

A Year of Unity 2021 ANNUAL REPORT





Dear Friends,

Throughout the past year, we focused on and celebrated A Year of Unity. We chose this theme to acknowledge and recall the inscription that is engraved above the entry to the monastery, taken from John's Gospel, "that all may be one."

Living in right relationship with the Divinity, with one another and with all of creation is a lifelong process of discovering of our oneness with Creator and created. Thus, it is important for us as a community of communities to reflect on the many ways we are woven together through our prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth.

Thank you for your steadfast and generous support of the mission and ministries of Holy Wisdom Monastery. Your love and care were deeply felt throughout the past year. Despite enduring another year of pandemic and global sorrow, we also experienced much joy together. Your loving kindness towards the sisters was especially joy-filled during the Celebration of Community weekend.

As we make new memories together throughout 2022, A Year of Beauty, may we do so united in prayer, hope, peace and love.

Sincerely,

Mary David Thalymbrick OSB Charles

Mary David Walgenbach, OSB Prioress

Charles P. McLimans Chief Executive Officer



Colleen Hartung, Board Chair



Jim Welsh, Board Vice Chair



Sister Mary David Walgenbach, Prioress



Sister Lynne Smith



Charles McLimans, CEO





Neal Smith



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Benedictine Women of Madison, Inc. Board of Directors helps lead Holy Wisdom Monastery by following the Carver Policy Governance[®] model. Board members are volunteers who focus on the vision and ends of the organization.

We are grateful to all these dedicated individuals who serve in leadership and we wish to lift up Neal Smith and Maureen Van Dinter who both served as chairs and retired from the Board in 2021.

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*Past board member

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Aspirations

As a *beacon of Benedictine spirituality*, the sisters of Holy Wisdom Monastery and the community of communities seek to live and work out of our values:

prayer and contemplation, simplicity, balance, beauty and quality, hospitality and inclusivity, living in right relationship silence and listening with the ear of the heart, humility, respect for each person, justice, community, and care for the earth.



VISIONING

The "Listen, Imagine, Create" process initiated by the Board in 2020 generated input from hundreds of stakeholders who identified strengths and named opportunities to move the organization forward. The following aspirations offer a vision for the future of Holy Wisdom Monastery

- Be a beacon of Benedictine spirituality
- Achieve sustainability in all our essential resources
- Live ever more deeply into diversity, inclusivity and equity
- Expand the monastery without walls
- Embrace our land as a spiritual resource

In 2021, the work continued as volunteers, sisters and coworkers created task forces for each aspiration and set goals, created a three-year plan and started the work.

BENEDICTINE SPIRITUALITY

GOALS:

- Form the communities at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Benedictine spirituality
- Create a reflection tool for our communities so that the Benedictine charism guides all we do
- Grow the oblate community
- Enhance and expand our virtually streamed offerings for our communities

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

GOALS:

- Listen and remove barriers
- Educate
- Partner
- Ongoing commitment (Inclusion Council)

LAND AS A SPIRITUAL RESOURCE

GOALS:

- Share the history of the land
- Offer educational experiences
- Enhance the volunteer program

SUSTAINABILITY

GOALS:

• Explore how each community plans for its sustainability

Ecospirituality Retreat | Oct. 16, 202

- Segregate funds that support the sisters' healthcare and retirement
- Establish a plan and process, grounded in Benedictine spirituality, for engaging all members of the communities in meaningful work to support the mission
- Ensure sustainability of leadership continuity by having succession plans for key leadership positions

MONASTERY WITHOUT WALLS

GOALS:

- Steward a robust, dependable, and well-trained team of volunteer tech hosts
- Offer hybrid and virtual experiences of our major events and programs
- Create a Benedictine-inspired, experiential and informative website
- Remove barriers to access Benedictine spirituality and the gifts that Holy Wisdom offers

MEMORIAL COURTYARD

In response to the increasing need of interment space, the sisters envisioned the Holy Wisdom Memorial Courtyard. The quiet, protected and sacred space is offered as a final resting place for the cremated remains of loved ones and a contemplative place for family and friends.

With 60% of individuals and families choosing cremation over traditional burial, the timing is perfect for Holy Wisdom to expand our ministry and provide additional interment space.

Learn More holywisdommonastery.org/ memorial-courtyard/

Contact Nancy Sandleback at nsandleback@ holywisdommonastery.org 608-836-1631, x105

In Memorium



IN MEMORIUM

Patricia Acker Karl Andersen Georgette Bathum Tom Braunger

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Community



BUILDING COMMUNITY Holy Wisdom Monastery is home to a vibrant community of communities. At the heart is Benedictine Women of Madison, the sisters' monastic community, open to Christian women of any denomination.

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY

The sisters celebrated a combined 151 years of religious life during the Celebration of Community, Sept. 24-26, 2021. Sister Mary David Walgenbach, Prioress celebrated her 60-year jubilee and Sister Everline Jeruto made her first monastic profession. We invited friends, family and community members to celebrate these milestones, return to the monastery and come together as the community of communities during A Year of Unity.

JOINING THE COMMUNITY

My journey from Kenya was like a drama. Past, present and future were all frightening. I was nervous about leaving behind the life I was used to – my house, my homeland, my farm and animals, my family and neighbors. It was hard to take a chance on losing everything! Stepping into the unknown meant that I didn't know what would happen. It was scary. Even though I tried to ignore the voice which was telling me to come to the community here in Wisconsin, and even though I pretended not to hear it, the voice didn't leave me alone! God is not fickle, forgetful or fragile in any way. God does not make mistakes.

~ Sister Everline Jeruto

There is a divine purpose behind all the blanks and unanswered questions in my life. I learn that God does what he does for reasons I can't always understand and I continue to believe that God is good even when the unknown of life has me in its grip. God will always bring it to fulfillment. I am growing in fulfillment as I see my life unfolding in this community. I'm grateful for the sisters, for their support, care and love that has enabled me to come this far.

~ Sister Everline Jeruto

Community of Communities

As we continued into the second year of the pandemic, we created opportunities to unite virtually and in person, while lifting up Benedictine spirituality and working toward a more diverse and inclusive community.



Coworkers

Coworkers strive daily to support the sisters' mission and vision, as well as the many wonderful and kind communities of Holy Wisdom Monastery.







Retreatants

Board of Directors Board members are volunteers who focus on the larger picture and the ends of the

organization.

Retreatants are individuals and groups who come to Holy Wisdom Monastery to retreat from busy lives into a quiet, peaceful setting. In 2021, 636 people came for personal retreats, 68 groups used the facilities and we held 10 weddings and 8 memorial services.



Oblates

The Oblates of Holy Wisdom Monastery form an ecumenical Benedictine community of lay people guided by the Rule of Benedict and mission, vision and values of Holy Wisdom Monastery.



Volunteers

Volunteers are a community of dedicated and inspiring individuals who support the monastery with their time and talents. In 2021, a total of 273 volunteers worked 5,470 hours!





Sunday Assembly

Sunday Assembly of Holy Wisdom Monastery is an ecumenical Christian community rooted in Benedictine spirituality. In our weekly liturgy of prayer, music and contemplation, we share the bread and cup with all, without exception, and nourish our commitment to peace and justice.



Friends of Wisdom Prairie

This community is dedicated to caring for the earth at the monastery by volunteering their time and dedication to the environment as well as offering financial support. Ecumenical Center for Clergy Spiritual Renewal (ECCSR) Each year a cohort of 18 ecumenical pastors experience contemplative renewal at Holy Wisdom through two immersions into Benedictine spirituality and the ongoing support of community experiences online.



Sisters

Benedictine Women of Madison is an ecumenical Benedictine community open to Christian women of any denomination. The sisters' work of prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth is integral to the life of the communities of Holy Wisdom Monastery.





Donors

Generous patrons support the sisters mission, vision and values by making financial contributions through the Benedictine Life Foundation. Donors are integral to the sustainability of the monastery and the sisters' endeavors.



The Coworkers at Holy Wisdom Monastery support the people & mission of the monastery and work in all the ministry areas.



Coworker Anniversaries

On Dec. 4, 2021, Car McGinley (pictured above), director of communications & IT, celebrated her 35^{th} work anniversary at the monastery.

"I came for a job, I stayed for the people — the sisters, my coworkers, the guests, volunteers and community members — and the difference the sisters are making as they offer a place and experiences that help people deepen their spirituality. I also value the way the sisters welcome all and take care of this precious Earth. I am incredibly thankful to work here and be able to tell the story of the people and the monastery." – Car McGinley

Also in 2021, Russell Habeck, facilities manager, celebrated 5 years on March 1 and Toby Grabs, director of operations, celebrated 5 years on November 1. We thank them all for their dedication to the mission of the monastery.



Left to right: Allie, Amy Alstad, Timothy, Lara

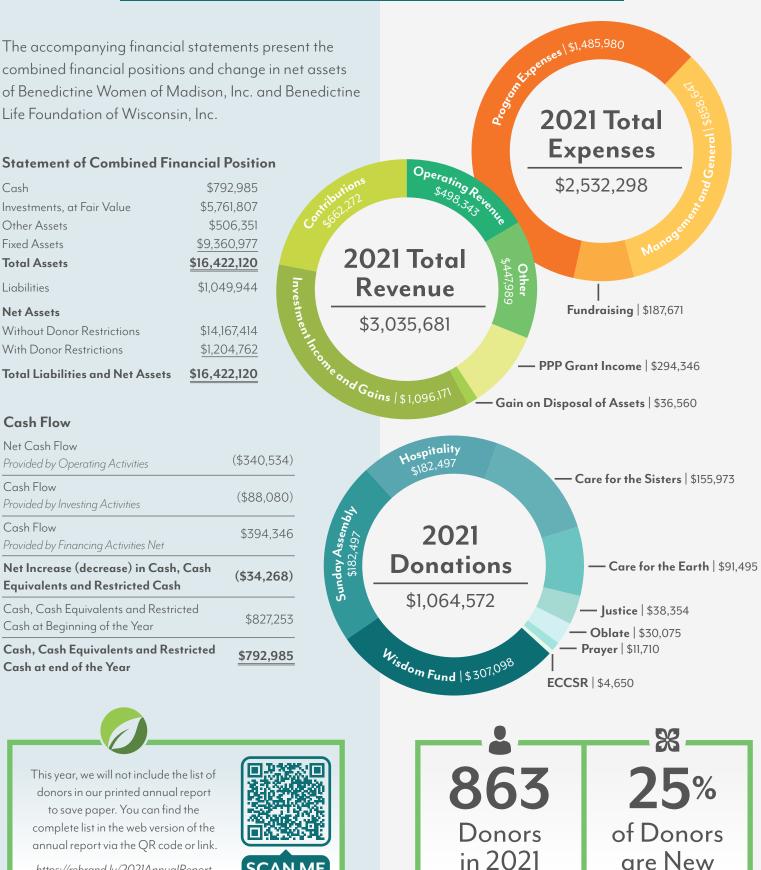
New Coworkers

To strengthen the coworker team as the monastery grows, we welcomed four new coworkers in 2021.

- · Allie Christensen, digital marketing specialist
- Timothy Byington-Fish, Greg Armstrong legacy summer restoration intern
- Lara Dulin, development coordinator
- Mary Pertzborn, bookkeeper (not pictured)

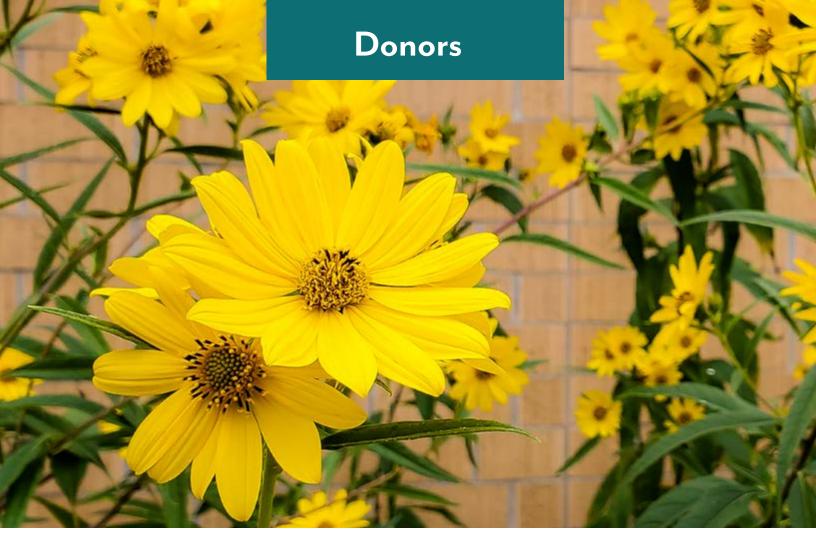
Support | Revenue & Expenses

The accompanying financial statements present the combined financial positions and change in net assets of Benedictine Women of Madison, Inc. and Benedictine Life Foundation of Wisconsin, Inc.



SCAN ME

https://rebrand.ly/2021AnnualReport



In creating this list to honor our donors, we made every effort to be accurate with names, spelling, etc. If you see an error please let us know by contacting hwm@HolyWisdomMonastery.org

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Learn more at HolyWisdomMonastery.org/support

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"As weekly guests of the sisters, Sunday Assembly is a cornerstone of the Holy Wisdom community of communities and has been for more than 50 years. Together, we worshipped in St. Benedict Center, the Waunakee Community Center and now the new

> LEED-platinum certified Monastery building. We walked with the sisters as we became an ecumenical faith community. We have great passion for our social justice work and living in right relationship with all, receiving each guest just as they arrive. "

> > ~ Joyce Wodka, Sunday Assembly, Volunteer, Donor

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"In 1999, when my husband and I moved from the city of Minneapolis into the country, we had a dream of living on a flower farm. We found land and planted. As time passed, I began to notice that the trees, the birds, the coulees, the flowers, the deer—the otherthan-human species—all practiced give-away. They were simply being themselves and giving themselves away to me and to all.

Why, I wonder, do you and I feel so blessed when we volunteer? Then I realized that the very nature of creation is replete with give-away generosity. We belong to this natural order. We are awakened by the life of the maple.

We can simply be ourselves and give away what we have been given.

It is God's genius and blessing."

~ Pamela Johnson, Sunday Assembly, Donor, Volunteer & Oblate

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"I had not realized until I was here how much I was yearning for a community where I could be myself. I did not need to worry about pastoral boundaries or even being judged. I just felt welcome, God's love and deep community."

> ~ Kathleen Cook Owens, PC (USA) Pastor from Verona, WI & ECCSR Cohort Participant

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Thank you for being part of our community.

MISSION

Holy Wisdom Monastery, home of Benedictine Women of Madison and a community of ecumenical Benedictine communities, weaves prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth into a shared way of life.

VISION

Holy Wisdom Monastery welcomes people into sacred space and our community of communities to pray, study and nourish one another. Compelled by the Gospel and rooted in the Benedictine tradition, we support personal and community growth as we live out our mission and values in a changing world.

VALUES

Beauty, balance, simplicity, silence and respect for all of creation.

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The Benedictine Life Foundation of Wisconsin, Inc. (EIN 39-1830847) provides volunteer and financial support to further the mission of Benedictine Women of Madison and Holy Wisdom Monastery. Learn more at HolyWisdomMonastery.org.

