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God's glory ebbs and surges

Photo and verse
by Mary Stamp

God's glory
ebbs and surges
washing our sandy lives
with rebounding waves
of hope.

God's grace
roils and purges
leveling our rippled lives
with reflecting streams
of justice.

God's gift
pools and splurges
stilling our rushing lives
with refreshing flows
of peace.

God's goodness
waits and merges
restoring our misty lives
with renewing waters
of love.

God's grandeur
shines and converges
gathering our scattered lives
on the reconciling shores
of time.



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women and men*

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human dignity*

*invites
involvement*

SEE PAGE 2

Messiah Sing-Along will benefit the Anuak

"Why do the nations so furiously rage together?" the Psalmist wrote thousands of years ago (Psalm 2:1) and people still ask today.

In "The Messiah," Georg Fredric Handel assigned this question to the bass soloist.

For more than 30 years, First Presbyterian Church in Spokane has been presenting Handel's "Messiah" as a community sing-along with a professional orchestra and soloists.

This year, the Messiah Sing-Along will be a benefit concert to raise funds for the Anuak people of Ethiopia, who experienced genocide last December. It will be held at 7 pm., Sunday, Dec. 5, at the church at 318 S. Cedar. There will be a free-will offering. Steve Goodenberger, music director, will conduct.

The Fig Tree has covered efforts by the local Anuak to raise world awareness and action.

The Anuak Justice Council plans to send a peacekeeping delegation to the refugee camp in Sudan to encourage displaced Anuaks to have patience. They are growing weary and need encouragement that people are working on their behalf, said John Frankhauser of the AJC.

Funds from the concert will aid Anuak people living in and near Gambella, aid refugees in Sudan and Kenya and seek justice as the Anuak Justice Council exposes the genocide and on-going atrocities.

Handel's "Messiah" includes voices of the prophets and saints, reminding listeners of Christ's teaching of peace and justice.

For information on the event, call 747-1058.

Presbytery grants funds for projects

Fig Tree draws partners for website

The Fig Tree takes the gifts of media and transforms ink, paper, web space and video into stories that encourage and empower people to act.

"We supplement what people gain in worship and other gatherings with stories of people living their faith and connecting what they do with what they believe," said editor Mary Stamp, reporting on the Rural-Urban Connections Project and the Interactive Website Project.

Three Gonzaga University public relations students helped The Fig Tree reach out to congregations in the region by sending a postcard to each of about 400 congregations, asking if they "want more local faith-in-action stories?"

The card said The Fig Tree "sparks awareness and understanding across the faith community, reinvigorating people in their lives and ministries." It also reminded of its role in strengthening "involvement in congregations, communities, society and the world by connecting people throughout the region."

The goal is to bolster the capabilities of staff and build a network of story-idea gatherers, contributing writers and editors of special area pages or sections.

In a student-organized phona-thon, callers asked for names of contact people, for newsletters, email, websites and links.

Of 225 calls made, 80 people answered and 34 provided names of contact people. Callers also learned of several story ideas. Some are in this issue, and will be in future issues.

Fig Tree staff refined the Interactive Website Project description during November to clarify how it will build on the newspaper's role as a trusted voice in the region, energizing people and overcoming their isolation through sharing stories of faith-in-action.

"We see the website as a way to multiply our scope, covering more stories and more area geographically," Mary said. "So we are making contacts, sharing the summary with people in Yakima, Vancouver, Bainbridge Island and Seattle, seeking to draw in more partners in the faith and higher

education communities.

"Often faith and nonprofit communities chase mass media, reshaping their message to the mass media mindset. We have stories to tell that can reshape thinking and lives, if the stories are not remolded into something trendy, sensational or conflict centered," Mary said.

The Rev. Jim CastroLang, website project coordinator, is meeting with people one-to-one.

Jim said that "the key is for us to build personal connections and relationships on the web. Many websites have teasers, but do not complete the job. We need to use this medium in relational ways."

The Inland Northwest Presbytery voted on Nov. 20 to grant The Fig Tree \$3,000 for the website and \$1,000 for the rural-urban outreach, joining the Pacific Northwest United Church of Christ which gave the same amounts in September.

Those grants provide a challenge for other regional churches to match those amounts, so these projects can take root.

For information, call 535-1813.

Religion News Briefs Around the World

Ecumenical News International, PO Box 2100
CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111
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Only missionaries can tame terror

Jos, Nigeria (ENI). A Nigerian evangelist, described by the Twentieth Century Dictionary of Christian Biography as the originator of indigenous cross-cultural missions, said only Christian missionaries can tame the rising wave of global terrorism. Panya Baba spoke at a missions program in Jos in central Nigeria, advocating that the United Nations send Christian evangelists into areas of the world engulfed in conflicts.

Corrupted churches need revitalizing

Bangkok (ENI). The general secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia, Ahn Jae Woong, stresses the need to "revitalize" Asian spirituality at a time when, he said, traditional cultures are on the verge of extinction because of western influences. Many churches in Asia have lost their missionary vocation and become corrupted, he told a meeting in Hong Kong of representatives of the Asian church grouping's partner agencies.

Religion in Vietnam faces new restraints

Bangkok (ENI). Vietnam has put into effect new legislation that the communist state says will ensure freedom of religion, said a Roman Catholic archbishop who warns that it places new restraints on religious groups. Authorities put a positive spin on the Ordinance on Religions and Beliefs, but Christians continue to face persecution in the Southeast Asian country.

Vanunu under Israeli house arrest

Jerusalem (ENI). Israeli nuclear whistle-blower Mordechai Vanunu has been released from custody, but placed under house arrest after being picked up by armed police in the grounds of the Anglican cathedral in East Jerusalem. Vanunu, a Christian convert, had been living in the cathedral's guest house since his release from prison in April after serving an 18-year sentence for disclosing Israel's nuclear secrets.

He was reportedly detained on suspicion of disclosing more state secrets after he had completed the prison term for treason after divulging classified information about Israel's nuclear program to London's Sunday Times newspaper.

Indian human rights commission censures laws

New Delhi (ENI). A report by the National Human Rights Commission in India criticizes laws enacted in some Indian states to restrict conversion from one religion to another as an attempt to hold onto the caste system. Its 300-page report on prevention of atrocities against Dalits, Indians consigned to a low caste, said the anti-conversion laws were an attempt by the state and upper caste Hindus to "freeze" the status of Dalits as "untouchables."

New Dutch Bible translation is best-seller

Amsterdam (ENI). A new Dutch translation of the Bible has catapulted onto the best-seller lists in the Netherlands, despite survey findings that show a continuing decline in church attendance there.

Canadian clergy plan to join trade union

Vancouver (ENI). The Canadian Auto Workers Union accepted a request from some United Church of Canada clergy in Ontario to represent ministers of religion. It will launch a campaign to unionize the 4,000 ministers of Canada's largest Protestant denomination, because of decades of clergy abuse.

Church leaders warn of Kenya's chasm

Nairobi (ENI). Church leaders in Kenya warn that the chasm between the poor and the rich could spark chaos in the East African country of 32 million people, where three million individuals control all the riches. Church leaders want the gap bridged and declare it "a tormenting eyesore" affecting their work.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Faith groups plan legislative advocacy

The 2005 Washington State Legislature will hear from communities of faith through the Washington Association of Churches' new internet-based Faith Advocacy Network.

The program will use a computer software tool for political action, said Lindsay Daehlin, public policy intern.

"People of faith who believe in social and economic justice can make their views known to their elected representatives with just a few keystrokes," she said. "The WAC will begin using this tool in January."

The WAC has mailed more than 4,500 postcards to individuals and organizations to confirm email addresses. It is also collaborating with the National Council of Churches' advocacy network, FaithfulAmerica.org.

"The 2005 legislative priori-

ties are health care, tax fairness, reducing poverty, and environmental justice," she said.

"With an expected state budget deficit of \$1 billion this year, we can expect efforts to cut social services severely. Our unified voice as members of faith communities allows us to connect with decision makers more effectively," Lindsay said.

Members of the Faith Advocacy Network will receive action alerts on issues so they can write letters to legislators. In addition, they will receive analysis of issues that will help them write letters to the editor.

During January and February, the WAC and related faith organizations will present Legislative Conferences in four cities to inform people about issues and ways to influence policy decisions.

Legislative Conferences are scheduled for Saturday, Jan 22, in Spokane; Thursday, Jan. 27, in Tacoma; Saturday, Feb. 6, in Seattle, and Saturday, Feb. 12 in Yakima.

The Spokane conference will include briefings on state and local issues, plus advocacy training in writing letters, making visits and doing phone calls.

In addition to collaborating on the event in Spokane, the Interfaith Council for the Inland Northwest will also hold legislative briefings in Pullman, Colville and Spokane, focusing on the state issues and on advocacy training.

The Interfaith Council plans to hold a Lobby Day in February.

The annual WAC Advocacy Day in Olympia will be held on Feb. 24.

For information, call (206) 625-9790 ext. 17 or call 329-1410.

Students participate in Urban Plunge events

In December and January, students from Gonzaga University, Whitworth College and Eastern Washington University will participate in weekend "Urban Plunge" experiences to learn about the lives of people who live downtown.

The plunges, which are sponsored by Catholic Charities, the

Interfaith Council and Bethany Presbyterian Church, were started with the goal of introducing people in the pews with the realities of homelessness, gentrification, single-room occupancy, camps and housing options, as well as the social isolation of many people.

Participants gather on a Friday evening at the House of Charity

for an introduction, meet some patrons, sleep there, hear a panel discussion and tour agencies and buildings on Saturday, ending about 2:30 p.m.

Weekends planned are Dec. 3 to 4, Gonzaga; Jan. 7 to 8, Whitworth and Jan. 28 to 29, EWU students.

For information, call 358-4273.

World Council, Catholics prepare joint resource

Preparation of the 2005 edition of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has led to a new stage in collaboration between the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Roman Catholic Church.

For the first time, the text that will inspire the Week of Prayer has not only been jointly prepared but also jointly published by the WCC Faith and Order commission and the Pontifical Council for

Promoting Christian Unity.

Calling it a "further, small step in the direction of Christian unity," WCC general secretary, the Rev. Samuel Kobia, and the secretary of the Pontifical Council, Bishop Brian Farrell, hope the joint liturgical resources will usher in "a new era of collaboration" between the two bodies.

The theme proposed for the Week in 2005 is "Christ, the One

Foundation of the Church," a reference to 1 Cor. 3:1-23.

The texts were prepared by members of the theological committee of the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Slovakia.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is celebrated from Jan. 18 to 25.

Information is available at: wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/faith/wop2005contents.html.

CROP Walk funds presented to area groups

The Spokane CROP Walk Committee is beginning plans for the next walk, at 1 p.m., Sunday, April 24, 2005. They are seeking volunteers to help with organizing the annual fund-raising walk for local and global hunger.

The next committee meeting will be at 7 p.m., Jan. 20 at Manito United Methodist Church, 3220 S. Grand.

The 2004 Spokane CROP Walk local funds were divided four ways with \$1,697 going to Spokane Valley Meals on Wheels, Second Harvest, Mid-City Concerns, Inc., and the Interfaith Hospitality Network.

Cheney walkers, who joined in the Spokane walk, raised \$265 for the Cheney Food Bank.

In Yakima, the CROP Walk

raised \$1,076 for the Yakima Interfaith Coalition.

The Seventh-Day Adventist Community Center and the Breadbasket Emergency Food Center in Milton Freewater, and the Christian Aid Center in Walla Walla each received \$453 from that area's CROP Walk.

For information, call (888) 297-2767.

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Westminster coordinates the Tree of Sharing

The Tree of Sharing opened Nov. 19 and runs through Dec. 12 at RiverPark Square Atrium, the second floor of NorthTown by the Bon and the Valley Mall on the first floor by the Bon.

Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ at 411 S. Washington is partnering with KREM-TV and Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets to meet needs of people listed on 7,500 tags.

People pick up tags at the trees, purchase the gifts and return them to any one of the locations.

The church, agencies and service clubs at high schools are providing volunteers.

For information, call 928-6697.

Catholic Charities responds to 44,000

The 63rd annual Catholic Charities Christmas Collection will reach out to the most vulnerable in Eastern Washington. Catholic Charities responded to the needs of more than 44,000 people in 2004, regardless of religious preference.

More than 2,400 volunteers and 150 staff of Catholic Charities make possible 12 programs in 50 different locations, providing basic human needs of food, clothing and safe shelter.

Last year, more than 4,700 donors contributed \$621,000 to the Christmas Collection. The 2005 goal is \$675,000.

For information, call 358-4250.

Red Cross seeks volunteer help

The American Red Cross, located at 315 W. Nora in Spokane, is offering courses in adult, infant and child CPR—cardio-pulmonary resuscitation—in automated external defibrillator use and in babysitter training.

The Red Cross needs volunteers for its various programs.

For information, call 326-3330.

Sacred table gathers diversity of humanity

Ringling a triangle, Tom Westbrook symbolically called people to gather around the table, as he defined the meaning of "sacred table" at the Interfaith Council's Thanksgiving Day celebration at Central United Methodist Church in Spokane.

He recognized that church has a "sacred table."

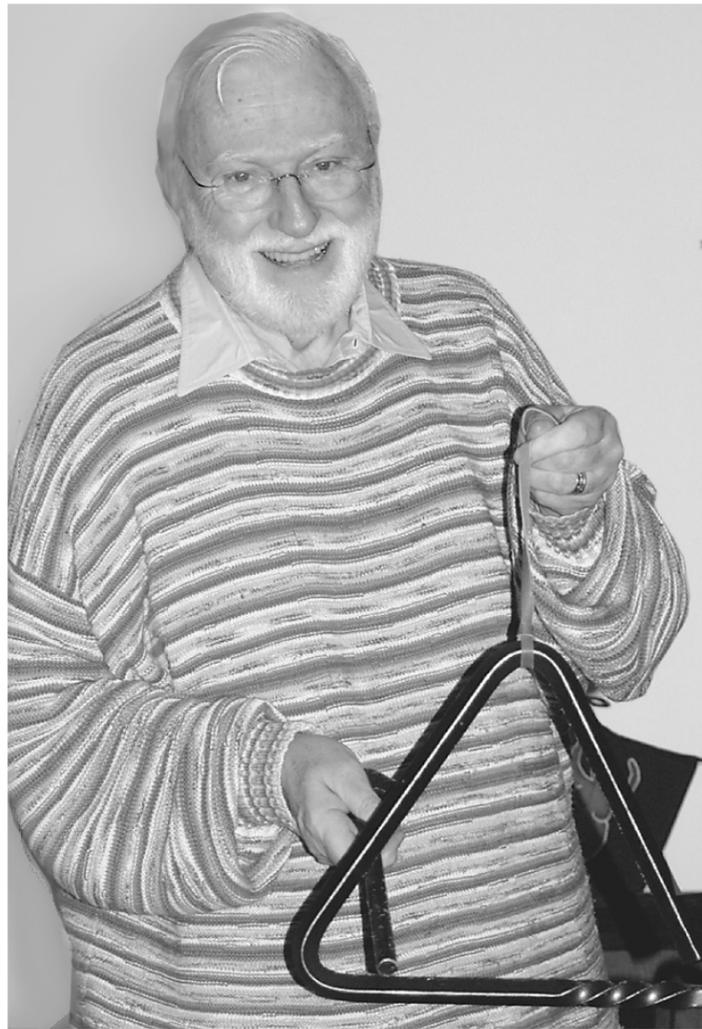
"This church is central to the lives of many people because the hungry are served here regularly, reliably and respectfully," he said of Shalom Ministries.

Just like people who gather for meals around the sacred tables of the Dine with Dignity program, Tom recognized the diversity of those gathered for the interfaith celebration.

"Over the years, many good people have come together in a church, temple or cathedral happily manifesting their sense of community, their spiritual and corporal concern for others," he said. "God judges the poor on their honesty but judges the comfortable on their generosity."

As a cradle Catholic, he said that through kindergarten, the grades, high school, college and some time in seminary, he has grown to become a practicing Catholic.

For Tom, a member of St. Ann's Catholic Church in Spokane, that means being an American who "glories in our pluralism, diversity and freedom to find ever new perspectives to rediscover lost insights, truths from other



Tom Westbrook

traditions and ideas that seem revelatory," he said

His faith prompts him to seek and promulgate that which is of universal value rather than to impose any kind of intellectual

or behavioral uniformity.

"Religion is meant to cradle, embrace, prepare and support us. In faith, we find our full freedom. In love, we are energized to live," he said. "In our mysteriously loving God, the single source, sus-

tainer, guide and goal, we have hope and trust."

Tom described the family table during his childhood in Minnesota. It was a round oak table. There his mother did her sewing and his father paid the bills, but primarily the family gathered for supper.

When his grandparents visited from Spokane or when other guests came, his family added one or two extender boards to make more room.

"In my memory, that table is sacred," he said. "Surely our sense of the sacred is inherently symbolic. Nothing is made sacred by designation, only by recognition born from experience, sensitivity and insight.

"Some would call it grace. It's an awareness that can come upon us at any time or place, even in church," he said.

"It's one thing to hold in reverence a tabernacle or other designated site," Tom said. "It's something else for us to live in the light shown in the dawning acknowledgement that all creatures and all creation are holy, and that all of us are sacred.

"We are all one family," he said.

Juvenile program recruits mentors

Washington's Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) is developing a mentoring program in the Spokane area and is recruiting volunteers who are 21 years of age or older to be positive role models for youth involved in the juvenile justice system, said parole officer Misty Myers.

"We partner a mentor and a mentee for six months before the youth's release from a state institution," she said. "The relationship continues for six months while the youth is on parole. This is a one-year commitment."

Youth from the Spokane area

will be on parole there. The program is volunteer for both parties. Youth have to request to have a mentor, she said.

"JRA Mentor Programs have been in place in western Washington for several years and have proven to reduce recidivism by as much as 30 to 40 percent," Misty said.

For information, call 363-4670.

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Project Safe Place in Coeur d'Alene joins VOA ministries

At-risk and homeless youth have a place to connect with adults and peers at Project Safe Place in Coeur d'Alene, a six-year-old program that became part of the Volunteers of America Spokane program in September.

Beth Barkley, a social worker and mother of two teens, started the program in a facility at 205 LaCrosse Ave., donated by Idaho Youth Ranch, with grants from the Department of Juvenile Corrections and the Department of Health and Welfare.

"There was a need for a safe place for youth to go. With incidents of juvenile crime were higher in Coeur d'Alene than in the rest of the state," she said, "so we started this as a prevention program."

The local program connects with the national program of that name that started in 1984 in Louisville, Ky., and now has programs in 700 communities.

Yellow signs with the Safe Place logo in windows of businesses, agencies and public places say it is a place for a child or teen to go for safety.

"Perhaps a teen is being harassed in a mall after a movie. Perhaps a teen does not have a safe driver to take her home. Perhaps a child does not feel safe at home," she said, listing a few of many reasons why youth might decide

to go into the business and ask to call the program.

Beth said there are 89 locations in the Coeur d'Alene area with signs, including Lincoln Way Church of God, First Assembly of God, St. Vincent de Paul and Hayden Lake Faith Presbyterian.

Some youth driving through from Alaska, Minnesota, Missouri, Maryland and New Mexico have recently seen the sign, recognized it and stopped in for a meal, because the site is near the interstate highway.

Project Safe Place provides meals, a clothing bank, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, and a gathering place. An attendant is on call, so a teen can stay overnight if necessary.

Beth described it as a mini-Crosswalk, drawing about 12 teens.

"The youth are not necessarily homeless, but are from families on the edge. Some have no dinner at home because parents work or are at the bar," she said. "It's a step in prevention, so the youth do not become homeless. Many who come are at risk of separating from families. Some are in trouble, struggling at school or lacking a support system," she said.

Beth, who graduated from Miami Uni-

versity in Ohio in 1976, came to Coeur d'Alene about 20 years ago.

She has reached out to teens through the school system to tell them about the program.

Like Crosswalk, Project Safe Place would like to sign up churches to provide meals once a month, once a week or on some other schedule. Some churches and individuals provide meals, but more are needed. They also have breakfast, lunch and snack foods available for anyone who comes in crisis.

Family Worship Center in Hayden regularly donates bread and rolls.

A member of the North Idaho Unitarian Church, Beth said the project is consistent with her values and commitment to help people in need, especially children and teens.

"Every child needs a safe place to be, to help them find values and learn skills to be successful," she said.

Children and youth are vulnerable without good parenting, mentoring or role models, said Beth, adding, "The more strong, healthy adults youth relate with, the stronger they will be."

At her 10th high school reunion, she learned that a friend had been physically

abused by her father. The friend told no one then, because she felt she had no safe place to go.

"That motivated me to try to have an effect and to change lives for youth in those situations," Beth said.

Marilee Roloff, VOA's director and founder of Crosswalk, finds this connection an example of "interstate cooperation and program evolution." VOA has registered to operate in Idaho and will support Project Safe Place in efforts to serve youth and families in North Idaho.

The programs have been collaborating for two years, serving runaway and homeless youth across the state border.

VOA served about 4,500 children, youth, families and single adults in 2003-04. In addition, it distributes 40,000 children's books a year, and participates in the Spokesman Review Christmas Bureau to provide 30,000 with food vouchers, toys, candy and books.

More than 350 youth attend the Crosswalk School and 16 earned GEDs or diplomas last spring.

Forty churches, families, service clubs and businesses help provide meals.

For information on Project Safe Place, call (208) 676-0772. For information on VOA call 624-2378.

Every child needs a safe place to go.

Personal-energy scooter ready to visit churches as educational tool

The United Methodist Rural Fellowship in Missouri sent a small, hand-powered, three-wheeled scooter to Spokane in 1999 to promote it in CROP Walks, fairs and churches.

The scooter is made with volunteer labor in small, medium and large sizes. It is shipped to 29 countries, including Vietnam, Congo and Mexico.

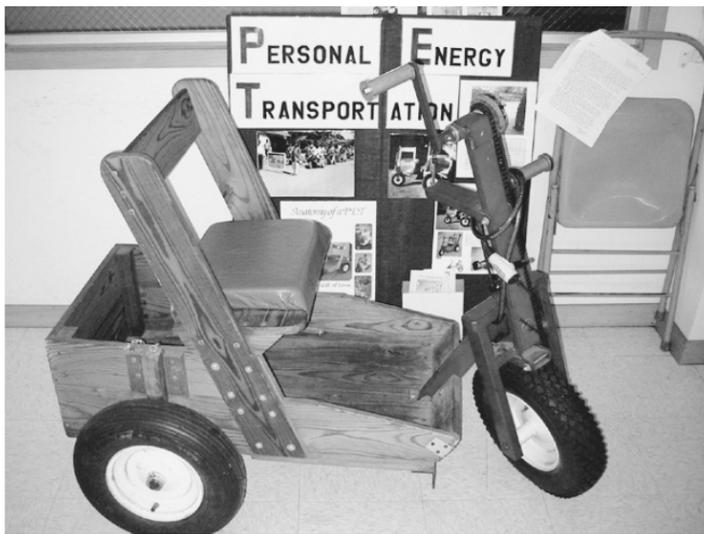
"By shipping large numbers of disassembled scooters packed in a large container, using volunteer labor and purchasing parts in large wholesale lots, the cost of each scooter delivered is about \$250," said Dave Noble of the CROP Walk Committee.

Since 1999, Spokane donations have been sufficient to sponsor three scooters. "Our" scooter remains here because it cost \$300 to truck it to Spokane.

From time to time, it has been borrowed for use on trails where a narrow-tired wheelchair would likely become stuck or break up.

"Children love to get in it and drive it around," Dave said. "It now comes with a display board with photos and explanatory text, locally printed fliers and a locking cable so children can not ride it unsupervised."

Throughout the year, churches host the scooter at for one or two months, then move it to a new lo-



Personal Energy Transportation scooter available. Photo by Dave Noble

cation—to other churches, fairs and other venues.

In 1994, the losses of mobility in Zaire from land mines and polio inspired the invention of this low-cost, rugged, easily repaired vehicle for use where a wheelchair falls apart.

The Rev. Larry Hills and the Rev. Mel West started The PET Project with the help of Earl Miner, product designer.

"PET" stands for Personal Energy Transportation.

In 1995, field tests demonstrated the effectiveness of the PET design. Rodney Miner in Montana began building and shipping frames to Zaire where wooden beds were added and distribution took place.

By 2003, the wooden beds of the PET scooters were also built in the United States. More than 40 individuals and groups across the country build parts for the PET and ship them to Florida, Montana or Missouri for assembly.

Dave, who has coordinated its use since it first came, seeks assistants or a new coordinator.

For information, call 534-5558 or contact noblevideoman@toast.net or visit giftofmobility.org.



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Human rights leader says empowering women empowers men

Ireland's first woman president, Mary Robinson, was shocked to learn that 7,000 women seek refuge in the YWCA-Spokane domestic-violence shelter each year and that the average age of a homeless person in YWCA programs is eight.

Those facts, however, support her point that human rights must matter close to home.

Mary spoke at the recent YWCA Women of Achievement Luncheon in Spokane.

President of Ireland from 1990 to 1997, United Nations high commissioner for human rights from 1997 to 2002 and current chair of the Council of Women World Leaders, Mary asserts that human rights are relevant in the "small places" of life.

Visiting shelters in Ireland, she found women working through guilt for enduring violence at home and then for leaving it. She realized the government should provide funds so shelters for women could improve services.

Mary served a seven-year term as president and was succeeded by Mary McAleese, who has been elected for a second term.

"Small boys in Ireland now weep at their mothers' knees, asking why they can't grow up to be president of Ireland," she said.

Commenting on the YWCA's new commitment "to eliminate racism and empower women," she noted that the phrase "empowering women" now can include empowering men in the same way that the words "men" and "he" were once thought to encompass women.

As she meets with 31 members of the Council of Women World Leaders, which she helped found in 1996, she learns of their visions for their nations. Ten of 15 points they have promoted to improve life have been achieved.

"Everyone in the world should realize they have human rights and dignity, as recognized under the UN Human Rights Charter," she said, adding that government and corporate leaders should understand they have a role in promoting rights.

Because millions of women do not know they have rights, Mary suggests taking "human rights



Mary Robinson, a leader in Ireland, the United Nations and among other world women leaders, spoke at YWCA luncheon.

out of the box and making them simple, practical and relevant to trade, health and migration—the human face of globalization."

Working with several other women leaders on the Ethical Globalization Initiative, she said they have identified several challenges for women and girls:

- One issue of global health is maternal mortality. More than half of women who die in

childbirth or after have no access to safe water or to anyone who knows how to care for them.

- Education must be extended to girls so they will know they have rights and options.

- The HIV/AIDS pandemic has a severe impact on women, espe-

cially in Africa where 29 million people are HIV positive or have AIDS. Only 400,000 have access to treatment. About 60 percent of those with HIV/AIDS are girls and women.

"It's about empowerment. Women and girls trade sex for food, shelter or education. They are raped. They feel they have no protection from uncles or other men in their families.

"The ABC approach—abstinence, being faithful in marriage and condoms—does not work well in many parts of the world," Mary said.

- Abstinence is not possible because of inequality, intergenerational sex in families and need for food, shelter and education.

- Being faithful does not work because married women cannot say "no" to husbands infected with AIDS.

- Using condoms requires that a woman to be able to negotiate with her male partner to use them.

Mary helped convince the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS to work with a pharmaceutical company to develop a female condom and a microbicide gel, developed by a business woman to prevent HIV and sexually transmitted diseases.

Girls and women need to change both their cultural expectations and their behavior to negotiate for their rights so they can protect their lives, she said.

"The work of the YWCA has strong spiritual grounding and human rights grounding. It's not just about all being free with equal rights, but also that everyone owes duties to the community. Without that, we do not achieve our full identity," Mary said.

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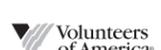
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Second Harvest continues to find food to meet needs of hungry people

Hunger persists in Spokane County.

More than 16,000 people stand in lines every month at 21 outlets distributing food provided through Second Harvest and area food banks.

Changing the manner of response are two factors, food producers are more efficient and volunteers are aging.

Despite these changes, Jason Clark, director of Second Harvest of the Inland Northwest, said the agency is finding ways to keep up with the needs. He is heartened by the generosity of people in the community.

Second Harvest provided more than 14.5 million pounds of food to the emergency network—including more than 4.5 million pounds of fresh produce. Community food drives added another 900,000 pounds of shelf-stable canned and boxed foods to help families have balanced, nutritious meals, he said.

Second Harvest deleted "food bank" from its name so people do not come to the distribution center thinking it is a food bank where they can receive assistance. The operation at 1234 E. Front in Spokane is a warehouse where trucks deliver food for sorting, storage or packaging, and then transport it to the outlets.

The 18th annual client survey, titled "Still in Line" includes the following statistics on hunger in the area:

- Of those seeking assistance, 42 percent are children and 11 percent are over the age of 55.
- More than three-fourths of those in line live on 30 percent of the Spokane County median income—\$1,229 a month—or less.
- More than half of the primary wage earners surveyed worked at some point in the past year—44 percent worked at least six months.
- About 29 percent of households had an adult currently working full time or part time, 20 percent were looking for work but not finding, and 44 percent of primary wage earners did not work during the last year.
- Nearly 60 percent of parents are skipping some meals so their children will have food.

To reach more children, Second Harvest has started the Backpack Project through two schools with a high number of children on free lunches.

The schools will give at-risk children a box of food that fits in their backpacks.

"We balance cost, nutrition and what children will eat," said Jason, showing a sample box that contained raisins, granola bars,



Adult volunteers help Boy Scouts with their recent food drive. Photo provided by Second Harvest

applesauce, juice, crackers and cheese, jello and other snacks. "We also have to keep in mind allergies."

To launch a trial run of the Backpack Project, Second Harvest raised \$14,000 to help 150 children through the end of 2004. The project went from concept to implementation in three months of working with school districts in Spokane and Pasco.

Second Harvest is developing new ways to find food products.

"Changes in the food industry make it harder to come up with food resources to feed hungry people," Jason explained. "The industry can donate food products only if farmers grow too much and if food manufacturers have excess inventory of safe, unmarketable products. To be competitive and productive, farmers and manufacturers have made improvements that reduce the availability of food from them."

One way is through Grocery Rescue, going to retail grocery chains three to five times a week to pick up damaged, safe products, in contrast with going to wholesalers less often to pick up returned products.

This approach offers an opportunity to recover unmarketable product, Jason said.

Second Harvest now works with 10 retail stores and expects to have 20 by mid-2005.

Three years ago, Second Harvest received 1.8 million pounds of salvaged food products, but now the amount is down to 600,000 pounds.

The cost of grocery rescue is nine cents a pound, compared with five to six cents a pound with salvaged food delivered, because of the added transportation costs.

"Increased efficiency and better manufacturer inventory control have reduced the amount of dry goods, cereal and canned goods. Grocery Rescue brings more op-

portunity for fresh produce, frozen and refrigerated foods, but the food perishes.

"The challenge is to store it and send it out quickly. We have cold storage on site and off site, but food bank outlets have less cold storage," Jason said. "Carrots, potatoes and apples have a good shelf life, but broccoli, radishes, pears and bagged salad mixes last only a few days."

To add to its own efficiency, Second Harvest has a new 60-foot power conveyer to sort food from drives and salvage, and to build food boxes, backpack boxes and brown bags for seniors. It enables volunteers to do in one hour what they previously did in one day, Jason said.

He believes communicating the need will open people's hearts, checkbooks and volunteer time.

"The challenge is the number of families living on the margins of the economy from Spokane to the Okanogan and in rural areas. The lines are not shorter. The gap between middle class and low income is widening," he said.

Volunteers help at both the distribution center in Spokane and the 270 neighborhood food banks and meal banks Second Harvest serves in the Inland Northwest.

Many volunteers are "part of the greatest generation" of people giving their time, he said, and are now in their 80s, slowing in their ability to assist.

"Who will take over running neighborhood food banks as they step down?" he wonders. "Baby boomers are working later into life. We hope that as they retire, they will be free in terms of time and income so they can step in to volunteer."

Volunteers come not only to give food out but also to keep shelves stocked, record intake and inventory, unload trucks. It takes 20 to 30 volunteers a week to run some food banks.

Churches and agencies con-

tinue to help with food drives for neighborhood outlets, but Second Harvest provides more than 70 percent of food given out.

A recent regional study attributes the increase in hunger to high unemployment in the Northwest, to the high cost of living and to mobility as people seek more affordable housing.

"We need to respect the lives of people who come through the system," Jason said.

He told of a 55-year-old homemaker whose husband had a good job and provided a comfortable living for the family. He died of a heart attack. She was in a food-bank line for the first time.

Many families on the edge of the economy and society are in

the lines. Some seniors have to choose between medicine and food. One took a reverse mortgage to pay for medicine and taxes, but was needed food.

Jason said it's not that those in lines did anything wrong. Most are just struggling to eke out an existence and pay for food.

"Most feel a cross between humility, embarrassment and anger as they stand in line," he said.

The need is self-declared. Each is asked to verify whether the family income is within the federal poverty guidelines. Agencies take social security numbers and cross reference names to find if they are going to more than one food bank.

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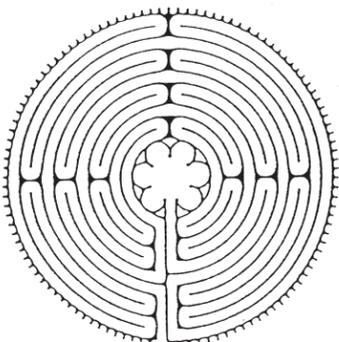
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Republic's food pantry rises to meet growing need in slow economy

The number of people coming once a week to pick up a one-day supply of food at the People's Pantry in Republic keeps rising.

A few weeks ago, about 65 individuals with 170 family members came. Thanksgiving week there were 89 people with 248 family members and the week before, there were 100 with about 300 family members.

"It's harder for people with the rising cost of gas, cuts in mental health programs and costs of drugs," said the Rev. Barbara Baum, pastor of First Presbyterian in Republic for eight years.

Barbara looks forward to an annual benefit event, "Holly Day Harmony." The evening of music, stories and Christmas carols will begin at 5 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 12, at the church as a benefit for the People's Pantry.

North Ferry County was once a gold mining, logging and ranching area. Now it is often the poorest county in the state with the lowest per capita income and unemployment ranging from 12 to 15 percent, she said.

There are Vietnam vets still suffering post-traumatic stress syndrome, others with mental illnesses and others who struggle to earn a living. Some ranchers are land rich but money poor.

While some people may be "stuck" there, Barbara said the people and scenery have stuck on her, a city slicker from Albuquerque in the desert Southwest.

"These people are as important as any people in God's eyes," she said. "My passion is hospitality."

So a few years ago when a man from Moses Lake called and said he had a car full of food to give people, she welcomed him and shared the food in what was the beginning of the People's Pantry. Barbara had worked with the previous food bank, which has closed.

The church session agreed to be the pantry's board and to house it in the church. Run by volunteers, it serves Ferry County people who need assistance with groceries.

The People's Pantry has filled those needs since May 2003, respecting the dignity of and caring for the people who come.

One week each month, more than 30 sacks of groceries are delivered to homebound people and seniors.

A satellite site in Curlew is open two mornings per month



The Rev. Barbara Baum

and serves about 35 people.

"A team of more than 35 volunteers in both locations works graciously and labors long to help with both visible and behind-the-scenes tasks," Barbara said.

The Republic Pantry alone distributes 1,000 to 1,200 pounds of food each week. It has received grant resources of food and funds from Northwest Harvest, Rural Resources and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

First Presbyterian Church is one of 17 churches in Republic, a community where 1,000 of 3,500 North Ferry County residents live. The southern part of Ferry County is the Colville Indian Reservation. About 200 live in Curlew.

"Our economy has been hit hard. There is genuine need to help feed our friends and neighbors," Barbara said. "Alone we could do little, but together, we can do much."

"Orders come in a steady stream and shelves seem to empty fast, but the volunteer staff are determined in faith that no one goes away hungry," she added.

"Community members and

merchants give generously from their garden harvest, cupboard over-stocks and funds, bringing donations to the churches. Several have had and are having food drives to help," she said.

Seven freezers in different three locations hold perishable

food until distribution day.

The People's Pantry in Republic is open from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., Thursdays, and the satellite pantry at Curlew Presbyterian Church is open from 10 to 11 a.m., second and fourth Thursdays. That location started in October 2003, when Barbara was also pastor there.

Recently, residents in the nursing home unit of Ferry County Memorial Hospital decided to have a food drive for their "Make A Difference Day." Their activities director delivered groceries to the pantry on a Monday morning, when the pantry was closed.

As the pantry coordinator prepared to leave, she noticed a man outside with a notebook. He came to the door as she left, said he was looking for an emergency number and asked if there was a way to get help for his family of five. They were having hard times and had no food for the next few days.

Quickly, she prepared an emergency food supply for him, using many of the groceries that had just been delivered by people who wanted to make a difference, Barbara said.

Grocery expenses average more than \$600 per month, less than \$1 per family member served.

The People's Pantry is a community and county effort, made possible by members of the church and community volunteers. Clients also volunteer.

Barbara sees it as an expression of "love in action."

All Barbara wanted to do in

1988 when her husband died of cancer under hospice care was to return the caring she and he had received. She had run a secretarial and accounting business in Albuquerque, and never thought of ministry.

She began volunteering for hospice and decided she wanted to be a hospice chaplain to give back. She went to San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo to prepare, but a mentoring pastor suggested she take an internship in a church and that drew her into pastoral ministry.

She came to Republic in 1996 right out of seminary. Recently, she has begun serving as a hospice chaplain in the county.

"I'm sure God chuckles," she said. "I didn't even grow up going to church regularly. I'm just here to serve the least, just as Jesus wandered the countryside and served all kinds of people. We have all kinds of people here. Each person is special."

The church of 46 members has about that many at worship services each week and its members are active in the church and community, she said.

"We welcome all people," Barbara said, adding that beyond the difficult economic picture, the community also has well-educated, well-traveled people—musicians, artists and theatre people.

She is energized by working with the volunteers, who range from school children to seniors.

For information, call 775-2257.

Human Rights Day celebration planned

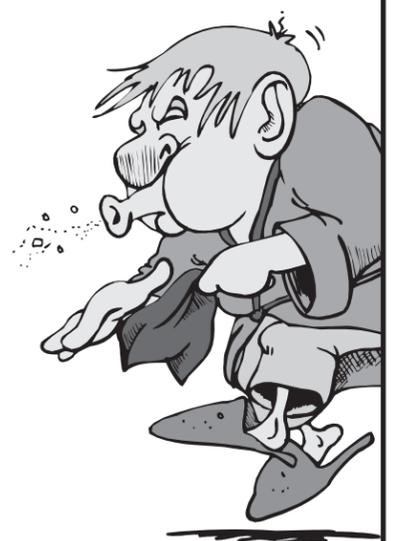
The Spokane Chapter of the United Nations Association features John Yoder, professor of politics and history at Whitworth College as its speaker for the 2004 Human Rights Day Commemoration.

He will speak on "The Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur," at 7 p.m., Monday, Dec. 13, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Fort George Wright Dr.

For information, call 624-3608.

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Sisters' lives balance classical music and global commitment

As Kresha and Katie Frankhauser seek to glorify God through music and action, their lives reflect their upbringing in a classical-music and social-justice-filled home.

From that home they ventured with their parents and church on missions to Mexico and Brazil, and on their own—to El Salvador, Belize and South Africa.

They marched in Martin Luther King Day marches, joined in Peace and Justice Action League events and read Sojourners magazine, which linked their faith to a social justice commitment.

With diligence, they practice their musical talents so “we can perform with excellence,” said Kresha.

As a teen, she played in the Valley Junior Orchestra. Now she performs in operas in Spokane, Coeur d’Alene and Mendocino, Calif., and makes trips to New York City for training and auditions. She also visits El Salvador once or twice a year, translating for trips of the Bellevue, Wash., Christian Reformed Church.

Katie, who was principal oboist of the Spokane Youth Symphony and coached high school music students, studied a semester in Belize and spent the last two summers introducing Americans to post-apartheid South Africa.

The family, who moved to Spokane from Minnesota in 1981, connects with people around the world and seeks to live simply and peacefully.

John and Mary, their parents,



Kresha Frankhauser talks with Salvadoran children while they paint, crayon and draw.

Photo provided by Kresha Frankhauser

helped welcome Anuak refugees from Ethiopia settle in Spokane 15 years ago through First Presbyterian Church in Spokane. They continue to be involved now in efforts to call attention to the December 2003 genocide of the Anuak people.

Kresha’s connection with El Salvador began during a 1996 semester in Central America as part of her major in cross-cultural studies and sociology at Whitworth College. She studied Spanish at Lewis and Clark High School, Spokane Falls Community College and Whitworth. After graduating in 1997, she worked with Second Harvest and then as

the youth and children’s director at a California church.

In 2000, she decided to pursue singing and studied two years under her father and his teacher, who lives in New York City. Her career has steadily grown since she began performing in 2002.

Now she travels to give performances much of the year, with Spokane as her home base. Her family gives family concerts, which tie classical, gospel and folk music with social justice.

“We perform serious classical music without taking ourselves seriously. We do zany things. We will tip Dad on his side, while he’s singing, so that he ends his aria parallel to the floor,” said Kresha.

She finds that a way to balance her music and social justice is to return regularly to El Salvador.

Relationships she has formed there have drawn her back five times with the Bellevue church, which first took a team to rebuild houses after the 2001 earthquake. She went for four days in 2002, a week in 2003 and two weeks in 2004. Two trips are planned during 2005.

“We have visited about 10 villages where we are welcomed into homes of sticks, corn husks and corrugated aluminum. They feed us meat-stuffed tamales. We wealthy Americans gratefully shared that special meal with them,” she said.

The Bellevue church first started a library for 20 villages. They added a scholarship program a year later to help children attend school through 12th grade. Nearly 80 students are currently supported.

Kresha described other projects: Some villages started chicken projects to sell eggs to send other

children to school. Work is in progress to open two halfway houses to serve women suffering domestic violence. Because the lack of jobs means families are unable to make ends meet, the church provides seed money for self-sustaining projects.

Beyond the economic help, Kresha finds the most important part of visits to be relationships.

The group spends time with

children—playing soccer, singing songs, reading books, painting pictures and climbing trees. With adults, they talk into the night, building friendships.

“Relationships keep connections alive and keep people alive,” she said.

“Social justice is not just being in solidarity with people, but also showing people they have worth and we care about them. There are large systems I can’t change, but I can be with them despite government corruption and tensions from conflicts.

“There’s little difference between visiting someone in El Salvador or in Spokane. If someone feels lonely or depressed, when someone comes and connects, both leave feeling better.

“Social justice is simply being with someone to listen, share stories and honor them as friends,” Kresha said.

“As North Americans, we can also use our power to improve their health, nutrition, education and citizenship,” she said. “We provide scholarships so people will become better citizens where they are, investing in their communities, becoming critical thinkers and finding new options for their communities.

Continued on next page



Kresha Frankhauser

Messiah teaches peace, justice

Kresha, who has sung in “The Messiah” in Spokane, wrote the following reflections relating the oratorio to social justice.

Handel’s Messiah has become a holiday favorite for many in the western world. It prophesies the birth of the Christ child in “For Unto Us a Child Is Born.” It brings the angel chorus that appears to the shepherds to life in “Glory to God!” It draws all ends of heaven and earth together, rejoicing over the Savior’s birth in “The Hallelujah Chorus.” It tells of Jesus’ victorious triumph over death in “Know That My Redeemer Liveth” and “O Death, Where Is Thy Sting?”

Although Handel’s Messiah is an appropriate piece for Advent and Christmas, it tells of more than just the birth and ultimate triumph of the Christ child.

Through voices of prophets and saints, it reminds listeners of Christ’s teaching of peace and justice in “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace,” and invites listeners to look to heaven for the eternal healing hope and worth found in Jesus Christ: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive!” It also promises that “we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet,” and proclaims: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.”

Handel saves the final musical exultation of Christ’s victory for the grand, expansive “Amen” chorus, reminding us that our call to justice on this earth is indeed holy, but that our ultimate hope and rest is found in God whose name “shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father.”

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Parents instill values of integrity, simplicity, compassion, justice

Continued from previous page

Kresha, who attended Cataldo Catholic School for one year of her schooling, identifies as both a Protestant and a Catholic. She attends St. Aloysius Catholic Church, as well as First Presbyterian.

"Many of my Protestant friends believe we need to 'convert' Catholics in El Salvador, and I say that is not only pointless but also ignorant and arrogant.

"Our beliefs and experiences may differ," she said, "but in conversations about those differences, our faith strengthens us, inviting us to think of things we have not had to deal with as North Americans and Salvadorans, Protestants and Catholics.

"Building trust and relationships leads El Salvadorans to dream," said Kresha, adding that it leads her to look at her life and opportunities in contrast to their poverty.

"I have education and opportunities that mean I can do what I put my mind to. Their structure does not allow them that luxury," she said.

Katie leaves in January

to spend the next two years working in Belize with Target Earth, a U.S. Christian environmental group, to set up a volunteer network among Belizean organizations.

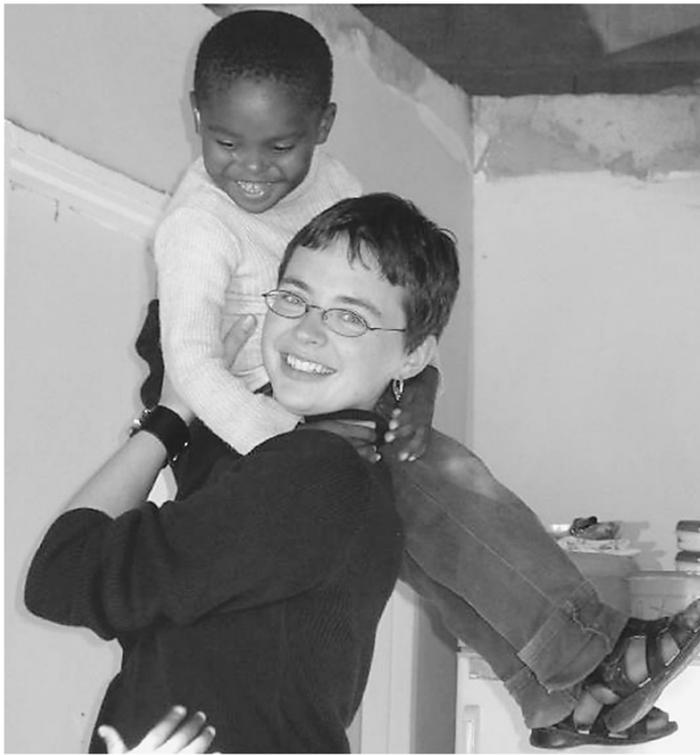
She will arrange opportunities for volunteers to come for short-term work programs, housed at Jaguar Creek, a facility off the grid—using solar energy, composting toilets and water from an onsite creek. It is a closed system except for food production, she said.

Jaguar Creek seeks to become a center connecting local environmental groups by providing an information hub as well as a common volunteer base.

Katie, who majored in environmental studies and minored in music, spent her last semester at Western Washington University in Belize, studying at Jaguar Creek which is owned and operated by Target Earth.

Katie plays oboe, so to keep up her skills in the mold-growing jungle humidity, she will take a plastic oboe.

Because her parents took her on mission trips, she said she grew up with world connections that have shaped her world view. So she has sought work through which



Katie Frankhauser plays with a child in South Africa.

Photo provided by Katie Frankhauser

she can pursue her theological and philosophical ideals.

"I find it meaningless to work only for a paycheck. I'm drawn more to work that engages my ideals regardless of salary attached," Katie said.

After graduating in 2003, she worked with the South Africa Community Fund, a sister organization to Target Earth that brings several teams of Americans each year to South Africa to study peace building and reconciliation.

While South Africa made a dramatic turn from apartheid, Katie said, life there is complex, not perfect.

Visitors study the history of South Africa, the transition to democracy and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. They participate in service-learning opportunities to immerse themselves with people and learn how they were affected by the transition.

"In the South Africans' recognition of the horror of apartheid lies hope. For a positive future, people have to acknowledge what happened. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has tried to address people's need to tell their truth in order to have healing and forgiveness. It has had varying degrees of success, depending on whom you ask," Katie said.

"Often people think resolving a conflict means ceasing violence. I believe it means seeking truth, having the power to speak and

having that voice recognized. That's necessary for moving forward, in contrast just to ceasing violence, moving on and forgetting the pain," she said. "To 'move on' says that what happened does not matter and that the people do not matter.

"People needed a space to bring their stories to light, to acknowledge as a country the violent reality of apartheid," she said, noting that there are varied opinions about the transition to democracy and the quality of life.

To "move on" and pretend to be friendly may mean the past continues to damage. Katie wishes the United States did more remembering. She admires Archbishop Desmond Tutu in the sensitive way he connects faith and politics, so Christian faith raises an imperative to be engaged in the world.

"Apartheid was both enacted and overturned largely by actions of Christians," Katie said. "The Dutch Reformed Church provided the theological affirmation for apartheid. Many mainline denominations were instrumental in overturning it."

She hopes to return to South Africa.

For information, call 448-0805.

Parents taught and showed values

Kresha and Katie's father commented that when they were little, Mary and he were "intentional about the values we taught them and tried to demonstrate for them." Those values included integrity, simplicity, compassion and justice.

"In those early days, I sometimes wondered if this high priority, time-consuming effort was worth it. Would it bear fruit in the future, or was it foolishness?"

"Now, it is both humbling and extremely gratifying to watch our children take what we have given them and even go beyond where we led them," John said. "They have taken the values we taught them and independently found new and creative ways to apply them in a complex world. It is an understatement to say I am proud of my daughters. It has been worth it."



Katie Frankhauser

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Aware that teen drug and alcohol abuse will be part of society for years, Daybreak Youth Services teaches youth refusal, emotional and regulatory skills. It also teaches peer social skills and helps repair relationships in families, so families can help teens prepare for adult life.

To respond to ongoing needs, Daybreak purchased a warehouse at 960 E. Third in Spokane and turned it into an outpatient treatment center.

Teens begin coming at 1 p.m. to meet three full-time counselors and a treatment director, who help them face their addictions in individual and group sessions.

Daybreak volunteers and interns from Eastern Washington University supplement staff. Some spend time with teens in a storeroom that is now a gym with basketball, volleyball and foosball. Other activities include a computer club, a public relations club and a group producing a show to air on Thin Air Radio, KYRS.

"We want it to be a community center as well as a treatment center," said Tim Smith, Daybreak director, who oversees this center plus a secure, 24-hour inpatient and crisis center at 628 S. Cowley, a Spokane Valley office at 11711 E. Sprague and a program started in 1999 in Vancouver, Wash. The other buildings are leased, so new property on a two-and-a-half-acre block offers space for future expansion.

The 1,000 clients served there come from Spokane County and Central and Eastern Washington and North Idaho.

Daybreak began as a nonprofit drug and alcohol center in 1978, initiated by Whitworth Presbyterian Church and starting in office space at Manito United Methodist Church. Tim came in 1987.

Now it serves 1,300 teens in Spokane and Vancouver, has 125 employees and provides \$4 million of services a year, contracting with state agencies in Washington and Idaho.

About 40 percent of Daybreak's clients have private health insurance. Others pay based on family income. Funds from United Way and individual donations provide some scholarships for about 10 percent of treatment.

"There has been no increase or decrease in need," said Tim, noting that about five percent of youth from 12 to 18 need drug or alcohol treatment. "Five percent would

be about 2,000 youth in the greater Spokane area alone, so there is need for more services."

The residential center also accepts run-away teens and teens in family crises. In counseling to resolve immediate crises, staff find about 25 percent also need drug and alcohol abuse treatment.

"Some dynamics are constant: Younger teens experiment with alcohol and marijuana, while older teens become involved with a wider range of drugs, including methamphetamine, hallucinogens and narcotics. Parents play a major role in addressing issues and supporting recovery, so we actively seek their involvement," he said.

Daybreak's programs include:

1) A pilot project for behavioral therapy with the University of Washington emphasizes recovery, teaching teens with chaotic lives to manage their emotions and examine their chemical use.

2) Alcohol and drug evaluations, resources and case management for the Tamarack psychiatric center for teens and the Sacred Heart youth psychiatric unit encourage them to seek treatment.

3) Student assistance, education and counseling are provided at East Valley middle and high schools.

4) Inpatient care in Vancouver, Wash., began at the invitation of Clark County Community Services. Daybreak provides 15 beds for boys, serving 150 teens a year from Southwest Washington, the Puget Sound and Columbia Gorge areas.

As a regional organization, Daybreak Youth Services is the new name of Daybreak of Spokane. It has new bylaws with board members in both cities.

"Unfortunately, drug and alcohol issues will continue to be part of our culture. We are not close to meeting needs," Tim said. "Alcohol is the first drug of choice and marijuana, the second. The array of other drugs has changed. About 10 percent of those we see use methamphetamines and narcotics."

Daybreak warns of dangers of drugs:

- Alcohol does immediate damage, often causing accidental death or injury from driving or falls. Liver damage also begins early.

- Marijuana has long-term effects on the ability to think and reason, after two to three years of use.



Tim Smith, director of Daybreak, stands by one of many posters, reminding teens that drugs and alcohol deprive them of power to control their choices and lives.

- Meth does immediate damage, and there is high risk of overdose.

- Narcotics use brings risk of transmission of hepatitis or HIV/AIDS through sharing of needles.

"Teens abusing alcohol and drugs often put themselves at risk through sexual behavior, criminal behavior and running away," Tim said. "Drug use by teens with mental health and behavioral disorders makes their conditions worse."

He likens teens to "canaries in the coal mines"—on the front lines, mirroring the problems society faces.

"We may remember feeling unsupported, failing a test or not making a sports team, as many teens do," he said, "so it is important for our staff of state-certified chemical dependency specialists to find a balance, bonding with teens without becoming overwhelmed."

For many staff, the work is a mission more than a job. Income alone does

not sustain motivation for the overwhelming work. Many have been with Daybreak five to 10 years, making it a career.

Spirituality—such as in 12-step programs—is a key component for staff and people in recovery, said Tim, who was with Spokane Community Mental Health eight years before heading Daybreak.

"Working with parents, we can become emotionally involved with their struggles at home," he said. "The teens are demanding. We can't turn our backs on them."

"Our staff has a passion to help young people navigate through their troubles. We balance how to do it each day—as individuals and an institution—so we are not jaded," Tim said.

"Counselors must be engaged emotionally but stay on an even keel, or they are ineffective. They can become part of the problem if they take on characteristics that feed the teen's troubles. Angry teens

Continued on next page

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Teens realize their peers suffer from teasing and bullying

Recognizing the ongoing need to engage teens with each other on issues of diversity that impact their lives and schools, the Inter-faith Council continues to offer Camp PEACE.

About 60 youth from nine schools participated in two sessions of Camp PEACE Oct. 28 to 30 and Nov. 11 to 13 at N-Sid-Sen on Lake Coeur d'Alene.

"Teams of teens from schools are willing to talk openly about the need to recognize that all students in their schools, whatever their backgrounds, suffer from some form of teasing or bullying," said Kateri Caron, director of the council.

She is amazed at how they reach out to each other and how they want everyone in the school

to have a better life, not just one group.

"They realize that what happens to one happens to all," she said.

After Camp PEACE, teams return to their schools with a commitment to share insights from their experience to help their peers understand what it takes to have peaceful interpersonal relationships that can create peace in the world.

"We recognize that our differences are gifts. We do not seek just tolerance, but for people to embrace their own and each other's differences. As we enjoy and embrace our differences, our lives are truly enriched," Kateri said.

Camp PEACE provides a safe space for the teens to share and



Team of students from North Central High School in Spokane discuss plans for their school.

learn about such differences as race, ethnicity, economic status, gender, religion, sexual orientation and physical abilities.

Schools participating in the October and November sessions

were Ferris, Lewis and Clark, Rogers, Post Falls, Colfax, West Valley and North Central high schools, Gonzaga Preparatory School and the District #81 Equity Team.

Peggy Federici of North Idaho College led the first session and shared leadership of the second with Sunny Ybarra, diversity director at Gonzaga Prep.

For information, call 329-1410.

Staff can embody God's compassion, invite use of values

Continued from previous page may try to trigger anger in others to reinforce that expectation," he said. "It's hard for many to have a trusting relationship with another person, especially an adult."

Tim believes it's important for staff, volunteers, the board and clients to "be mindful" and to take time to meditate, to discern—through self awareness and awareness of concerns in the community—why they are involved.

"Daybreak's founders came from a spiritual quest, so we try to continue that in a non-sectarian way. Without being overtly religious, we can tie recovery to spiritual wellbeing," said Tim, who earned a bachelor's degree in psychology at Whitworth College in 1972 and a master's in psychology from Eastern Washington University.

"My work is an extension of my Christian faith values and commitment. Our work as professionals is not completed in itself, but by God's grace and love," Tim said.

"We can embody God's compassion and be conduits that extend God's grace to teens and their families. We can invite them to live by their values without imposing ours. It's a delicate balance," he said.

"For more overt assistance from faith, we encourage—but do not require—clients to maintain an active relationship with their churches and faith groups. Teens at the inpatient center can attend church. Congregations send volunteers and provide services to the teens, honoring their family's values."

Tim, who is active in Shalom United Church of Christ Mennonite Fellowship, said his church's

commitment to social justice combines compassion and empowering community.

Daybreak focuses on helping people in crisis more than dealing with societal causes. It serves as an instrument of healing more than an instrument of social change.

"Because teens are forming their beliefs, we take care not to manipulate them or impose our beliefs. Teens in recovery will do anything to gain approval of those helping them. They need freedom to develop their own values, to see their family values and to recognize how their behavior affects their lives and the lives of others," Tim said.

Part of healing and changing is for teens to take responsibility for their actions.

"We promote healthiness, which is more than an attitude or belief. We help teens see the dangers and consequences of their decision to drink or abuse drugs," he said.

"Unfortunately, chemicals influence the brain and foster irresponsibility. Teens are still learning what responsibility is."

Daybreak will help a teen repeatedly until he or she is 19. The first time teens seek help, they may not be ready. They may bounce back and forth. Tim

added that parents also may not be ready. Some teens are in and out of treatment two to three times before they come back are ready to change.

One girl, in and out of Daybreak three times during her adolescence, is in college, has a job and is rearing her children. It took many times for her to hear what she needed to do.

"Our goal is to reduce or eliminate the chemical use, to have the young people attend school, have job training, hold a job and develop healthy relationships with their parents, guardians or caregivers," Tim said.

About 60 percent of the teens achieve their goals in two years, comparable to the rate in eight other programs in the state.

Other teen alcohol and drug treatment programs in Spokane are at Excelsior Youth Center and the Native American Healing Lodge.

For 450,000 teens in Washington, there are 150 treatment beds. Most facilities have waiting lists.

"In Spokane with four outpatient and three inpatient treatment facilities, we just scratch the surface of the need," Tim said.

An optimist, Tim makes peace with the limitations of the program and the difficulties of

working with teens.

While doing his part with the resources Daybreak has, Tim has learned to surrender outcomes of "the daunting work" to God, in order to avoid becoming overwhelmed by trying to deal with a never-ending problem.

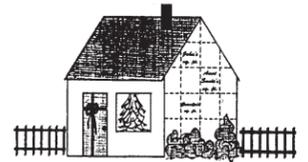
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Colfax pastors' ecumenical ties lead to assistance of people in need

By Jeannette Solimine

Pastors in 12 churches in and around Colfax may disagree on theology, but they come together to pray for one another, discuss faith issues in the community, promote ecumenical events, build faith awareness and provide assistance to people in need.

Members of the Colfax Ministerial Association agree that people in need of assistance should receive it, and they work together to provide as much assistance as is possible in their effort to follow the message and ministry of Christ.

"We work together toward unity of the greater body of believers," said the Rev. Richard May, pastor of First Baptist Church for more than five years.

He is also the president of the ministerial association for this community of 2,900 in the heart of the Palouse, where the North and South Forks of the Palouse River meet.

Rich believes that "in the kingdom of heaven, there won't be denominations and divisions. There won't be separate areas for all of us. God intends for us to work together in a unity of spirit."

The ministerial association gathers clergy from churches ranging in size from 30 to 300 members and ranging in theological diversity from Catholic to Bible, from mainline Protestant to Latter-Day Saints in Colfax, the Whitman County seat, and from surrounding rural communities. Clergy serving in non-pastoral roles also attend.

The Travelers Fund they have is one way they combine resources to serve the larger community. The fund assists people who are passing through Colfax and find themselves in dire need of food, gas or shelter. Churches are still the first place people go when



Emergency assistance program transforms dollars given in Thanksgiving offering to food, transportation and access to shelter. Photo by Jeannette Solimine

they arrive in a community in need of financial assistance.

None of the Colfax churches has resources to meet the needs of people who are passing through or in need of shelters. So pastors decided they could both help more people and screen out grifters—drifters who make their living as con-artists—if they pooled their resources and asked the sheriff's chaplain to administer them.

If someone comes to a church, the pastor sends the person to the sheriff's office to see the chaplain. The person in need may be able to walk there, but often the pastor will give the person a ride.

The Rev. Ron McMurray, who is both a reserve deputy sheriff and the sheriff's chaplain, is responsible for the distribution of the funds. He is also the current treasurer for the ministerial association.

His life and work experiences have taught him how to deal with people in crises, emergency situations, accidents and life-changing experiences.

Ron also checks on outstanding warrants on people requesting assistance and then provides vouchers for the grocery store, gas

station or local motel, depending on the needs.

Working together, Colfax's communities of faith believe they can help more people in a more significant way.

"It is a wonderful time for all believers to come together and see, not the theological differences, but how we share in the work of Christ. It gets us out of looking at our individual ministries to see how God is working through all of the churches in Colfax," Rich said.

However, the association continues to find that there is more need than there are funds.

Most of the churches make regular contributions to the Travelers Fund, but the main fund raiser is the offering at the Community Thanksgiving Service held every year on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Churches rotate hosting the evening service, which is usually attended by 100 to 150 people.

In addition to hymn singing, a prayer and the offering, each church provides either a musical presentation or a testimonial to express gratitude to God.

Last year, Ron offered a testi-

mony on how his life had been changed when he was nearly killed on the job earlier that year.

He was standing behind his patrol car on the side of Highway 195, when a woman who was being pursued by authorities rammed into his car. His car hit and threw him, breaking bones and causing extensive injuries.

Among other things, he spoke of how he learned about the power of prayer by being the recipient of prayers from people around the world who didn't know him, and his gratitude for that prayer reminded many of how much there is to be grateful about.

All the offering, which is

usually \$400 to \$500, goes to the Travelers Fund. This year's service at Colfax Baptist Church raised \$501.

Because the amount does not fill the needs, churches take other offerings during the year to supplement fund.

The churches consider the distribution of these gifts an expression of the generosity of the community's desire to aid strangers in their midst as part of their faith commitment.

"The Travelers Fund existed before I came to Colfax," Rich said, "and will probably continue to exist long after I am gone."

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PAX Christi offers study on 'Joy and Hope'

During Advent, PAX Christi is presenting a three-part series of discussions on "Joy and Hope," the 1965 Catholic pastoral constitution on the church in the modern world, known in Latin as "Gaudium et Spes."

The discussions on the fifth chapter of the Vatican II document, "The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations," will be held at 2 p.m., Sundays, in the chapel at Bea House, 1107 N. Astor.

Scott Cooper of the Catholic Charities parish social services office will lead the Dec. 5 session on outlawing war and establishing an international community.

The Dec. 12 session will focus on the presence of the church in an international community.

Sister Anne Bosserman, SNJM, led the first session on Nov. 21 on "Peace and War."

The following quotes are being considered:

- "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man...It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation."

- "The unique hazard of modern warfare is: it provides those who possess modern scientific weapons with a kind of occasion for perpetrating just such abominations...and can catapult men into the most atrocious decisions."

- "Therefore, we say it again: the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which ensnares the poor to an intolerable degree. It is much to be feared that if this race persists, it will eventually spawn all the lethal ruin whose path it is now making ready."

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Change of address challenges congregation to new outreach

A predominantly African-American congregation's move from 312 E. Third to 806 W. Indiana represents more than a change of address.

It expresses Holy Temple Church of God in Christ's vision to reach out to the community and to model reconciliation.

To Gladys Howard, chair of the board of trustees and member since 1959, the church is committed to welcoming everyone.

"The Bible says to love our neighbors. Who are our neighbors? Everyone is, not one color or ethnic group. We have one God, so we should learn to get along with everybody," Gladys said. "We hope our church will be an example of friendliness across differences."

Archie Henderson, who has been a member for the last 30 months, cited Scripture, saying that in Christ there is neither male nor female, so there should be no gender bias; there is neither Jew nor Greek, so there should be no racism, and there is no distinction between slaves and free people, so there should be no classism.

"We are about breaking barriers," he asserted.

He sees God moving in Spokane to spread reconciliation among diverse people and to gather people to break through barriers that otherwise would divide.

The congregation moved on June 20 to the former Second Church of Christ, Scientist, which now meets at its reading room at 3915 N. Monroe. They sold their former building to the Orchard Christian Fellowship.

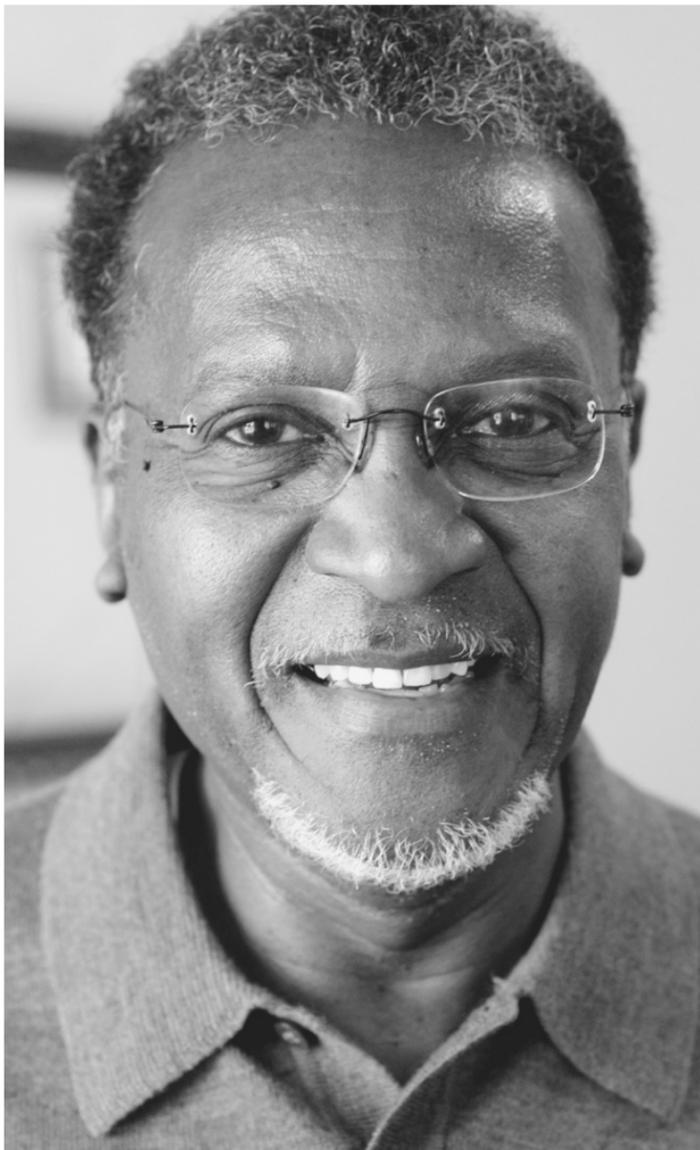
The move has unleashed energy and a desire to fill the new space, which has seating for up to 600 people in the sanctuary and space downstairs for classes.

Holy Temple Church, founded in 1948, met ten years in a store front on Sherman where the freeway now is. Then they moved into the Third Ave. location.

"We have been looking to move for some time," said the Rev. Ezra Kinlow, the pastor, "seeking a facility to accommodate a complete ministry with space for children and family ministry. We have 150 members and followers and continue to grow."

Ten years ago, Holy Temple bought land but realized a new building would be too expensive, he said. So they began looking for an existing structure.

While the new location has space for family nights, choir practices, teen ministry and worship services Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, as well as Sunday mornings and evenings, it lacks one thing the former build-



The Rev. Ezra Kinlow

ing had: a kitchen.

"We like to cook and eat, so we'll put in a kitchen," Gladys said.

Most members commuted to the former church from Fairchild and all around Spokane. The new building is closer for many.

Ezra, who is also district superintendent for Church of God in Christ churches in Yakima, Pasco and Walla Walla, knows that when people improve their situation, they may become more reserved. Many in the church, like Ezra, come from farm country in Mississippi, Alabama or Arkansas and moved to cities to advance.

"We can be proud of the facility, but we do not want to lose our common touch. We need to stay down-to-earth," Ezra said.

"Coming to a building of this size calls for new commitments. We are not affluent, and there will be new maintenance costs."

Ezra hopes to use the building to reach out, by inviting religious speakers and Gospel singers from around the country and the world to expose the congregation and the city to ideas and music.

"Gospel music is my preference from my cultural background. I want to expose others to it," he

said. "The goal is to reach more people in the city with the Gospel message. While some people may not come to hear a preacher, many will come to hear Gospel music, and the message will touch them. I hope to bring a greater portion of Spokane to unite in covenant relationship with Jesus Christ."

Ezra entered lay ministry in Tacoma, working with youth. Holy Temple Church of God in Christ is his first congregation.

The son of a minister, he left Arkansas in the 1950s after high school. He went to Los Angeles, which he found "too much for a country boy." So he moved to Tacoma, where he lived 17 years.

Ezra had no desire to follow his father but it seemed natural when he became serious about Christ. Married in 1963, he entered ministry in 1972.

When he came to Spokane 23 years ago, the church had 15 members.

He attributes the church's Pentecostal faith and his connections with Mission Spokane for the church's vision beyond itself.

"The Church of God in Christ believes that biblical principles can be lived day to day in modern society," Ezra said. "It may be a

struggle, but we believe in the full operation of gifts of the Spirit in today's church, giving strength to the ministry Jesus did on earth.

"Jesus ministered to the whole body. He fed the hungry, gave sight to the blind, restored hearing to the deaf and healed the lame," he said. "Acts 2 says that, as the Spirit moved on the disciples, they were able to do these things, too. We are able to do what Jesus did and more, as John 14:12 says."

Ezra has seen it happen in others and experienced it himself.

IBM transferred him to Spokane at the same time the church called him as pastor. After two years, he hurt his lower back and went on medical retirement.

"I couldn't rest at night. I went to doctor after doctor. In a 1995 prayer meeting, God lifted the back pain that limited me, deepening my faith," he said. "I give my testimony to influence others. It took the pain from what I did and released me to be more active."

Through Mission Spokane, Ezra began meeting with people from other churches in the city in the early 1990s. He felt the Spirit move him to a ministry of reconciliation and to be more evangelical in terms of both the evangelical gospel and the social gospel to help people in the community have better lives.

In 1996, as an outgrowth of

Promisekeepers, Ezra met with many other pastors to plan Reconciliation Sunday in the Spokane Arena. Out of it, pastors established weekly prayer meetings at Union Gospel Mission.

"It is great to come together in Christian community," he said.

As president of Mission Spokane, which trains "servant leaders" to transform Spokane, Ezra said he has a visible role in the religious community that enhances his church's ministry.

They organized some joint worship services and pulpit exchanges that introduced church members to people in different churches that use different types of worship.

"Cross-denominational acceptance shows how broad Jesus is. Jesus is not dependent on one culture or denomination," he said.

"We all preach Jesus Christ, but have different emphases to fit our flavors. If we are left to our own thinking, we operate only in our own circles.

"Our church, which is a racially mixed congregation, likes lively, emotional worship," he said, aware that style does not appeal to some Christians. "I appreciate that the Gospel sets no boundaries, so we work on reconciliation through Mission Spokane and within our congregation."

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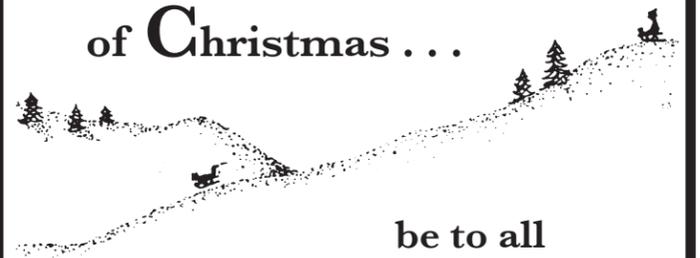
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What Christians hold in common can outweigh their differences

With the role of faith and moral values in the national election creating a perception of opposing Christian camps in the United States, the National Council of Churches and Church World Services General Assembly meeting Nov. 8 to 11 in St. Louis called for a process to engage the spectrum of Christians in dialogues about values.

"What Christians hold in common outweighs their differences. All Christians have something to learn from those with whom they disagree," delegates said, so "we deplore pitting Christians against each other."

The assembly also affirmed that Chris-

tian values include eliminating poverty, preserving the environment and promoting peace. It suggested that churches study "Christian Principles in an Election Year," which the NCC developed before the election to open conversation.

In an "open letter" to U.S. Christians, the assembly bemoaned "the painful spectacle of Christians demonizing one another" and dividing Christians and the country into red and blue based on their votes.

"We are a mosaic of God's grace and presence. We need to give up caricatures of each other's positions and avoid treating others as if they were less than faithful.

While we each have deeply held values that reflect Christian moral and ethical perspectives, we serve one God."

This statement reminds us how easy it is to become caught up in the conflicts and divisions of the world, and how precarious it is to turn faith values over to political purposes that create only half solutions.

The faith community can find new ways to work together and hold one another accountable to the breadth of faith and to be enriched and challenged by our differences. We need to attend each other's meetings and raise voices.

For example, what if those working

with an interfaith effort to end domestic violence met with those in the evangelical community working to promote healthier marriages, in order to create common action by congregations on an issue that has impact on marriages.

Faith groups linking with politicians too often work for a "winnable" policy, rather than one that embraces the height, depth and breadth of concerns that Christians sitting at a table together might discern.

Whether coming from the right, left or center, people of faith need to be cautious when they advocate for political action.

Mary Stamp - Editor

United Nations Human Rights Charter expresses moral values

United Nations Universal Human Rights Day on Dec. 10 celebrates the signing of the UN Human Rights Charter. It was first adopted by most nations of the world in July 1948 in San Francisco, and then signed on Dec. 10, 1948 in New York at the UN General Assembly.

This great document, holistic in content and spirit reflects God's vision for peace in God's world, in the midst of the perpetually war-torn, irrational, global environment.

Unfortunately, U.S. foreign policy has chosen to ignore the UN Human Rights Charter, the Geneva Convention for treatment of prisoners and wounded, and the International Criminal Court.

Many agencies in the UN organization are considered "suspect," and 20th century human rights are seen as being archaic. There is a somewhat "Yankee hubris" present in the 21st century foreign policy sphere.

Where human rights, suffering, multiple

deaths and mistreatment of prisoners, innocent detainees and civilians are a factor, our super-power approach is wrong.

Since when has human suffering become reduced to a shrug of the shoulder—irrelevant in this "new age" of combating terrorism at any cost? Since when have innocent people in Iraq and Afghanistan become expendable when they "get in the way?"

The unbelievably high death and injured totals are usually are not published. We cannot allow our country to reject the principles and moral values that our God-inspired founders envisioned.

On a warm day in July 1948, peace-loving delegates from all parts of the globe gathered in San Francisco to jointly write the International Declaration of Human Rights Charter. They were guided by the pen of Eleanor Roosevelt.

This captivated convention outlined the basic rights of all of humankind, and the

God-given intrinsic worth of each person on earth. They included the right of access to food, medicine, adequate health care, shelter from the elements, due process in legal matters, and protection against military, social and economic exploitation.

Sanctions and embargoes were to be used to punish offenders. In the ensuing years many of these measures were effective.

The UN is noted for being low profile for many of the successes.

I was in San Francisco at the end of the war. As the convention terminated, delegates were packing bags but the spirit of the tremendous event lingered. Excitement and hope for a better future prevailed everywhere.

I will never forget it—the flags, the sound of many strange tongues all speaking at once on the streets and in the cafes. It was the promise of a new day and expressed the moral values that the delegates cherished.

Today, with the current policy regarding

human rights in vogue and the war news from Iraq regarding Abu Ghraib and other prison venues, the principles of the charter are in trouble.

The faith community, peacekeeping organizations and The Fig Tree along with most of the mainline Protestant denominations, Roman Catholic and Jewish faiths, are supportive in principle for maintaining a continued emphasis on human rights in foreign relations deliberation and action.

In the churches, we need to stand up and be counted. The 21st century peacemakers and all human rights advocates need to keep the flame burning that the visionary Eleanor Roosevelt lighted.

It is a vital part of the wisdom of the ages.

God blesses the peacemakers: "They shall be called the children of God," Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount.

Jo Hendricks
Contributing editor

Newsletter Excerpts

Sounding Board

Reflections

The following are excerpts and letters:

Our work here at FaithTrust

Institute goes on as before the election. The United States is divided in its world view and political vision, but that would be true regardless of who won. The suggestion that "moral values" tipped the balance only increases the urgency of our work. As people of faith, we cannot let "moral values" be used as code for simply anti-abortion or anti-gay/lesbian rights efforts.

We must step up our efforts to advocate for moral values based in a thoughtful and critical view of today's society in which sexual and domestic violence are moral issues along with poverty, the war, and the state of health care and education for our people.

We believe that ending sexual and domestic violence requires nothing less than a transformation of society and of our religious traditions, and we believe that our faith communities call us to this task and support us as we confront the dominant values of a society which continues to accept violence against the most vulnerable as just the way things are.

Who said this would be easy? "We shall not give up the fight, we have only started . . ." are the words of the South African freedom song. Look how long it took to end apartheid. The work of transformation is slow and incremental, but it is the work we are called to and God does not abandon us along the way.

Marie Fortune – senior analyst
Faith Trust Institute in Seattle

"Go in peace. Serve the Lord," we say at the conclusion of most worship services. They are sometimes only words that show the service is over.

As people following Christ, we are first invited to leave worship in peace. We have confessed our sin and received forgiveness; have sung, prayed and listened to scripture; have received the Word and been fed; have been filled with God's presence

in community with one another and with saints throughout history and throughout the world. We have joined in a special, fundamental way with God. Throughout worship, we were offered glimpses and the promise of what the kingdom of God is and will be. We are invited to go in peace.

We are not, however, just to leave worship and forget about what we have received. As baptized followers of Jesus, we are called to serve God. How do we do this? We remember that always, in all we do, we are first, foremost and always children of God. At work, at home, at school, with our children, with our spouses, with our grandchildren, with our friends, in the car, at the drive-in, with our parents, in the grocery store, paying bills, paying taxes, contributing to charities, voting, sleeping, watching TV, reading—always in all that we do—we are to serve the Lord.

We are called to gather in community to worship God. Then we are called to leave the building and to be the church in the world. We are called to gather to strengthen one another and then we are sent out to tell others about the wonderful news of Jesus. As Christians, we live by gathering together and then being sent out. It is a marvelous, hopeful way of living.

The Rev. Shelley Bryan Wee
Zion Lutheran - Spokane

If we had a state of the congregation address—like the President's State of the Union address each year—what would we say about our church? Fortunately, as a faith community we have the ability to measure our progress as a congregation against a standard, God's standard. God has three primary standards:

- The first standard is "to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves." (Luke 10:27)

- The second is to go to all the world making disciples of all nations and baptizing. (Matt. 28:19)

- Third, we are told over and over to care

for the widow, the orphan and the alien. (Matt. 25:42) Hospitality is a key ingredient of caring for the poor and the stranger.

How does a congregation measure up to God's three standards?

God promises that our lives will be better if we put God first. Let us challenge ourselves to find new ways to accomplish God's work.

The Rev. George Abrams
Cheney United Methodist

I crave the light. I love spring and summer, but fall and winter are hard because it gets dark so early.

Sometimes it seems as if our world is in darkness. Our world's societies suffer wars, hunger and oppression. We fight and fight with our fists tightly closed.

The first Sunday in Advent, we begin to light those candles that remind us again of what the Apostle John wrote: "The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5)

Jesus is the Light of the world that chases away the darkness of our lives, and out of the world as well. When Jesus gives me his body and blood in Holy Communion, he gives me a dose of light, so I can help spread the light just as the light spreads in the sanctuary as we light our candles on Christmas eve.

Worship teaches me this in the words of liturgy, in hymns and in symbols and gestures that surround me in worship, and in lighting Advent candles week by week.

Jesus is indeed the light that shines in the darkness of our lives and of our world.

The Rev. Betty Krafft
St. Peter Lutheran

We don't bring children into the world to remain infants. We set them on a path to full maturity. We mentor, we model, we nurture, we pray for them, and we relinquish them.

We stop holding onto them as though if we let them go, we will die. In fact, we insist they become accountable for their

lives as mature adults.

What does maturity look like? The Apostle Paul gives us a "clue" in urging that we aspire "to be dependent on no one," which is to behave properly toward others. (1 Thes. 4:11-12)

Why is our society so broken, addicted, exploitative of relations with others, compulsive and helpless? Is it not because we are imitating patterns of dysfunction rather than patterns of holiness? God's Word says, "we must grow up in every way into Christ!" (Eph. 4:15) We must grow up in every way into Christ, not living in futility as others do, but living into Christ.

The Rev. Gary Starkey - Westpark
United Methodist - Yakima

Letters to the editor

Your October issue published an article on a Mayday for Marriage rally in Spokane. I thought you should be made aware of the right-wing partisan political nature of these rallies.

An article on the website of Americans United for Separation of Church and State—www.au.org—reports on a similar rally in Washington, D.C. The organizer of that rally is a far-right preacher from a church in Redmond, Wash. These rallies had a firmly partisan agenda favoring right-wing Republicans.

Marian Hennings - Spokane

I'm spending time at the Women's Drop In Center and joined the knitting/crocheting group. I'm also knitting prayer shawls. I saw the lovely article that Deidre Jacobson wrote for the November Fig Tree and I called the woman who has started the movement here in the Spokane Valley. I first learned about the prayer shawl ministry at Holden Village this summer.

I finished my first shawl in September, a labor of love for my mother. I am working on two at the present, one for my daughter-in-love and the other for a neighbor with Parkinson disease.

Katie Krauss - Spokane

Fig Tree Show seeks volunteer production crew

The first video show of "The Fig Tree" was produced Feb. 4, 2004 at Comcast facilities for cablecast over channel 14. The original purpose was to promote *The Fig Tree* newspaper. Today after eight productions, "The Fig Tree Show" is another medium The Fig Tree uses to inspire, comfort and educate.

The newspaper, website and video show provide more depth and different viewpoints.

The video production project could use volunteers from supporters.

"The Fig Tree Show" has been produced as energy and time allow. Two half-hour shows are created at each production session. Editor Mary Stamp and writer Deidre Jacobson have interviewed guests on shows. David Noble has produced each show, arranging for crew members from the list of volunteers at Comcast and reserving the time at the studio, 1717 E. Buckeye.

While "The Fig Tree Show" has not achieved "series" status yet, when it does, it will have both production and cablecast times reserved. So it might be produced, for example, on the third Saturday morning of each month and be showed on cable 14 at 6 p.m., two Mondays.

For series status, a dedicated crew of volunteers is necessary. Volunteers serve in the following capacities: producer, host, director, technical director, audio, graphics, camera, floor director and production assistant.

Production runs more smoothly when the crew members are the same for each production.

Community Productions is a service of Comcast, which provides an opportunity for area residents to express themselves through cable television.

Comcast offers training to volunteers. Classes cover training in how to use studio equipment, portable camera, lighting and editing.

Comcast provides time and studio facilities for volunteer production teams from nonprofit organizations to create programming for the Community Production channel, cable 14, which reaches more than 90,000 subscribers.

Orientations, a pre-requisite for use of the services and facilities, are held at 6 p.m., first Tuesdays at the studio.

For information, call 535-1813.

Course generates awareness of indigenous cultures

A 15-week course on "Perspectives on World Christian Movement" will be offered Jan. 17 to May 9 at Fourth Memorial Church, 2000 N. Standard in Spokane.

The course, which will be held at 6:30 p.m., Mondays, seeks to help people align God's purposes with their lives so they can contribute to Christian education and global discipleship for short- or long-term cross-cultural work in the United States or abroad.

The course, which was developed 25 years ago, explores biblical, historical, cultural and strategic perspectives of doing mission under the leadership of instructors from Moody Northwest, the Leadership Institute, Pioneers, Wycliffe, TENT India, New Tribes Mission, His Place Church, Presbyterian Frontier Missions, OMF International,

Free Indeed Ministries, Caleb Projects, International Students, Partners International and Carey Theological College.

The program was developed by Ralph Winter, a Presbyterian missionary who returned with concerns that mission work was disjointed, with different focuses, overlapping responses and unmet needs. So he established a clearinghouse to identify where there were mission activities and where there were needs among "unreached people."

In the 1960s, there were considered to be about 8,000 ethnic groups in the world, said the Rev. Bill Ward, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Reardan and one of the organizers.

"Now we have more sophisticated understanding that there are 24,000 people groups. We know the Gospel will not spread

among them unless people in mission know the language, culture and geography. For example, in Guatemala, there are 16 Mayan linguistic groups.

"For each people group, there needs to be a different strategy to understand them so we can sow seeds of mission. The church is best spread in indigenous areas by

the group's own people, building an indigenous church—in contrast to colonial mission that led people to adopt the colonial culture with the church," Bill said, noting that there is now "more need for mission in the United States than abroad."

For information, call 924-5930 or visit spokaneperspectives.org.

Calendar of Events

- To Dec 12** • Tree of Sharing, p. 3
- Dec 2-5** • Christmas Creche Exhibit: Nativities from around the World," Spokane Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1620 E. 29th, 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
- Dec 3-4** • Gonzaga University Choir Christmas Candlelight concert, St. Aloysius Church, 330 E. Boone - call 323-6733
- Dec 3-5** • Retreat with Sufi Pir ShabdaKahn, Dances of Universal Peace, Camp N-Sid-Sen on Lake Coeur d'Alene - call 675-4554
- Dec 5** • Messiah Sing-Along, p. 1
- Inland District United Methodist Church Welcomes Bishop Edward Paup, Central United Methodist, 518 E. Third, 4 p.m.
- Dec 5, 12** • PAX Christi presentations on "Joy and Hope," p. 12
- Dec 7** • School of the Americas Watch NW, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 35 W. Main, 6 p.m.
- Hanukkah begins at sunset
- Dec 10** • Jello Biafra, An Evening of Rant and Spokane Word, a benefit for Thin Air Radio and the Lands Council, The Met, 8 p.m.
- Dec 10,11** • Whitworth College's Christmas Festival Concerts, First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 8 p.m., Friday; 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., Saturday - call 777-3280
- Dec 12** • Wellness Day Retreat, St. Joseph Family Center, p. 4 - call 483-6495
- Dec 11** • New Horizons Orchestra Concert, Holy Names Music Center, 3910 W. Custer, 4 p.m.
- Dec 13** • Celebration of United Nations Human Rights Day, p. 7
- Spokane Citizens for a Living Wage, 35 W. Main, 5 p.m.
- Dec 14** • New Horizons Choir Concert, St. Mark's Lutheran, 24th & Grand, 7 p.m.
- Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane Steering Committee, 35 W. Main, 6 p.m.
- Dec 14,15** • Singing Nuns Concert, The Met, 2 & 7 p.m.
- Dec 16** • VOICES, Salem Lutheran, 1428 W. Broadway, 5:30 p.m.
- Dec 18** • Campbell House tours, MAC, 2316 W First Ave., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., p. 10
- Jan 2** • Labyrinth Walk at Cathedral of St. John, p. 6
- Dec 31** • First Night annual celebration of the arts in downtown Spokane - call 624-1848.-
- Jan 5** • Fig Tree distribution, St. Mark Lutheran, 24th & Grand, 9 a.m.
- Jan 6** • Fig Tree Board, 1323 S. Perry St., 1 p.m.
- Mondays** • PEACH Safe Food Orientation - call 455-2552
- Tuesdays** • Sign Vigils, Mission & Hamilton, 5 p.m. - call 838-7870
- Tues-Sats** • Habitat for Humanity work days - call 534-2552
- Fridays** • Peace Vigil at Army Recruiting Office, Colville - call 675-4554
- 1st Sats** • Interdenominational Ministerial Fellowship Union - call 624-0522
- 2nd Sats** • Sacred Harp Shape-Note Singers, 2929 Waterford Dr., 7 p.m.
- Stevens County Fellowship of Reconciliation, First Congregational, Colville, 6:30 p.m. - call 738-4962

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Low-income people need self-advocacy skills, witnesses

Along with joining others in public policy advocacy to protect services for low-income people, Cathy McGinty, director of VOICES, said that low-income people also need to build personal advocacy skills.

"Companies make money on people who accept unfair charges and practices," she said.

Monica Peabody of the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition (WROC) in Seattle and Olympia also encourages developing self-advocacy skills for meetings with caseworkers at the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

WROC plans to start a welfare witness program, which will train volunteers from churches and the community to accompany people on welfare when they meet with their caseworkers. Their role is to listen, take notes and share the stories in their communities, like Witness for Peace has done in Central America.

"The presence of a witness changes the demeanor of a caseworker," Monica said. "The client should be treated that way anyway."

Cathy shared two stories of personal advocacy at the recent Congress on TANF—Temporary Assistance to Needy Families—at Salem Lutheran Church in Spokane.

One of her stories was about car insurance rates and another about cell phone charges. Her self-advocacy saved her money.

When she was not working, she did not have insurance on her old car. A law passed requiring insurance. It put people who did not have insurance in a high-premium class for two years. At the end of that period, she expected to have

the market rate, but was put in a high rate because it was an old car.

Cathy wrote the insurance commissioner to say the policy discriminated against low-income people. She never had an accident or a ticket. The insurance commissioner agreed.

"I could have accepted the policy and paid too much. By standing up for myself, I paid the market rate," Cathy said.

After she began using a new cell phone, she tried for months to find the number of minutes used out of the plan of 500 minutes for \$30. There was no response to her repeated inquiries, and no bill. Then, after two-and-a-half months, she received a bill for \$474. It was impossible to pay. So she wrote the Better Business Bureau in Colorado, where the cell phone company's headquarters was, and the BBB in

Washington, requesting that the bill be adjusted to the monthly fee and roaming. The bill was reduced to \$93 for the three months she had the phone.

"We can do personal advocacy in many ways, advocating about problems related to medical care, child custody, nursing-home stays, long distance charges, bank account charges or welfare payments," she said.

Cathy advised people to be prepared, keep records and have allies to prevent losing their temper and creating "a barrier you can't get beyond" or even facing a felony assault charge for yelling.

She told people to call VOICES—Voices for Opportunities, Income, child Care, Education and Support—for volunteer allies to accompany them as witnesses when they feel they are treated unfairly.

"The key to personal advocacy is never

to give up. If you become frustrated, walk away so you can gather your faculties, resolve and more information. Then regroup, find allies and go back again," she said.

Monica said WROC teaches people to advocate for themselves with the DSHS.

"Advocacy does not end with gaining social services. We have to do self advocacy all the time if we experience oppression—especially women, the poor, people of color and domestic violence victims," she said. "It's hard to find strength to speak out when you feel the power imbalance."

"People with power may seem mean spirited or wonderful. We need to work to equalize the imbalance of power," Monica said. "When we seek food stamps or other help, we may feel someone else is in control of our access to food, health care or transportation."

For people to regain control, she said, they need to know the laws.

Sometimes caseworkers are under pressure to lower their number of cases because funding is limited. The law may say that a person should have \$3,000 in services in a year, but all the funds in that budget category may not be available.

"That is the fault of the policy makers," she said. "If policy makers want to reduce the caseloads, they need to assure that people working earn a living wage."

The Welfare Rights Organization Coalition started in 1984 when a few welfare mothers started talking and learning about their rights.

Monica became a single parent in 1990.

"I wanted to be at home when my child was young," she said. "I am thankful that

WorkFirst had not started. As a single parent, I had no one to help. If I had had to work, find child care and raise my child, it would have been even harder.

"Mother work is work," she asserted. "It is important work."

Monica went to college, has a career, owns a house and has been off welfare for 10 years.

"It's hard to see the system changes that no longer allow parents to rear their children and limits access to college. It's hard to see caseworkers and people on welfare struggle as the rules continually change," she said.

Both VOICES and WROC also help empower low-income people by encouraging them to be on policymaking committees so that their perspectives are considered as policies are formed.

VOICES has representatives on the Economic Services Committee and the DSHS Domestic Violence Committee.

"The presence of voices of low-income people with policymakers may look good, but sometimes those people do not know how the meetings work or how to be heard. Sometimes they feel intimidated," she continued. "It's important to be present in more than name only—to make suggestions and be heard."

"Low-income people need to know they have a voice," Monica said. "They also need to use it and find allies to improve 'customer service' by caseworkers."

"Keep trying. Never give up," she advised, adding her hope that the WROC witness program will help people continue self-advocacy.

For information on VOICES, call 532-6121.

For information on WROC, call (206) 324-3063 or (360) 352-9716 or visit wroc.org.

The key is never to give up.

Church World Service offers alternative gift-giving website

A baby giraffe mascot named Imani, popularized in a Church World Service curriculum, "Building a Better World," has been animated to introduce the relief and development agency's new website, "Build a Village" at buildavillage.org.

Lynn Magnuson, regional director of CWS said the website started Nov. 15. It offers alternative holiday and year-round gift-giving opportunities and introduces new ways to explain mission to children of all ages through stories, games and activities.

"It's fun for us grown-ups as well," she said. "Children of all ages can learn more about the world and about the work CWS supports so people have safe water to drink, seeds to grow their own food and educational materials."

Supplementing the website, books and T-shirts are available. Gift donations support health education for HIV/AIDS orphans and oral rehydration therapy.

Lynn also reported on Church World Service's response to suffering in the Darfur region of western Sudan, where the Sudanese government and its southern rebel opponents recently signed a memorandum of understanding, promising to come to a peace agreement by the end of December.

She said women and children make up a disproportionate number of those affected by civil conflict and the displacement of 1.5 million people. They have been physically abused and suffer a level of trauma that will not be addressed by a peace agreement.

The international religious community seeks additional support for humanitarian efforts through the Sudan Council of Churches to provide shelter, medicines, water and sanitation, agricultural inputs and tools.

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