

THE CROSSING

CAMPUS MINISTRY

The Crossing is a diverse and caring community of students who find belonging, embrace exploration, advocate passionately for justice issues, and become who they are inspired to become.

This month marks one year in the Executive Director seat for me. The past year has brought a new network of colleagues, partners and friends in a context of ministry and advocacy, both on the UW campus and in the Madison community. I am so encouraged by these relationships. There is a lot about Madison and the educational context here that has made my first year at The Crossing feel natural and energizing. There are challenges of course, but such things are an inherent part of renewal and I expect to navigate challenges indefinitely. We at The Crossing are embarked upon new approaches, new goals, even a new manner of existing that meets the present-day issues with intention and hopefulness. In the words of a new community partner, “nothing is impossible, until you give up on yourself.” This sentiment resonates with how we view the future. There is little concern about giving up, and instead an investment in the “know thyself” part of that statement. We won’t shrink in the face of adversity if we know who we are. At the Crossing, individual students and the organization as a whole, are called to embrace our four mission anchors, “**Belong, Explore, Advocate, Become.**” One can easily infer from these values a refusal to give up and a celebration of joyfully knowing and being who we truly are. The Crossing insists on optimism in mission.

Gracias & Peace,

Rev. Mike Burch, Executive Director

The new *Justice Advocacy program* that was rolled out in September 2023, holds a lot of potential for a renewed impactful student ministry. I am personally very excited about the immediate responsiveness from students who are stepping into opportunities to advocate for justice whether local or global. Individual students are engaged in meaningful ways in specific areas of advocacy at The Crossing; currently, that’s immigration, labor rights, food insecurity and voter engagement. By the Fall of 2024 I expect the spectrum of advocacy issues to broaden as students arrive at The Crossing and pursue their passions. The onus is on them. And we are here for them. The students authentically bring their mission desires to the Crossing, and we step up and partner with them. And this only happens with your partnership too. We need all the pieces. Your support is what makes our basic work of empowering students to follow their sacred calls possible. Thank you and please stay engaged with us. We have work to do.

May 2024 be a year of positive energy, spirit led risk taking, and life-giving daily habits. **Belong** to something meaningful, **Explore** new ways of thinking about the Divine, zealously **Advocate** when the odds are not favorable, and enjoy every day as you **Become** your authentic self!

BELONG IN COMMUNITY

EXPLORE FAITH & SPIRITUALITY, ADVOCATE FOR JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS, BECOME AUTHENTICALLY YOU!

LIZZY BURKHALTER

Worship & Hospitality Coordinator

The fall semester of 2023 was a wonderful semester at The Crossing. As the student coordinator for worship and hospitality, I was able to give two messages at our worship services last semester. I chose to talk about faith exploration and the themes of advent. **Giving messages has built upon my faith, connections with others, and public speaking skills, which I am very thankful for.** Last semester, The Crossing continued their food justice work. I was involved in the UW Frozen meals program, where I organized and communicated with volunteers to keep our freezer stocked. **I am very proud to be a part of the food justice work done at The Crossing, which I know many students depend on.** Moving into the last semester of my senior year, I am excited to continue my internship at The Crossing and see how our programs grow.

STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Crossing announced in January that Rev. Karla Schmidt is no longer employed as Campus Minister at The Crossing. We thank Karla for her many years of service to The Crossing and we wish her the best in her future endeavors. The board is engaged in comprehensive strategic planning regarding fall 2024 and beyond, which will continue into the spring. Please make periodic visits to The Crossing website for updates, and/or feel free to connect with the Executive Director at burch.director@crossingministries.org

THE CROSSING LAUNCHED A NEW WEBSITE DESIGN IN JANUARY! CHECK IT OUT AT: WWW.THECROSSINGUW.ORG

MUSIC TEAM



THANKSGIVING DINNER
NOVEMBER 2023

STAFF, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI IN ATTENDANCE AT THE CROSSING'S 2023 ANNUAL GALA



FRESHMAN-SOPHOMORE GROUP PLAYS SPOONS



THE CROSSING
CAMPUS MINISTRY

(608) 257-1039 | office@crossingministries.org
1127 University Avenue Madison, WI 53715

Congratulations

DECEMBER 2023 GRADUATES

Britney Lane

Deepak Charan Logavaseekaran

Julia Nick

MAY 2024 GRADUATES

Elizabeth Burkhalter

Valeria Martinez Rae Salazar Ng

Quintin Bovre Kylie Schedler

Claire Bradley Will Vraney

Dottie Brand Alison Stuebe

Josie Brand Emily Widgden

Garazi Lopez de Aguilera

IMRAN KHAN

Food Justice Advocacy Coordinator

Imran has been involved with food justice since the spring of his sophomore year. For a class project, he composed a research paper discussing the prevalence of food insecurity in the US, among college students, and in Dane county. **His research sparked a passion for advocacy, inspiring him to get involved with organizations on campus that help alleviate food insecurity.** Imran has been volunteering with Slow Food UW since the spring of his sophomore year, and hopes to continue working on advocating for food justice with Slow Food and the Crossing. **He plans to introduce a food justice blog to help spread awareness about problems with food systems and food security among peers.**

VALERIA MARTINEZ

Immigration Advocacy Coordinator

Hello Crossing Community, I'm Valeria Martinez, a UW law student as well as The Crossing's Immigration Advocacy Coordinator. **In this role, I plan to raise awareness among Madison's undocumented youth about Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS).** SIJS is a non-immigrant status for minors in the U.S. who were abused, neglected, or abandoned by one or both of their parents and for whom returning to their country is against their best interest. SIJS provides the minor with documentation they need to obtain state IDs or driver licenses and work authorization. It also makes them eligible for Permanent Residency and subsequently citizenship in the future. **I am excited and thankful to have The Crossing's support to address some misinformation about SIJS in Madison.** I hope to visit local schools to present and distribute information and resources about SIJS.



WORKING TOWARDS JUSTICE

On October 29th, Mike hosted "Working Towards Justice": A spotlight on UW-Madison Graduate Student Advocacy Event. Top Picture Left to Right: James Morgan MOSES organizer, Imran Khan Food Justice Advocacy Coordinator, Valeria Martinez Immigration Advocacy Coordinator, Olivia Ligman Labor Rights Advocacy Coordinator. Bottom Picture Left to Right: Graduate Student Featured Presenters Hannah Glenn, Bri Buhr, and Patrick Monari, Mike Burch Executive Director

OLIVIA LIGMAN

Labor Rights Advocacy Coordinator

Workers' rights are very important to UW Students, faculty and staff. From undergraduate students to staff working in all of UW's buildings, labor justice is necessary. The university functions only because of the labor its students and staff provide. Graduate students fill teaching positions, undergraduates contribute to research, cleaning, the residents of every hall, and so much more. As the cost of living increases, and student wages at UW continue to fall behind what's necessary to afford tuition, housing, and basic needs, UW's student workers are being squeezed out of housing, schooling, and Madison as a city. In light of this, as well as workers' issues facing larger Madison, **Olivia focused on building connections with local organizations and engaging in research surrounding worker's rights issues in Wisconsin, and Madison specifically.** She has focused especially on low-wage work and student-workers at UW, drawing connections between tipping culture, managerial oversight, and a lack of affordability for workers in Madison. She has been working on gathering more information and data, and creating more awareness about exploitative practices in Madison businesses, and workplaces in general. Future events and initiatives for next semester have been planned, and include cross-organization event planning, zine/art creation, and collaboration with other social justice advocates.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM SOME OF
OUR CURRENT STAFF & STUDENTS!**



SAVE THE DATE!

**THE CROSSING'S ANNUAL GALA
FRIDAY APRIL 19TH, 2024
6:00PM-8:30PM
AT THE CROSSING**

**WE HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US FOR A
FUN & CASUAL NIGHT INCLUDING
JAKARTA CAFE FOOD TRUCK FARE,
JUST BAKERY DESSERTS, MUSIC,
AND COMMUNITY!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION &
TICKETS, VISIT:
WWW.THECROSSINGUW.ORG/GALA
OR EMAIL ANDI AT:
OFFICE@CROSSINGMINISTRIES.ORG**

GO GREEN WITH THE CROSSING!



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