíen el acceso a viviendas asequibles para todos.

De cara al futuro, el grupo de trabajo de Vivienda Justa **seguirá impulsando soluciones** que creen un sistema de vivienda más justo y equitativo en nuestra comunidad.



MAY 1, 2015
SOPHIA Organizer Bernie Gonzalez speaks at 'Day without Latinos' rally in Madison.

APRIL 29, 2015
SOPHIA and WISDOM leaders meet with state legislators on SOPHIA issues.

JUNE, 2015
Public Transportation Task Force Launched. Transit users shared stories how insufficient public transportation affects their lives.

SEPTEMBER, 2015
Leaders address Waukesha Co. Health and Human Services Board advocating for increased funding and programming via Drug and Alcohol Treatment Courts.

SEPTEMBER, 2015
Sponsor forum to push for Drivers Card legislation at LaCasa de Esperanza with WI Representative JoCasta Zamarippa – Bilingual services available.

NOVEMBER, 2015
Religious Leaders Caucus presents WI Council of Churches Executive Director speaking on impact of poverty on our community.

2016

MARCH 22, 2016
SOPHIA Organizer Bernie Gonzalez speaks on PBS Program ¡Adelante!

SPRING, 2016
Criminal Justice Task Force presents multiple presentations county-wide re: SOPHIA work

MAY 1, 2016
SOPHIA hosts Statewide Rally in Cutler Park with walk to County Courthouse – protesting 287g legislation.

EL GRUPO DE TRABAJO DE JUSTICIA PENAL DE SOPHIA EN ACCIÓN:

Justicia en movimiento

¡En abril de 2024, el Alguacil Severson anunció el cierre de la prisión Huber, lo que cambiaría a los sentenciados en virtud de la Ley Huber a monitoreo electrónico (EM). Esta fue una victoria importante para SOPHIA, que había abogado durante mucho tiempo por este enfoque más humano y consistente. El grupo de trabajo de justicia penal (CJTF) sigue participando activamente, haciendo un seguimiento de la eficacia del monitoreo EM, investigando los desafíos y manteniéndose involucrado en las reuniones del Consejo de colaboración de justicia penal del condado.

Como parte del ciclo electoral de 2024, SOPHIA organizó **un foro de candidatos** para los tres distritos legislativos del Condado de Waukesha. **Los candidatos que asistieron se involucraron con las prioridades de SOPHIA**, mostrando un compromiso con la reforma de la justicia. Una fuerte participación y cobertura de los medios de comunicación subrayaron el impacto del evento.

Más allá del Condado de Waukesha, CJTF trabaja en asociación con WISDOM, alineándose con los esfuerzos estatales para abordar la compleja Red de Reforma de la Justicia Penal. De cara al futuro, el CJTF está planeando organizar un Foro de Justicia Penal este otoño. ¡Esté atento para obtener más detalles!

La justicia requiere que todos nos mantengamos comprometidos y nos esforcemos para lograr un cambio significativo.

SOPHIA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE AT WORK: Justice in Motion

In April 2024, Sheriff Severson announced the closure of the Huber Facility, shifting those sentenced under Huber Law to electronic monitoring (EM). This was a major win for SOPHIA, which had long advocated for this more humane and consistent approach. The Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) remains actively engaged, tracking EM's effectiveness, investigating challenges, and staying involved in the county's Criminal Justice Collaborating Council meetings.

As part of the 2024 election cycle, SOPHIA hosted a **candidate forum** for Waukesha County's three legislative districts. **The candidates who attended engaged with SOPHIA's priorities**, showing a commitment to justice reform. A strong turnout and media coverage underscored the event's impact.

Beyond Waukesha County, CJTF works in partnership with WISDOM, aligning with statewide efforts to address the complex web of criminal justice reform. Looking ahead, the CJTF is planning to host a Criminal Justice Forum this fall. Stay tuned for details!

Justice requires all of us to stay engaged and push for meaningful change.





▲ Candidates Sarah Harrison and Kevin Reilly prepare to answer questions about social justice issues in Waukesha County.

2017

- DECEMBER 3, 2016
SOPHIA co-sponsors state-wide transit Summit. Waukesha Branch of EXPO (Ex-Incarcerated Persons Organizing) launched.
- JANUARY 20, 2017
Joins statewide call for Immigration Reform, release of prisoners held at deportation facilities.
- FEBRUARY 8, 2017
Immigration Reform Forum, 'Know Your Rights', held at Ascension Lutheran Church—providing tools for undocumented individuals (additional workshops offered throughout 2017).
- FEBRUARY 19, 2017
Immigration Rally at Cutler Park speaking out for immigration reform and against deportation.
- MARCH 18, 2017
SOPHIA sponsors forum on 'How to be Become a Sanctuary Church.'
- MARCH 30, 2017
SOPHIA leaders meet with state legislators re: restoring Transit funding, Immigration Driver Cards, multiple Criminal Justice Reform issues, Education funding, Expanding BadgerCare.
- SPRING, 2017
SOPHIA leaders testify at Joint Finance Committee meetings.
- JULY, 2017
Waukesha County Transportation Coalition receives Sierra Club's 2017 National Special Achievement national award for work on state budget.



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FALL, 2017

Meet with county officials to oppose '287g'. Immigration Rally at Cutler Park. Hundreds actively oppose local participation in '287g.'

NOVEMBER 8, 2017

Religious Leaders Forum hosts Nelia Olivencia, UW-Whitewater professor —reviewing proposed immigration legislation.

2018

SUMMER, 2018

Statewide funding for treatment alternatives increased to \$6 million. New state prison construction halted..

FALL, 2018

Housing Justice TF meets with County Executive to ensure that workers in Waukesha County are at the table when considering Neighborhood Initiative actions.

NOVEMBER 13, 2018

Religious Leaders Caucus hosts Rev. Kerri Parker of WI Council of Churches challenging us to use 'Courage, Justice and Holy Imagination' to make change.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2017

Anti-Hate Prayer Vigil on visible corner of a downtown Waukesha church.

MAY, 2018

Transit Hearing held with public officials. Fight for state budget to include JobLines bus, increase state funding for public transportation, segregate transit funds from transportation fund.

FALL, 2018

Pilgrimage and multiple presentations highlight need for Driver Cards for immigrants who are undocumented.

PARTNERING AROUND THE STATE THROUGH WISDOM Strength Together

SOPHIA is not alone when it carries out its faith-based community organizing. While SOPHIA members primarily focus on issues that are affecting Waukesha County, we are **linked with twelve other groups around the state** doing much the same work under the umbrella of the state-wide organization called WISDOM.

One of the many ways that WISDOM organizations work together is by gathering for an **annual retreat**, where we **share ideas, set goals**, challenge each other, and plan state-wide actions. The 2025 retreat took place January 16-17 in Green Lake, Wisconsin, with four SOPHIA members present for the two-day event, along with about 70 others from around the state representing their organizations.

In addition to the annual retreat, WISDOM provides a **weekly conference call for the leaders of its 13 affiliates**, training for the affiliates' staff, workshops on community organizing, both via Zoom and in-person, on-call consultation with the WISDOM staff, and even some administrative services to make the management of the 13 affiliates a little more efficient.

SOPHIA is far from alone in its ongoing work to build a more beloved community. It is blessed with partners around the state, and the **guidance and support of WISDOM**.

In 2025, WISDOM celebrates its 25th anniversary! Everyone is welcome to attend the gala taking place on August 7, 2025, at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee. To learn more and to be part of the festivities, go to WISDOMwisconsin.org.

◀ **SOPHIA leaders Betty Groenewold, Susan Mingesz, Jim Bickel and Jaclyn Foley set goals for SOPHIA.**

COLABORANDO EN TODO EL ESTADO A TRAVÉS DE WISDOM Juntos somos más fuertes

SOPHIA no está sola en su labor de organización comunitaria basada en la fe. Si bien los miembros de SOPHIA se centran principalmente en los problemas que afectan al condado de Waukesha, estamos **vinculados con otros doce grupos en todo el estado** que realizan prácticamente la misma labor bajo el paraguas de la organización estatal WISDOM.

Una de las muchas maneras en que las organizaciones de WISDOM colaboran es reuniéndose en un **retiro anual**, donde **compartimos ideas, establecemos metas**, nos retamos mutuamente y planificamos acciones a nivel estatal. El retiro de 2025 se llevó a cabo del 16 al 17 de enero en Green Lake, Wisconsin, con la presencia de cuatro miembros de SOPHIA, junto con otras 70 personas de todo el estado en representación de sus organizaciones.

Además del retiro anual, WISDOM ofrece una **conferencia telefónica semanal para los líderes de sus 13 afiliados**, capacitación para el personal de los afiliados, talleres sobre organización comunitaria, tanto por Zoom como presencialmente, consultas de guardia con el personal de WISDOM e incluso servicios administrativos para optimizar la gestión de los 13 afiliados.

SOPHIA no es la única organización que trabaja continuamente para construir una comunidad más querida. Cuenta con la bendición de contar con colaboradores en todo el estado y con la **guía y el apoyo de WISDOM**.

¡En 2025, WISDOM celebra su 25.º aniversario! Todos están invitados a la gala que se llevará a cabo el 7 de agosto de 2025 en el Hotel Pfister de Milwaukee. Para obtener más información y participar en las festividades, visite WISDOMwisconsin.org.

2019

- FEBRUARY, 2019**
SOPHIA adopts WISDOM Racial Equity Statement.
- MARCH, 2019**
Full sized replica of a Solitary Confinement Cell in Waukesha—a chance to walk inside the cell and experience it. People who had been incarcerated shared their experiences.
- JULY, 2019**
Transportation Task Force celebrates Transit Awareness Week, honoring all riders and drivers. Fights to maintain bus lines in SE Wisconsin, so workers could get to their jobs.
- SEPTEMBER 21, 2019**
Forum held on immigration myths, and the realities of the benefits of immigrants.
- FALL, 2019**
Housing Justice Task Force facilitates conversations in member congregations re: housing needs. Presents at Waukesha County Sustainability Fair. Partners with St. Vincent de Paul's 'Community Voice for Change Report.'
- NOVEMBER 13, 2019**
Religious Leaders Caucus presents 3 panelists speaking on 'How to Preach, Teach and Live our Faith Values in these Divisive Times.'
- NOVEMBER, 2019**
Leads campaign to increase funding for BadgerCare. Works on campaign to end shackling of pregnant women within prison system.



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17

ASOCIACIÓN CRECIENTE: Construyendo una Watertown acogedora y SOPHIA trabajan juntos

En respuesta al surgimiento del nacionalismo cristiano blanco y la presencia neo-nazi en el evento de Pride in the Park de Watertown, cuatro congregaciones locales se unieron con miembros de la comunidad para formar **Building a Welcoming Watertown**. Su misión es contrarrestar los mensajes dañinos y **crear una comunidad más inclusiva y acogedora**.

Desde su formación en octubre de 2023, se han centrado en temas locales clave, incluidas la **vivienda** y el apoyo a los **grupos marginados**. Una cumbre de vivienda en noviembre de 2024 reunió a inquilinos y propietarios.

Las cuatro iglesias que ayudaron a formar Building a Welcoming Watertown son Immanuel ELCA, St. Paul's Episcopal, Ebenezer Moravian, and First Presbyterian. Estas congregaciones, junto con los miembros de la comunidad, se centran en abordar las necesidades locales.

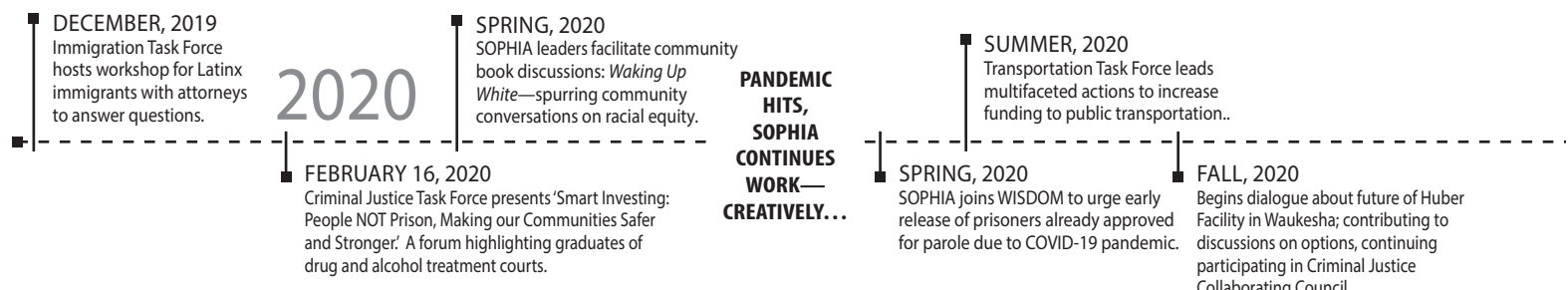
David Liners, Director Ejecutivo de WISDOM, se involucró desde el principio para ayudar en la formación de Building a Welcoming Watertown. Jaclyn Foley, Organizadora de SOPHIA, comenzó a asistir a las reuniones de Watertown en diciembre de 2024, y junto con David, vio el potencial de que Watertown se convirtiera en un afiliado de SOPHIA.

SOPHIA y Building a Welcoming Watertown tienen grupos de trabajo similares y **están trabajando en objetivos comunes**. Ambos tienen un grupo de trabajo de **vivienda**, con SOPHIA enfocándose en cupones de vivienda y Building a Welcoming Watertown pos su parte trabajando en un Albergue. También comparten un grupo de trabajo de **inmigración**, centrándose en difundir información precisa y disipar los mitos sobre los inmigrantes. Además, ambos grupos están comprometidos con la participación comunitaria y abordar **las necesidades locales**. Building a Welcoming Watertown patrocinó un **foro** para las elecciones de su junta escolar, y están definiendo la estructura de su nueva organización. Los miembros de Building a Welcoming Watertown se uniran a SOPHIA en **Madison Action Day**, profundizando aún más la conexión entre los dos grupos.

Unir la experiencia, el apoyo logístico y la orientación

de SOPHIA con la pasión y la energía de Building a Welcoming Watertown permitirá a ambos ampliar su alcance e impacto.

La colaboración entre estos dos grupos tiene una gran promesa. A medida que continuamos explorando nuestra asociación, tanto **SOPHIA como Building a Welcoming Watertown siguen comprometidas a mejorar nuestras comunidades y crear un futuro más acogedor e inclusivo para todos**.



GROWING PARTNERSHIP: Building a Welcoming Watertown and SOPHIA work together

In response to the rise of white Christian nationalism and the neo-Nazi presence at Watertown's 2023 Pride in the Park event, four local congregations came together with community members to form **Building a Welcoming Watertown**. Their mission is to counter harmful messages and **create a more inclusive, welcoming community**.

Since their formation in October, 2023, they have focused on key local issues, including **housing** and supporting **marginalized groups**. A Housing Summit in November, 2024, brought tenants and landlords together.

The four churches that helped launch Building a Welcoming Watertown are Immanuel ELCA, St. Paul's Episcopal, Ebenezer Moravian, and First Presbyterian. These congregations, along with community members, are focused on addressing local needs.

David Liners, the Executive Director of WISDOM, became involved early on to help Building a Welcoming Watertown with its formation. Jaclyn Foley, SOPHIA's organizer, began attending Building a Welcoming Watertown meetings in December, 2024, and together with David, saw the potential for Watertown to become an affiliate of SOPHIA.

SOPHIA and Building a Welcoming Watertown have similar task forces and are **working on common goals**. Both have a housing task force, with SOPHIA focusing on **housing** vouchers and Building a Welcoming Watertown working on a warming shelter. They also each have an **immigration** task force, focusing on spreading accurate information and dispelling myths about immigrants. Additionally, both groups are committed to community engagement and addressing **local needs**. Building a Welcoming Watertown sponsored a **forum** for their school board election, and are defining the structure of their new organization. Members of Building a Welcoming Watertown joined SOPHIA at **Madison Action Day**, further deepening the connection between the two groups.

Joining SOPHIA's experience, logistical support, and guidance with Building a Welcoming Watertown's passion and energy will allow both to expand their reach and impact.

The collaboration between these two groups holds great promise. As we continue to explore our partnership, both **SOPHIA and Building a Welcoming Watertown remain committed to improving our communities and creating a more welcoming, inclusive future for all.**



OCTOBER 3, 2020
Past, Present and Future of SOPHIA reflections shared by SOPHIA leaders at 'Drive-in' Prayer Breakfast at Church of the Resurrection, Pewaukee. School Sisters of Notre Dame honored as longtime members (as order moves out of Waukesha County).

SPRING – FALL, 2020
Launches Relational Voter Program and Integrated Voter Engagement—2 initiatives to increase voter engagement: Members send information to 363 incarcerated individuals eligible to vote.

2021

MARCH, 2021
SOPHIA/WISDOM members meet with legislators in first Virtual Madison Action Day.

NOVEMBER 6, 2021
'Speak Up and Show Up,' Carl Fields, Lead Organizer for EXPO (EX-Prisoners Organizing) energizes all at second 'drive-in' Prayer Breakfast.

JUNE, 2021
Immigration Task Force members deliver rice and beans to Senator Ron Johnson to draw attention to essential contributions made by immigrants. Driver Cards for undocumented persons continues.

JULY, 2021
Prayer Vigil challenges people to work to combat systemic racism—joining vigils around the state.

NOVEMBER 10, 2021
Religious Leaders Caucus Event—Debra Schneider, SOPHIA member, presents: 'Creation Care for Faith communities.'

KATE DELANEY JOLIN PEACEBUILDER AWARD

SOPHIA Vice-President Jim Bickel receives 2025 award

Plowshare Fair Trade Marketplace and Education for Peace in downtown Waukesha selected SOPHIA Vice President Jim Bickel to receive Plowshare's 12th Annual Peacebuilder Award. The award was named for Kate Delaney Jolin, one of Plowshare's founders. Kate is also a member of a SOPHIA congregation.

Jim was nominated for his visible, **active leadership in SOPHIA** for more than two decades. He was one of the pastors in Waukesha who accepted the call to start SOPHIA in Waukesha County over 21 years ago.

Jim and Kate met over three decades ago, while working together on the Ecumenical Partnership for Peace and Justice, part of the Wisconsin Council of Churches. Later they participated together in the early SOPHIA organizing meetings. This makes Plowshare's Peacebuilder award in Kate's name especially meaningful to Jim, Kate, and SOPHIA.

Although his professional roles have changed over the years, his passion for social justice has remained steadfast. Throughout the decades with SOPHIA, Jim has supported criminal justice reform work, led community book discussions on racial equity, led reorganization of the

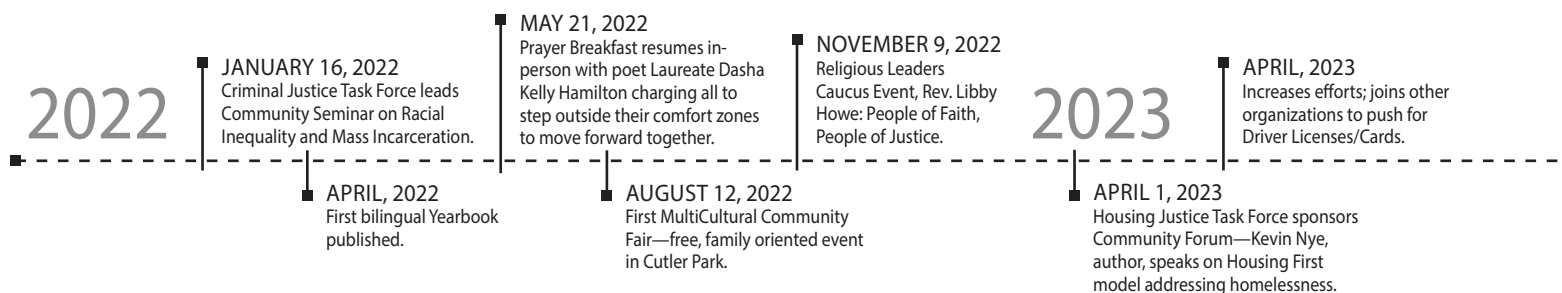
Immigration Task Force, nurtured leaders within SOPHIA and built relationships with decision makers in Waukesha County.

Jim truly lives out his faith and his passion for social justice. Congratulations, Jim!

(Award presentation available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@plowsharefairtrademarketpl703>)



▲ The Peacebuilder Award was started in 2013 to honor Kate Delaney Jolin, one of Plowshare Fair Trade Marketplace's founders. Plowshare, a non-profit store, has maintained a storefront in downtown Waukesha for 35 years; making it one of the longest standing businesses in downtown Waukesha.



PREMIO KATE DELANEY JOLIN PARA LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA PAZ

El vicepresidente de SOPHIA, Jim Bickel, recibe el premio 2025

Plowshare Fair Trade Marketplace y Education for Peace en el centro de Waukesha eligieron al vicepresidente de SOPHIA, Jim Bickel, para recibir el 12.º premio anual Peacebuilder Award de Plowshare. El premio lleva el nombre de Kate Delaney Jolin, una de las fundadoras de Plowshare. Kate también es miembro de una congregación de SOPHIA.

Jim fue nominado por su **liderazgo visible y activo en SOPHIA** durante más de dos décadas. Fue uno de los pastores de Waukesha que aceptó el llamado para iniciar SOPHIA en el condado de Waukesha hace más de 21 años.

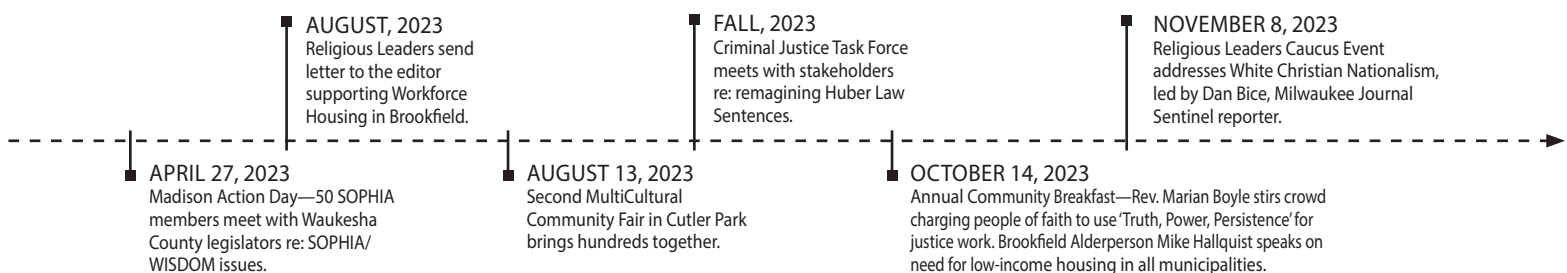
Jim y Kate se conocieron hace más de tres décadas, mientras trabajaban juntos en la Asociación Ecuménica para la Paz y la Justicia, parte del Consejo de Iglesias de Wisconsin. Más tarde, participaron juntos en las primeras reuniones de organización de SOPHIA. Esto hace que el premio

Peacebuilder Award de Plowshare en nombre de Kate sea especialmente significativo para Jim, Kate y SOPHIA”.

Aunque sus funciones profesionales han cambiado a lo largo de las décadas, su pasión por la justicia social se ha mantenido firme. A lo largo de las décadas que lleva trabajando en SOPHIA, Jim ha apoyado el trabajo de reforma de la justicia penal, ha dirigido debates comunitarios sobre libros sobre equidad racial, ha liderado la reorganización del grupo de trabajo sobre inmigración, ha formado líderes dentro de SOPHIA y ha construido relaciones con los responsables de la toma de decisiones en el condado de Waukesha.

Jim vive verdaderamente su fe y su pasión por la justicia social. ¡Felicitaciones, Jim!

(La presentación del premio está disponible en: <https://www.youtube.com/@plowsharefairtrademarketpl703>)



Justicia Hídrica

El grupo de líderes religiosos de SOPHIA (RLC) organizó una miniserie de tres partes sobre la justicia hídrica o del agua en octubre de 2024. Los miembros del RLC presentaron los diversos componentes de la justicia hídrica y sugirieron una medida de acción cada semana.

16 de octubre de 2024: ¿Quién es dueño del agua?

Debate sobre la visión tradicional de los nativos americanos sobre el agua, con una presentación sobre la justicia hídrica y la lucha por el agua del río Colorado.

Acción: escribir al Congreso en apoyo de la aprobación de la HR 8945 para permitir que la Nación Navajo lleve agua a donde se necesita en sus tierras tribales.

23 de octubre de 2024: El agua y nuestros hogares

El cambio climático está afectando a los hogares al provocar inundaciones por las fuertes lluvias junto con el aumento del nivel del mar. La necesidad desesperada de agua limpia (segura y potable) en la prisión de Waupun para los reclusos (actualmente, el agua marrón corre por la prisión).

Acción: escribir al gobernador Evers, al Departamento de Justicia, al alcalde de Waupun y a nuestro representante estatal para instarlos a aprobar una legislación que permita que la prisión de Waupun se conecte al sistema de agua potable de la ciudad de Waupun, lo que proporcionaría agua potable.

30 de octubre de 2024: ¿Qué hay en el agua?

Información sobre los efectos del cambio climático en los Grandes Lagos; cómo se les está dando estatus legal a los sistemas de agua en otros países; y una presentación sobre las pruebas de

las aguas residuales en Milwaukee para detectar contaminantes, a cargo de un orador del Instituto de Agua Potable de la UWM.

Acción: defender los derechos de la naturaleza y la salud de los Grandes Lagos.

Water Justice

SOPHIA's Religious Leaders Caucus (RLC) hosted a three part mini-series on Water Justice in October, 2024. Members of the RLC presented on the various components of Water Justice, with an action step suggested each week.

October 16, 2024: Who Owns Water?

Discussion of the Native American traditional view of water, with a presentation on Water Justice and the fight for the Colorado River water.

Action: write Congress in support of
(Continued on next page)

**Access to ►
running water
transforms
communities.
When taps
turn on, so do
opportunities.**
—George
McGraw,
DigDeep
Founder & CEO



2024

MARCH 15, 2024
County Exec. Paul Farrow announces Huber Facility Closing, a goal of Criminal Justice Task Force for years—Persistence pays off.

APRIL 20, 2024
Annual Community Breakfast – Celebrating 20 years – Justice Castaneda expanded on his theme that *Love is an Act, Community is a Verb*. Lifetime Achievement awards presented to Rev. Joe & Joyce Ellwanger, following over 70 years of dedicated justice work.

AUGUST, 17, 2024
Third MultiCultural Community Fair in Frame Park highlights ethnic entertainment and vendors.

OCTOBER 2024
Religious Leaders Caucus hosts 3-part presentation re: Water Justice, Impact of Climate Change, and Public Health.

OCTOBER 2024
Criminal Justice Task Force sponsors a Candidate Forum for state legislative districts in Waukesha County.

OCTOBER 29, 2024
Housing Justice Task Force sponsors *Lunch & Learn* for landlords to learn about the benefits of accepting housing choice vouchers.

passing HR 8945 to allow the Navajo Nation to move water where it is needed on its tribal lands.

October 23, 2024:
Water and Our Homes

Climate change is impacting homes by causing flooding from heavy rains along with rising sea levels. The desperate need for clean (safe and potable) water in Waupun prison for inmates (currently brown water runs through the prison).

Action: write Gov. Evers, DOJ, Mayor of Waupun, and our State Representative to urge them to pass legislation

allowing Waupun prison to connect into the City of Waupun's clean water system, providing safe water.

October 30, 2024:
What's In the Water?

Information about climate change's effects on the Great Lakes; how water systems in other countries are being given legal status; and a presentation on testing waste water in Milwaukee for contaminants, given by a speaker from the UWM Freshwater Institute.

Action: advocate for Rights of Nature; and health of Great Lakes.

Take Action – Now!



SOPHIA asks you to join in the journey toward justice. Your participation is not only important, it is essential. We need your unique ideas, your talents, your precious time, and your monetary contributions. We need you to bring our vision to life.

You can: Join a Task Force or Committee
Attend SOPHIA events
Make a monetary donation

Please contact Susan Mingesz: president@sophiawaukesha.org to learn more ways to engage in this important work.

SOPHIA is committed to a day when every voice is heard and every person is valued.

Justice, however, doesn't just happen. **Justice is created by people, just like you,** who see a more sacred way of responding to one another and **take action.**

Action that is grounded in compassion, love, and fairness for everyone. **Action** that celebrates the inherent dignity and worth of each human being. As we stand with others, sharing responsibility for change, with values rooted in faith, we are all made whole. In the profound words of Desmond Tutu: *We need each other. In our world, we can only survive and experience freedom together.*

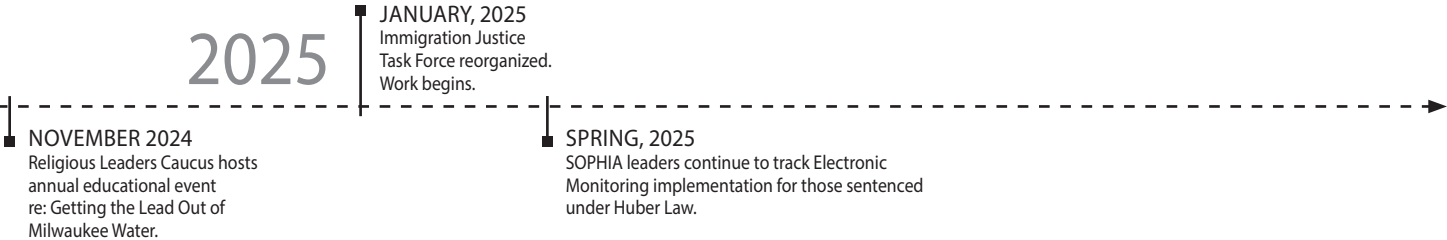
Together, we can bring our vision to life.

Thank you!



To donate to SOPHIA, use this QR code.

2025



CONGRATULATIONS SOPHIA: 20 years of working for justice and celebrating community!

The milestone 20th anniversary was marked with special awards, a recognition of success, and challenges for the future on April 20, 2024, at the annual Community Breakfast held at La Casa de Esperanza.

SOPHIA's work in housing justice, criminal justice reform, and immigration were highlighted at the event, with noted success reaching from an affordable housing struggle in New Berlin in SOPHIA's early days, to the recent decision to close the dilapidated and ill-suited Huber facility in Waukesha.

Not resting on their laurels, task forces outlined ambitious work ahead, including challenges in the housing voucher system in Waukesha County and the need for driver's cards for immigrant workers across the state.

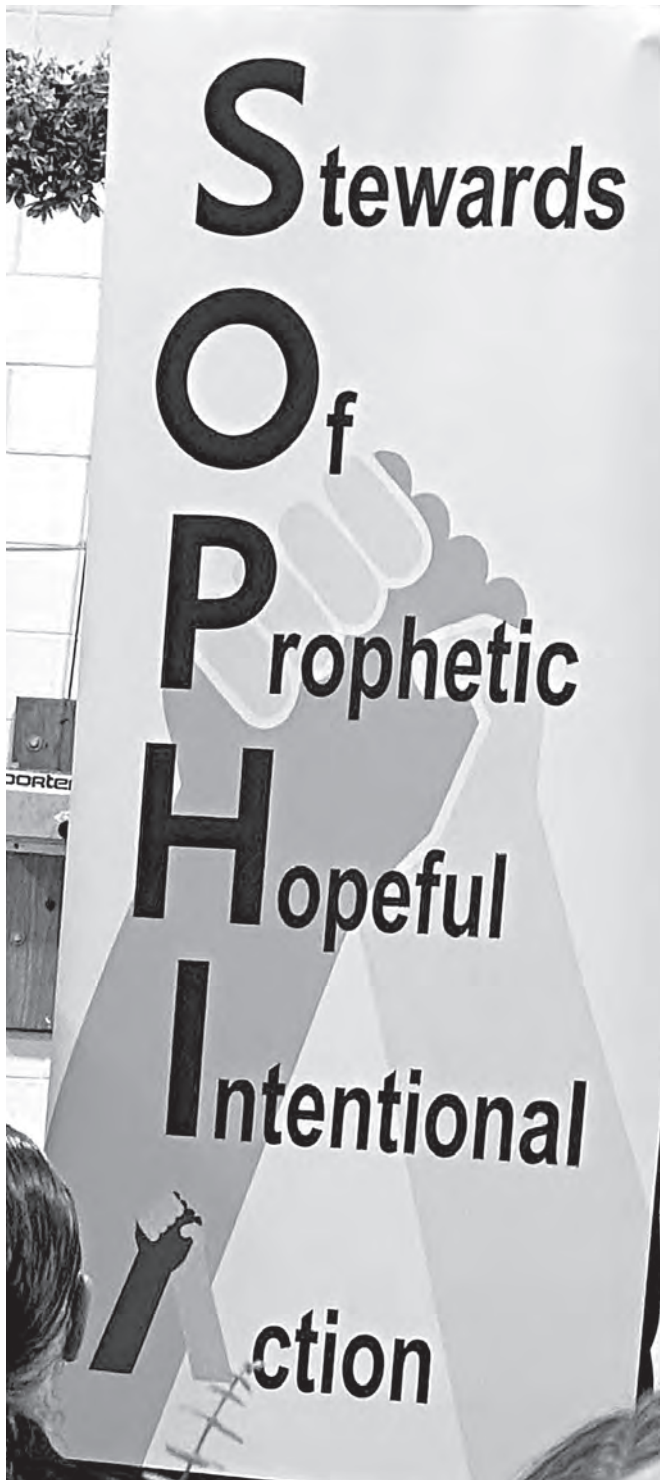
The keynote address was delivered by Justice Castenada, executive director of Common Wealth Development, who spoke of **"love as an act"** and **"community as a verb."** Castenada's organization began its work in violence prevention and quickly learned that violence prevention connects closely to housing, employment, and equity. Any attempt at reducing violence required a multi-issue-based approach to community building, just as SOPHIA works to do.

In celebration of SOPHIA's work toward justice and for the immense inspiration they have provided, **lifetime achievement awards were presented to longtime grassroots activists Rev. Joe and Joyce Ellwanger**, whose deep commitment to righteousness and truth keeps them pushing back against forces of evil.

And to cap it all off, the annual fundraiser online auction raised \$4,196, the highest amount yet.



FELICITACIONES SOPHIA: ¡20 años de trabajar por la justicia y de celebrar la comunidad!



El aniversario histórico de SOPHIA, se celebró el 20 de abril de 2024, en el Desayuno Comunitario Anual celebrado en La Casa de Esperanza dicho evento conto con reconocimientos especiales, un reconocimiento al éxito y desafíos para el futuro.

En dicho evento se destacó el trabajo de SOPHIA en temas de justicia de vivienda, reforma de justicia penal e inmigración, con un éxito notable que abarcó desde la lucha por la vivienda asequible en New Berlín en los primeros días de SOPHIA, hasta la reciente decisión de cerrar la inadecuada y casi en ruinas instalación de Huber en Waukesha.

En dicho evento se enaltecó que en SOPHIA "Nunca nos dormimos en nuestros laurales" ya que, los grupos de trabajo describieron el ambicioso trabajo que tienen

◀ **Rev. Joe Ellwanger accepts SOPHIA Lifetime Achievement Award for over 70 years of working for social justice, 25 years with WISDOM. Rev. Joe Ellwanger and Joyce Ellwanger received the award.**

por delante, entre los que destacan los desafíos en el sistema de vales de vivienda en el condado de Waukesha y la necesidad de tarjetas de conducir para los trabajadores inmigrantes en todo el Estado.

El discurso de apertura estuvo a cargo de Justice Castaneda, Director Ejecutivo de Common Wealth Development, quien habló del **"amor como acto"** y de la **"comunidad como verbo."** La organización de Castaneda comenzó su trabajo en la prevención de la violencia y rápidamente aprendió que sus conexiones con la vivienda, el empleo y la equidad hacen que cualquier intento de reducir la violencia esté necesariamente ligado a un enfoque de construcción comunitaria basado en múltiples cuestiones, tal como el trabajo que SOPHIA realiza.

En celebración del trabajo de SOPHIA en pro de la justicia y por la inmensa inspiración que han proporcionado a lo largo de su historia, **se entregaron premios a la trayectoria a los activistas que han sido pilar y han sentado las bases en SOPHIA, entre ellos al Reverendo Joe y Joyce Ellwanger**, cuyo profundo compromiso con la rectitud y la verdad los mantiene luchando contra las fuerzas del mal.

Cabe destacar que la subasta anual de recaudación de fondos en línea recaudó \$4,196, la cantidad más alta hasta ahora.

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Plowshare's 12th Annual Peacebuilder Awards

Video Première Saturday, May 3, 2025



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Individual Peacebuilder Award 2025

Jim Bickel – Decades of SOPHIA leadership
working for social justice

Group Peacebuilder Award 2025

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For details on the Awards and Silent Auction for this Spring fundraiser visit www.plowshareftm.org

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— Paul Wellstone,
former Minnesota Senator

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1 Peter 4:10

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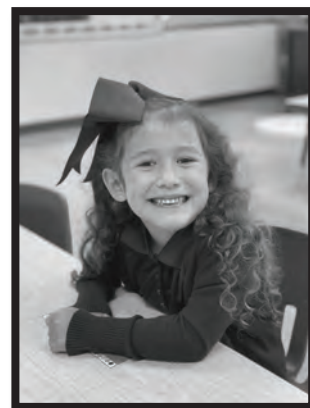
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continued success!*

*Blessings,
Iva Richards*



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every generation must do our part.**

—John Lewis
Civil Rights Activist and Public Servant



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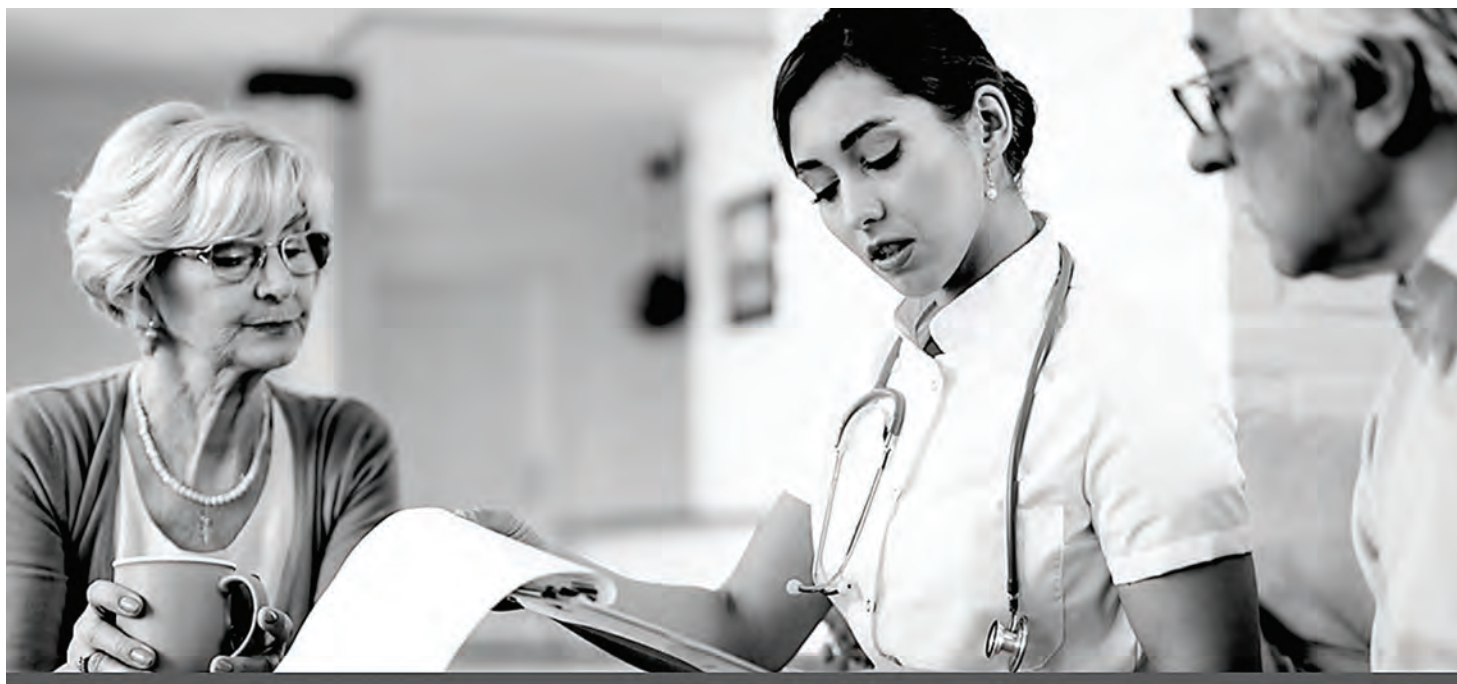
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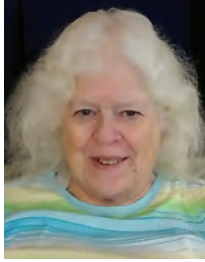
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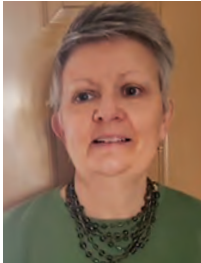
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SOPHIA booth welcoming all at Carroll University.

An attendee at the Multicultural Community Fair with the Romanian folk dancers after a dance lesson.



Rev. Jim Bickel offers closing prayer at a Candidate Forum.

Moderator Kelly Goodman asks candidates questions during a Candidate Forum.



Multicultural Community Fair dancers enjoy grass checkers game.



SOPHIA leaders talk with legislators about social justice priorities.



17 years of yearbooks shared at 2024 Community Breakfast.