



WYOMING ASSOCIATION OF CHURCHES

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2016 Report

The mission is, as people of faith, to empower Wyoming's churches to promote social and environmental justice through prayer, discernment, respectful dialogue, leadership, advocacy and service.

Current Activities:

- a. **Continuing to grow in relationship with our Native American neighbors: The Wyoming Association of Churches acted as midwife to the formation of the Wind River Native Advocacy Center** and continues to nurture it to bring a stronger Native voice in Wyoming. This is based on WAC's resolution adopted in 2012 to listen to and to stand with Native Americans in Wyoming.
- b. **A presence at the Wyoming State Legislature as we** advocate for and with the poor and disadvantaged.
- c. **Promoting respectful conversations** through workshops to address racism, like the workshop in Laramie in January about how to do justice and to appreciate diversity.
- d. **Providing leadership development opportunities** as was provided in Sheridan last September with a *Doing What Matters* Workshop.
- e. **Promoting understanding of those with different religions and perspectives** by co-sponsoring educational programs with the Wyoming Humanities Council.
- f. **Continued advocacy** for immigration reform, welcoming refugees, protection of public lands including the Red Desert and Medicaid expansion.
- g. **Weekly messages** on the theme of "Fear not. Be bold. Do justice." The 2015 initiative is to address racism in Wyoming.

The annual budget is \$36,000. Eight denominations partner with the Wyoming Association of Churches: American Baptists, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Evangelical Lutherans of America, Friends (Quakers), Presbyterians (USA), United Church of Christ and United Methodists. The primary staff person is Chesie Lee, Executive Director, who works part-time. Three teams help to guide the work of the Wyoming Association of Churches: the Sacred Ground Team, the Spiritual Life Team and the Peace and Justice Team. Most financial support comes from the judicatories of the denominations (about 40%) and contributions from congregations and individuals.

In 2016, the Wyoming Association of Churches celebrates its 40th Anniversary, October 14-15 in Casper. The theme is "Appreciating Diversity."