



Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

Mary Stamp, editor
editor@pncuccnews.org

325 N. 125th St. - Seattle WA 98133 • (206) 725-8383 or (800) 954-8777 or (509) 535-1813

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PNC churches show solidarity with Muslims

PNC Facebook group and listserv spread word so churches respond quickly

Banners and church signs have popped up at about 20 PNC churches so far since Ramadan began June 5. Organizing ordering signs and sharing of ideas was facilitated through Facebook and the PNC's Yahoo listserv.

Steve Clagett, chair of the Justice and Witness Ministries Committee for the PNC, helped coordinate efforts, suggesting where to order signs and offering several designs. He helped order signs and delivered them to Admiral, All Pilgrims, Kirkland, Richmond Beach, United Churches of Renton, Broadview, Normandy Park, North Shore, Wayside and United Churches of Olympia.

Alki UCC's banner included blessings from Kol HaNeshamah synagogue that shares its building, said Diane Dar-
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Veradale UCC sign includes the Arabic, "As-salaam alaykum" for "Peace be with you," and the word "peace" in 12 languages. "This is what our church should be doing," said a member.

Photo courtesy of Gen Heywood

Speakers repeat idea of 'right words at right time'

Introducing herself by preaching at the Friday worship at the 2016 Annual Meeting April 29 in Wenatchee, Courtney Stange-Tregear, the PNC's new minister for church vitality, introduced themes from Proverbs that "The right words at the right time are like golden apples in a silver setting."

Speakers repeated those words throughout the gathering.

"We have all said the wrong words at the wrong time, but the right words at the right time are rich and valuable," she said, pointing out that Scriptures are full of the right words at the right times.

"God saw creation and said it was good."

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God and believe in me (Je-

Annual Meeting 2016 decisions, speakers and reports

sus)."

Beyond the rightness of words is the value of covenant relationships and holy connections.

A year ago after Freddy Gray, a 25-year-old African American who was arrested for allegedly possessing an illegal switchblade and died in a wild ride in a Baltimore police fan, Courtney attended rallies, vigils and prayer services, hoping for justice.

She worked with Baltimore United, a faith based group.

"The city was in chaos. As it settled down, there was much talk and many sound bites. We needed the right words," she said. "The group organized a listening campaign that reached 500 people. We listened about the need for jobs to put Baltimore back to work.

"People were in fear, looking for corporate leaders to rebuild Baltimore and put the city back to work," she said.

They asked President Ronald Daniels of John Hopkins University to "be our Nehemiah" to help heal and rebuild Baltimore. The room was silent as he responded, "I can be one of the Nehemiahs."

"The right words at the right time

Church leadership is important: clergy and lay

Conference Comments



By The Rev.
Mike Denton
Conference
Minister

**The problem
is
that
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made
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Church leadership is important. Whether clergy or lay people, it's important that congregations have people who are willing to help a church organize and implement its mission and vision. It's important that there are people willing to take on responsibilities and be accountable to a congregation. It's important that there are people committed to seeing "the big picture" of what their congregation might be or what it needs to do. Church leadership is important.

The problem is that we've also made leadership into a false god. I've heard it—and I bet you've heard it too—when someone diagnoses a problem in a church with the phrase, "It all comes down to leadership." This is not true. It's never that simple. Some of "the problem" might be people in leadership, but I've never seen a situation where it "all" comes down to leadership—rarely even most of it.

More often than not, when a leader becomes an identified problem, it's because the community missed some steps. The community expected that the clergy person would help them find their mission and vision once they arrived instead of taking the time first to discern their own mission and vision and find someone who could help them live into it. Other times, the church invited someone into their community to do a task that, although clear, was unrealistic based on the human and financial capital they had available—growing the church, bringing in more young families, becoming relevant to their community.

Sometimes the congregation asks their leaders to change everything without recognizing what they might need to change in themselves. Too often the critique of the leader is actually a misplaced critique of the church. Frequently, the congregation is not taking responsibility to take the energy they're putting into complaining into transforming their community.

Even when it's clear that the behavior of a leader is problematic, that problem rarely emerges in a vacuum. We tend to put up with a problematic behavior or a behavior that's not compatible with our values when it gets the results we want. We might not have systems within our congregation to share ongoing, healthy, supportive evaluation of local church leadership. We might have more of a consumer culture in our congregation that sees members as the consumers and leaders and "the help."

All of these things can help create and enable negative behaviors.

Church leadership is important. However, it doesn't save churches as much as it reflects something back to churches about who they are and who they might be.

Church leadership is important as a part of a faith community. However, leadership is not more important, more powerful or more connected to God than the community as a whole. I know you've read before but take a few moments to read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31. Go ahead, I'll wait.

I recently had the experience of spending time with a chiropractor after some excruciating back pain seemingly came out of nowhere. I couldn't figure out what I had done. In the first visit, they poked, prodded and took a whole bunch of x-rays. When I met with my doctor she was able to point out several problem areas in my back and let me know that it looked to her as though the current pain in my back had been coming for years. Sure, I'd had a few pains here and there but I'd ignored them when they seemed to go away. The story she showed me on the x-ray was of a body that had been adjusting to this problem or that problem for years and had finally run out of ways to adjust.

Now, I needed to work on healing as well as changing the ways I stood, held things and listened to my body. The sharp pain was only the presenting issue. What had gotten me to this point had been going on for years.

Sometimes, at the point there's a problem, we treat leaders like an invading virus or bacteria that needs to be removed in order for the body to be healthy. Rarely is that analogy is apt. Leaders are a part of the body, the whole body. The whole body is called to love God and God's people. The whole body is called to health. The whole body has to be open to being lead by the Spirit's calling. The whole body has to keep Sabbath. All parts of the body have to do their part for the sake of the whole body.

All parts of the body determine where and when adjustments in the body need to be made, which means that the whole body helps determine the actions of any one part of the body.

Together, dear Siblings in Christ, we are the Body of Christ. We are beloved. We are strong. We are resurrected. We are whole.

If we choose to be.

Transitions announced

Tara Barber's installation is June 11 as specialized minister of support for clergy and congregations at Alki UCC in West Seattle, preceded by a Clergy and Lay Leadership Training on Saturday, June 11 at Kirkland Congregational UCC with workshops and guest speaker, the Rev. Elizabeth Dilley from the national UCC setting.

Maria "Dancing Heart" Hoaglund died after being hit by a car in Olympia in April. She had just returned to the area after spending a few years in Arizona. She was born in Tokyo, Japan, to missionaries. She studied in Kobe, at Yale University and Chicago Theological Seminary (MDiv). Maria served First Congregational Church in Everett (interim), Lummi Island Congregational, Japanese Congregational, and Columbia-Lakewood Community Church (interim). She was a transition coach, a spiritual counselor and bereavement specialist. She is also an author of two books: *The Last Adventure of Life* and *The Most Important Day of Your Life: Are You Ready*.

Fire damages Vancouver UCC
On Wednesday, May 25, fire broke out at Vancouver First Congregational UCC in the Central Pacific Conference. A neighbor awoke about 3 a.m., saw a ball of fire coming from the steeple and called 911. The arson fire did about \$2 million in damage.

They had done an extensive remodel in recent years of their unique sweeping steeple and cross. Response by the insurance agent led to swift efforts at cleanup.

The next day the Liberty Bible Church of the Nazarene, also in Vancouver, was set on fire and Bethesda Slavic Church in Brush Prairie, Wash., were also burned. All three were considered arsons.

"The evening of the fire 200 members, neighbors, ecumenical partners and conference members joined in a prayer vigil outside the church," said Walter John Boris, CP Conference minister.

The 228-member congregation, which was established in 1891, is meeting several Sundays on their labyrinth near the church for worship, then will meet at Congregation Kol Ami, which once met at the church.

Asbestos contamination will complicate rebuilding, Walter John said.

Jennifer Brownell, who was previously associate pastor at Magnolia UCC in Seattle, is interim pastor there.

For information call 971-340-6316 or email rev.brownell@gmail.com.

Muslim Assn. of Puget Sound holds interfaith iftar June 15

The Muslim Association of Puget Sound (MAPS) invites family, friends and neighbors to the 10th annual MAPS Ramadan Interfaith Iftar on at 6 p.m., Wednesday, June 15, at MAPS, 17550 NE 67th Ct., Redmond. Dinner is served at 9 p.m.

Speakers are Sr. Maha el-Geneidi, founder and CEO of Islamic Network Group that counteracts bias against American Muslims, and Sr. Aneela Afzali, an attorney and graduate of Harvard Law School, and a member of the MAPS Interfaith and Outreach Committee, a builder of interfaith alliances.

MAPS leaders say The Quran teaches that in times of difficulty and hostility, the choices of reacting in kind or responding with kindness are not equal. It calls people to master their inner selves by responding to fear and hostility with kindness and to work closely with many willing and eager partners in the community to spread the message of peace, respect and valuing one another. *To register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/MAPSIftar2016>.*

PAAM meets in Federal Way

The Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries of the UCC will hold its 22nd Biennial Convocation for the first time in 42 years in the Pacific Northwest. PAAM participants from Hawaii, California, Nevada, the East Coast and Midwest will gather July 7 to 10 at Calvary Lutheran Church, 2415 S. 320th St., in Federal Way.

UCC General Minister and President John Dorhauer and former General Secretary of the Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa Emau Petaia will be featured speakers, addressing the theme, "PAAM: Together in Ministry." Pacific Northwest PAAM moderator Nathalie Fuentes said there will be sacred conversations on race and racial justice issues particularly related with Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans.

PAAM was organized in 1974 on national, regional and local levels in the UCC to address racism, advocate for human rights, and strengthen clergy and lay leadership. *For information, call 206-313-0483 or email nathalie@q.com.*

Center offers classes June 8,16

The Center for Progressive Renewal offers an opportunity for congregational vitality, called ReVision, a year-long journey beginning with focused worship, intentional small groups and spiritual practices to move congregations into discernment.

A Convergence Summit brings people together to determine what God is saying to the church about what it can do in its community. Proposal teams take dreams, ideas and initiatives for the congregation for feedback before implementation.

A second webinar will be at 4 p.m. Thursday, June 16. *To register, visit, <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5718661505811913474>*

Our Whole Lives training set for Nov. 11-13 at Pilgrim Firs

An Our Whole Lives and Sexuality and Our Faith (OWL) training will be held Friday to Sunday, Nov. 11 to 13, at Pilgrim Firs. Participants can choose elementary, secondary or young adult/adult. An early bird rate will be given before Sept. 1. For information, email amy@diligentjoy.com or wade@pilgrim-firs.org.

OWL is a sexuality education curriculum. Training prepares facilitators to succeed in their role and enables their faith development team members to understand their own and others' sexuality within the context of United Church of Christ and Unitarian Universalist values.

Approved facilitators will be prepared to implement the curriculum in their congregation or settings.

For information, call Amy Johnson, UCC Our Whole Lives coordinator at 216-736-3718.

St. Paul holds recycling event

To raise funds to help St. Paul UCC in Ballard recover from a recent fire, there will be a recycling event for personal electronics, computers, appliances and stereo equipment. Items are to be brought between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Saturday, July 9, to Magnolia United Church of Christ, 3555 W. McGraw St. Seattle, said Becky Withington. *For information, call 206-290-9884.*

Wayside UCC is ONA for 25 years

On Pentecost, Wayside UCC in Federal Way celebrated its 25th year as an ONA congregation, the 63rd ONA church nationwide, said Dennis Hollinger-Lant, pastor. *For information, call 253-838-0915 or email dennishl@waysideucc.org.*

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Churches express love for Muslim neighbors

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ling, Alki's pastor.

Veradale UCC bought a four-by-eight-foot banner that uses Arabic words and the word "peace" in 12 languages.

Bellingham, Eastgate, Tolt and Westminster are among those using their signboards.

Magnolia ordered from their regular banner provider.

Plymouth in Seattle, where Muslims have held Friday prayers for 15 years, put up a two-by-10-foot banner, said Janice Randall, communications director.

Mercer Island, Fauntleroy and Renton have joined in, too.

The idea grew out of conversations Conference Minister Mike Denton had with other members of the conference, denominational leaders and leadership in the Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR).

They proposed supporting Muslim neighbors during Ramadan from June 5 to July 5, particularly given that these are times of increased anti-Muslim rhetoric, Mike said.

"We came up with a simple plan we hope can begin to build bridges where bridges might not exist and get to know each other better," he said.

Every day during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Muslims spend daylight hours fasting, abstaining from food, drink and physical needs, as a way to purify the soul, refocus on God and practice self-discipline.

Churches were invited to participate in several ways.

1) They can hang a banner, change their church sign or add a sign to say: "We stand in solidarity with our Muslim neighbors" or "Love your (Muslim) neighbor as yourself."

2) At sunset each fast day during Ramadan, there is a meal to break the fast called iftar, said Mike. Most of these happen in people's homes but there are frequently iftars

held at mosques. Community members are welcome at these gatherings and, so Mike suggested that at least once during Ramadan, pastors and church members call in advance and ask to attend an iftar and bring greetings from their churches, the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ, and our General Minister and President, the Rev. John Dorhauer.

3) Churches can also offer an event to support the Muslim community during Ramadan, such as hosting an iftar or educational event such as a forum, or a film festival.

Through the PNC Yahoo listserv and Facebook, pastors and congregations began sharing their ideas and plans.

When Mike told John Dorhauer about the efforts to support Muslim neighbors during Ramadan, John expressed pride in seeing the expression of love for Muslim peoples.

"They speak deeply to me about how the love of God binds us all together," he said. "The public narrative about how Christians and Muslims relate to one another is inconsistent with our core beliefs about what the gospel calls us to. Many of our Muslim neighbors live in constant threat of retribution from Christians who have been taught and told to live in fear of their Muslim neighbor."

John said that UCC churches have a "duty to change that narrative. Love will reign. We will do all we can to ensure that such love governs our speech and actions.

Mike started a Facebook group so people can share pictures and stories.

The group, "Honoring Sacred Time: An Interfaith Ramadan Campaign," is at <https://www.facebook.com/events/178964712505584/>.

For information, call 206-795-9475 or email clagett@



Plymouth Seattle displays banner. Photo courtesy of Plymouth UCC



Eastgate UCC in Bellevue uses its signboard. Photo courtesy of Eastgate UCC



Broadview members put up banner. Photo courtesy of Broadview UCC



Kirkland UCC puts up banner. Photo courtesy of Kirkland UCC



Photos were compiled by Steve Clagett, chair of the Justice Witness Ministries Committee of the Conference.

UCC banner taken to an Interfaith Economic Justice Coalition rally against islamophobia during a Seatac City Council retreat June 9. Briana Frenchmore and Steve Clagett of the PNC's Justice Witness Ministries Committee held two UCC banners silently at the back of the room.



All Pilgrims Christian Church, Seattle, left.
Westminster Congregational UCC, Spokane, center
Alki Congregational UCC, Seattle, right



Northshore UCC in Woodinville

Fauntleroy UCC in West Seattle

Tolt Congregational UCC in Carnation



Everett UCC, left

Wayside UCC in Federal Way, right



Photos courtesy of each congregation



Prospect Congregational UCC in Seattle



United Christian Church in Renton



Normandy Park UCC in Seattle



Richmond Beach Congregational UCC in Shoeline



University Congregational UCC in Seattle uses both its readerboard and has a banner on the side of its building. Carol Ingram noted that as it was being hung, two women who appeared to be Asian stopped and admired the banner, took a picture with one by it and thanked those hanging the sign.



Admiral UCC, left, United Churches of Olympia, right, and Mercer Island UCC, not pictured, is using their readerboard.



UCC asked to join berry boycott to support farm workers

Briana Frenchmore, who is on the PNC's Justice Witness Ministries Committee, has been spreading the word about the Farm Worker Ministry Northwest's support for Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ) and a boycott of berries from Sakuma Brothers and Driscoll's.

She led a workshop at the PNC's 2016 Annual Meeting, urging people of faith to stand in solidarity with FUJ and farm workers throughout the region.

"We want to mobilize the faith community to show up and support farm workers whenever and wherever they need us," Briana said.

Farm workers in Burlington, Wash., have asked consumers to honor the boycott until they negotiate a legally binding contract for better pay, better working conditions and workplace protections with their employers, Sakuma Brothers.

She encouraged people to write to store managers and participate in informational pickets to let more consumers know about the berry boycott.

Andrew Eckels of the boycott coordination team told workshop participants via Skype that Familias Unidas por la Justicia is the only farm worker union that is recognized by the Washington State Labor Council AFL-CIO.

FUJ organized in 2013 after a farm worker, Federico Lopez, was fired for asking for a raise. As a response, FUJ created a list of written demands that included a raise in the piece rate because many were earning less than the minimum wage.

They also sought humane living conditions and sick leave. In addition, they asked to be treated with dignity and respect by supervisors, who frequently harassed and intimidated workers.

In 2014, when Sakuma Bros. would still not negotiate a contract with FUJ, the farm workers decided that it



Brianna Frenchmore and Gabi Rios discuss the Driscoll Berry Boycott called by Familias Unidas por la Justicia during 2016 Annual Meeting workshop.

was time to escalate their efforts by calling for a boycott of Driscoll's, the company that distributes Sakuma's berries, said Andrew.

The boycott coordination committee, as directed by FUJ, has decided to focus on urging Costco, PCC Natural Markets and Whole Foods to stop selling Driscoll's berries and Haagen Daaz strawberry ice cream.

These retailers were chosen because they value environmental production, and fair and ethical labor standards, he said.

In March, FUJ set out on a two-month West Coast tour to widen their network of support. By the end of the tour, the number of boycott committees grew from eight in the Pacific Northwest to 41 committees nationwide, Briana reported.

The Driscoll's berry boycott has reached an international level as FUJ and berry pickers for Driscoll's in San Quintin, Mexico, have united their efforts to negotiate contracts for better working conditions in both locations.

Many of the farm workers with FUJ are from the Triqui and Mixtec indigenous groups from Oaxaca, Mexico. They have been displaced because of poor economic conditions. Many have family working in

San Quintin or have worked there at some point themselves.

The National Farm Workers Ministry encourages congregations to pass endorsements and resolutions, said Briana.

At the workshop, Gabriela (Gabi) Rios, the president of Farm Worker Ministry Northwest, also spoke.

Gabi described how farm worker issues are also gender and minimum wage issues.

"Women face discrimination in the fields and do not have recourse to act to protect themselves," she said.

A University of California at Santa Cruz study reported that 60 percent of 150 workers are sexually harassed—from verbal abuse to rape, she said.

"There is no grievance process, and the supervisors and crew leaders are not held accountable," Gabi said. "So women sometimes dress like men to avoid being harassed. The most vulnerable are undocumented workers with no legal status.

"Women are also vulnerable to infertility and their babies to birth defects because of working in the fields sprayed with pesticides," she added.

"Farm workers do not have guaranteed safety training and because there are no oversight

protections for farm workers, they report that they often do not get lunch or bathroom breaks," she said.

Briana reminded that the PNC Annual Meeting in 2014 voted to support the Living Wage Resolution.

The resolution recalls that Christian disciples in Acts shared all they had and that there was a Hebrew tradition of forgiving debt and freeing slaves every seven years, and every 50 years in the year of jubilee the land was equitably re-distributed.

"We do not own the land. It belongs to the Creator and is to be shared among creation," she said.

Briana added that the principle of a living wage is to ensure that all who work full time have access to safe affordable housing, healthful food, health care, education, transportation, the right to organize, and time for rest and renewal.

Gabi shared that Farm Worker Ministries Northwest was founded in 1985, originally as the Oregon Farm Worker Ministry.

Many of the founders were responding to the call of leaders such as Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta who asked faith communities to support farm workers in their struggle for just working conditions, dignity and respect.

Farm Worker Ministry has offered to come and speak to congregations who are interested in learning more about how to support farm workers in the Pacific Northwest region.

Familias Unidas por la Justicia invites faith communities to come and march with them at 3:30 p.m., Monday, July 11, in Burlington, as they mark four years of struggle.

For information, email fwm-nw@yahoo.com or boycottcoordination@qwestoffice.net, or visit boycottsakumaberries.com.

Delegation learn about peace issues in Korea

The mission of seeking peace, justice and reunification of the divided Korean Peninsula has been a centerpiece priority of the Presbyterian Church in South Korea for a decade.

A small exchange delegation participating in the 2016 Peace Pilgrimage to Korea and representing the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ was hosted by the Global Ministries Committee of the Seoul East Presbytery of the PROK (Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea) May 16 to 23.

Delegation leader Ed Evans of Sequim said the trip was the most significant and important of three exchange visits he has made to the Korean Peninsula since 2010. The hosts introduced delegates to some of the deeply held, emotional issues related to peace and the struggle for reunification of North and South Korea. Emotions around those issues run deep and are complicated.

PNC delegates also included the Rev. Jim Spraker and the Rev. Darrell Goodwin-Moultry, both of Seattle, and Tom Clarke, Port Angeles.

Border school focus is peace

The visit began with a journey to the Border Peace School academy near the village of Cheorwon, 56 miles north of Seoul, inside the demilitarized zone. The DMZ is a two-and-a-half-mile wide zone stretching 155 miles across the middle of the Korean Peninsula at the 38th parallel dividing North Korea from South Korea. Cheorwon is the site of one of the bloodiest battles of the Korean War for possession of a hill-top known as White Horse. It changed hands 24 times during attacks and counterattacks.

“Just outside the military checkpoint at Cheorwon we encountered a Buddhist monk and his mother who had come from Japan,” said Ed. “They



Japanese Buddhist monks praying for peace at the ruins of the Labor Party Building, Cheorwon, Korea.

Photos courtesy of Ed Evans



Standing are Peace School director Jiseok Jung, left, Rev. Eun-seung Kim, Rev. Darrell Goodwin-Moultry, Rev. Jim Spraker. Seated are Tom Clarke, Rev. Ed Evans and Rev. Joongtek Lee.

were praying for peace and repentance for the role Japan played for much of the suffering caused by Japan in Korea.

“The two stood alone facing the ruins of the North Korean House of Labor Party chanting, beating drums and praying for peace. An information billboard at the site says the building was used to strengthen communist politics and control people before the Korean War,” he said.

For five years, North Korea controlled the area, committing numerous attacks, brutalizing, torturing and killing people. The billboard says the building was so notorious that people used to say that “anyone who goes in there never comes out intact.”

The two have been praying and chanting for peace at the Labor Party building ruins twice a day every day for almost three years.

“There, we met with Dr. Jiseok Jung, director of the Border

Peace School inside the DMZ. The school is an academy that operates a program in partnership with the United Methodist Church adjacent to a South Korean Army outpost overlooking North Korea,” Ed said.

The academy offers a three-year graduate diploma in peace studies with faculty coming from as far as Northern Ireland, Costa Rica and the United Nations Peace College in America. The school meets in a government owned building. Privately owned buildings are prohibited in that zone.

Comfort women demonstrate

Next, they visited the War and Women’s Human Rights Museum in Seoul dedicated to the memory of the so-called “comfort women,” thousands of women across Asia who were captured, conscripted and enslaved by the Japanese military during World War II to serve as sex slaves for Japanese soldiers. In South Korea, 42 “comfort women” are still alive

today, all in their early 90s.

The museum is operated by the Korean Council for the Women drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan – known simply as “The Korean Council.” The council reports that only 238 sex slave “comfort women” have come forward to be recognized and registered in South Korea. However, it is estimated more than 200,000 women from both North and South Korea were enslaved in the military sex trafficking network, which stretched across the Pacific war theater. Most were too ashamed to come forward and identify themselves.

While the Japanese called them comfort women, the reality is that the women were sex slaves, forcefully and systematically raped by Japanese soldiers in an elaborate network of “comfort stations.”

Every Wednesday in Seoul, the Korean Council has staged a protest demonstration across the street from the Japanese Embassy demanding an apology for Japan’s sanctioning of sexual slavery by its military.

“There were hundreds of people participating in the demonstration on May 18, when we visited,” Ed said. “An International Conference of all Asian nations, which had sex slaves imprisoned by the Japanese government was scheduled to begin the next day in Seoul.

“We met a woman who had traveled from the Netherlands to attend the conference. The Guinness book of World Records says it is the world’s oldest rally on a single theme, only missing one Wednesday since demonstrations began on Jan. 8, 1992. The only Wednesday protest that was missed since 1992 was during the Kobe earthquake in Japan in 1995.”

Demonstrators gather every Wednesday around a golden

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Korean hosts share information on reunification efforts

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bronze statue depicting a teenage Korean girl sitting in a chair facing the Japanese Embassy. The statue is called Pyeonghwabi, meaning the Statue of Peace. A little bird perched on the young girl's shoulder is a symbol of freedom and peace.

"The statue was surrounded by hundreds of protestors, including many young school students, nuns, monks and activists on the day we attended. One elderly woman was sitting there. We were told she was a former "comfort woman" from the Philippines," Ed said.

The Korean Council is demanding that Japan admit the program of sexual slavery was a war crime. They are also demanding that Japan deliver an official apology, pay reparations to the few remaining victims, punish those responsible, and include the system of sexual slavery in Japanese history textbooks.

Jeju Islanders protest base

During the next two days on Jeju Island several miles off the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula, the PNC delegates learned that local residents have been demonstrating on Jeju Island every day for the past nine years, protesting construction of a huge South Korean Naval base near Gangjeong Village. Construction started in 2007 two years after Jeju had been designated as an Island of Peace by the South Korean government.

The 2005 declaration came after Island residents put sufficient pressure on the Korean government to admit its role in a brutal suppression campaign in 1948 and 1949, in which more than 30,000 island residents were massacred by South Korean police and military forces in an unprecedented eradication campaign, apparently while American military forces there did nothing to in-



Wednesday protestors gather around "Pyeonghwabi" the Statue of Peace across from the Japanese Embassy in Seoul



Anti-Naval Base protestors at Gangjeong Village, Jeju Island.

tervene.

"We were told at the time of the uprising, the island was controlled by the United States Military Government in Korea," Ed said.

U.S. commanders reportedly called the complete destruction of the people on Jeju who were thought to be communists and/or communist sympathizers a "successful operation."

"We stood at the site of a beach where we were told hundreds of villagers, including women and children, were massacred by government forces turning the sea red with blood. Having Jeju declared as an Island of Peace followed two years later by the beginning of construction of the largest naval base in South Korea over the objections of 90 percent of the residents of Jeju was too much for them," he said.

So they have been staging protests against the naval base

every day since then. More than 600 people have been arrested over the years.

"We were there on May 19 and watched protestors as they paraded and danced down the road toward the main gate of the naval base," Ed said. "Many wore costumes and were dancing and singing while being filmed by Korean police and security forces.

"We were told some in the group that day would likely be arrested for participating in those protests. The Navy base is nearly completed and will be formally dedicated soon. When completed, it will be the largest Korean military installation in South Korea with rumors that it will likely be expanded to include an air base," he said.

Pastor visits peace activist

"I spent the last four days of my journey in and around the city of Jeonju, a city of 600,000 about a three hour drive south of Seoul. I visited there in 2012

when I spent nearly six weeks teaching English to a group of PROK pastors in Seoul," said Ed.

On that trip, he met the Rev. Kansil Lee, co-pastor of Gobek Presbyterian Church in Jeonju. At the time, her husband, the Rev. Sung Yoel Han was serving a three-year prison sentence. He had been imprisoned for the crime of going into North Korea without permission of the South Korean government.

He had gone there on peace mission visits there before to meet with people to explore possible avenues of communication. He sought to help open channels of discussion for ways for the reunification for the two Koreas to happen. His previous visits were at a time when they were legal. However, newly elected South Korean President Lee Myung-bak changed the policy declaring that such visits would now be illegal. What had been legal, had now become a crime.

On his return, Sung Yoel was tried, convicted and sent to prison in Seoul.

"When I learned about his fate then, I told his wife I'd like to meet him some day," he said. "Well, I did on this visit."

"When we arrived at Gobek Church, and having never met him before, Sung Yoel came running out of the house, threw his arms around me, and held me tightly with a huge bear hug for a couple of minutes," Ed said. "I've never experienced anything quite like it. I didn't think he'd ever let go. We met and talked, and I shot a video of our conversation that will be included in a video report I'll be making about the trip as soon as I can edit it.

"It was remarkable how excited he was to see me, someone who cared about his story," he said. "After dinner at a

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Pastor finds values in partnership relations

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small restaurant that evening as we walked back to our cars, he held my hand tightly with our fingers intertwined. Before departing, he reached over and touched my chest, then his chest, and said our two hearts had come together as one. The moment nearly brought me to tears."

The PROK celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2013. The church says it felt called into existence to affirm its prophetic role in society, as well as to equip its leaders and members with a contextual understanding of the Bible, so the Gospel could be lived in the present. Peace and Justice have been foundational centerpieces of the PROK's purpose and social justice mission, he said.

In 2013, the World Council of Churches Assembly in Busan adopted a resolution calling for peace and the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. It included a recommendation to replace the Armistice Agreement of 1953 with a Peace Treaty. Without a peace treaty, the two Koreas technically continue to remain at war.

In view of that resolution, and on its 60th anniversary, the PROK has started a program of special prayer and worship services every Monday night for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea. Those services began in March 2014 and have been held every Monday night since. They will continue to be held every Monday night until the day of reunification.

"The PROK believes that peace building is a global enterprise shared in close partnership and relationship with churches and Christians not only in Korea, but around the world," Ed said.

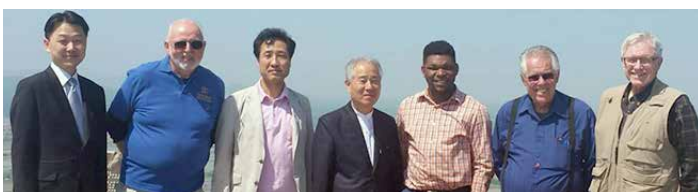
They have designated the Sunday before Aug. 15 as the "Sunday of Prayer for the Peaceful Reunification of the



Ed Evans with Rev. Sung Yoel Han and Rev. Kansil Lee, co-pastors of Gobek Presbyterian Church, Jeonju, South Korea.



Ed Evans receives the "Harmony Stole" from Rev. Joongtek Lee, Global Ministries Committee Chairperson, Seoul East Presbytery of the PROK.



Rev. Eunseung Kim, Jim Spraker, Rev. Youjin Kim, Rev. Joongtek Lee, Darrell Goodwin-Moultry, Tom Clarke and Ed Evans.

Korean Peninsula." That Sunday this year is Aug. 14.

"One of the primary goals of reunification is to end the suffering endured by separated Korean families, hopefully within their lifetimes," he said.

The PROK is calling for an end to joint United States and Korean military exercises, concerned that live fire drills and missile launching and the demonstration of military power could put the Peninsula and the Northeast Asia region at the

brink of war.

"As I've thought about our visit, I think about the anguish many people in Korea feel, people who feel they have lived under one form or another of oppression since the beginning of the Japanese occupation that began in 1910," Ed said.

"Many people feel betrayed that their peace island was transformed into a home base for the machinery of war. I could feel the angst of women who had been kidnapped and

conscripted into sexual slavery and who still have not received an apology from Japan. I also felt the passion of an activist pastor imprisoned for attempting to do the right thing, to find ways to talk about peace and reunification. Regardless of one's perspective, it's complicated," he said.

"I found our time together in Korea to be a living example of understanding how we are all people of God, related to one another more intricately than we might have ever known or believed: living in a world together, singing together, praying together, being the church together, leaning and experiencing new cultures and new traditions, and knowing that we are each a gift in God."

In that spirit, during the closing worship service, the Rev. Joongtek Lee, chair of the Global Ministries Committee of the Seoul East Presbytery, presented Ed with a "Harmony Stole," as a visual reminder that all of God's people are called by God to live in harmony, one with another.

Ed recalled a line in the hymn "In the Midst of New Dimensions" that says, "As we stand in a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes, grant that we, your Global Village, might envision wider dreams."

"That's my prayer as we continue to reach out to be partners and friends all around God's world," he said.

For information, call 360-670-1073 or email edevans@aol.com.

Ed Evans serves as the convener of the Global Ministries Committee of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Northwest Region, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The committee is a shared ministry of the two denominations.

Justice Leadership Jubilee program to start

Rich Gamble and Jenn Hagedorn led an Annual Meeting 2016 workshop to introduce the Justice Leadership Jubilee program being organized as an expansion of the Justice Leadership Program.

Rich opened the session telling how he developed his commitment to organizing for justice. He had left Seattle to serve a church in an Iowa town of 600. A large factory farm wanted to create a massive hog farm on land it had there.

"The stench would have made life in the town miserable, but the factory farm claimed it was their land and they could do what they wanted," he said.

They held the required public meeting inviting comment.

The residents expressed their anger, frustration and concerns.

The factory farm thought that was it. They would put in the farm, and people would learn to live with the stench.

"I knew a factory farm in a little community could change it. I had a pad and pen and set up a meeting at my church," Rich said.

"People who knew about the farm knew it would have a detrimental environmental impact. The farm owners knew what they needed to do for a license, but did not know what to do with those who were morally right and organized. When the factory farm realized they were facing an organized community, they pulled out," said Rich.

"My role is not to fix a problem but to provide a framework for people to know they have a right to act and how to act," he said.

Rich helped organize training around worker justice and gave a theological foundation and skills so the people were confident to do the work.

Rich solidified his commit-



Jenn Hagedorn and Rich Gamble lead a workshop on developing a Justice Leadership Jubilee Program

ment to organizing for justice. When he came to serve Keystone UCC, he began Justice Leadership Program training that grew into the Justice Leadership Program, funded by the PNC and part of the National UCC Young Adult Service Communities program.

Jenn was one of the justice leadership interns the first year.

"Now we are seeking to start a Justice Leadership Jubilee program for older adults. It will be similar to the program for young adults but will involve adults committing to 10 to 15 hours a week for 10 months, rather than a full-time commitment for a year," she said.

"Young adults are in a period of transition. It's an opportunity to surround them with priorities for justice," Jenn said.

"Older adults are also in transition and find that doing justice work life giving," she said.

The program will involve placing the adults in agencies

to do systemic work for six to 10 hours a week. Rich said that the two legs of social justice work are direct service related to food, housing and support, and changing policies and institutions to allow people to live so they have adequate food, housing and support.

"The church has experience in direct service. It's daunting to do justice on the systemic level," he said.

2) The participants will also have church engagement, likely continuing to be involved where they are but giving one to two hours a week doing something they have not done to use their skills, trying something new in their congregation.

"The idea is for them to convince others in the church to run with a project to bring justice, life and energy," Rich said.

3) Participants join in skill building, giving them frameworks to plug their experience into, and theological study to help them understand how and why they do justice. That will

involve four to eight hours a month.

4) Participants will also engage in reflection as they engage in action so they learn about themselves and what is happening.

"It's important to create transformational, internal and external cohort process to learn and grow together," he said.

"It's a significant commitment," said Rich, "but it's also flexible enough that participants can prioritize for the program to make it happen."

Beginning in September 2017, there will be a small cohort. The first Justice Leadership Jubilee will run to July 2018.

There will be no formal application, but those interested will be matched with an agency that needs their skills and is in line with their interests.

"We are hoping to build this model so it will be one that is easier to export and use in other parts of the conference," said Rich.

The young adult Justice Leadership Program costs \$16,000 to \$20,000 per intern, because it involves housing, health care and a stipend for the young adult interns.

The older adult program will involve less time, and require no housing, health care or stipend.

Participants will pay on a sliding scale, up to \$1,000 for 10 months. Placement will be skill based, not issue based.

Jenn said that agencies that have expressed interest so far are the Church Council of Greater Seattle, the Faith Action Network, Puget Sound SAGE and Meaningful Movies, which makes social justice documentaries.

For information, call 206-265-2834 or email justiceleadershipjubilee@gmail.com.

New PNC leader says we are called to live out on a limb

Continued from page 1

are like golden apples in a silver setting,” Courtney repeated.

The faith, education and labor leaders “went out on a limb” to listen and bring healing, she said.

“How do we know if we are going out on a limb or if we are just being crazy?” Courtney asked. “Apples do not grow in the ground or next to the trunk. Some apples grow with blemishes and may be left. Some ideas do not work.”

She pointed out that apples grow out on a limb. They fall and become fertilizer for the next generation of trees.

“None of us can turn away from what is hard. We need to go out on a limb to find new life, to follow the Holy Spirit,



Rob Leveridge and Courtney Stange-Tregear lead worship.

to engage. Out on a limb, we are called to live,” she said. “God calls us out of our scary, dark places, out on a limb,” Courtney said. Courtney has served as pas-

tor of Zion UCC in Perry Hall, Maryland, near Baltimore. While she grew up in the San Francisco Bay area, her studies took her all over the world—Annapolis, Chicago, Boston, the United Kingdom and China.

Her bachelor’s degree is from St. John College in Annapolis, her master’s in research and philosophy of religion from the University of Leeds, and her master of divinity in worship, theology and arts is from Andover Newton Theological School.

Her emphases in ministry are in social justice, educational ministry, worship, preaching and small groups. She, her husband Mark and their three children will move to Seattle in September.

Musical messages remind delegates they are on pilgrimage

UCC minister and musician Rob Leveridge, Christian songwriter and pastor of First United Church in Oak Park, Ill., shared musical messages during the PNC Annual Meeting in Wenatchee.

“We gather in worship and proclaim who we are as gathering people, God’s people, bearers of God’s truth who remember God’s pilgrimage,” he said during the Saturday morning worship.

“We are here to ask God to help us be people who act, not here because we are on a committee or because mom wants us to be here,” he said. “When we worship, we gather and remember who we are and why we are here. We are members of Christ’s body.

“When we pass the peace, we remember we are looking at God’s child, partners seeking God’s grace,” he said.

Rob said that a loving relationship requires honesty.

“Without truthfulness, relationships die,” he said. “Worship is a time for honesty with

God, offering truth about our greed, fear and neglect, and truth about God’s grace as we offer up our sins.

“We are in this redemption business together. Sin is true of you and true of me,” Rob said.

“The right words spoken at the right time are like apples of gold in settings of silver,” he repeated.

Rob told the story of an introverted, small-town girl who decided to go away to college three states away from home. When she went with her parents to register for classes, she said, “Sorry, I can’t go to school here.” They encouraged her to stay in line.

In was a long line. When she was sure she had too much, a loud, goofy college guy came out of the college bookstore singing praise. A young man in front of the young woman gave her a lollipop, saying for the goofy guy to give the lollipop to the beautiful woman behind him.

The goofy guy said to the parents, “See, her first day

away from home and she is taking candy from strangers.”

It was a playful moment. Something clicked for the girl and she realized she could stay and find friends. She could go out on a limb and be vulnerable, and live in instability and insecurity in the place where fruit grows.

“Two things help. We need a starting point, a sturdy trunk, and we need strong roots and branches,” Rob said. “The girl could contend with the scary place because of her parent’s unconditional love.”

Rob told of the African-American women’s a-capella group, Sweet Honey and the Rock. One song they sang is “No Mirrors in my Grandmother’s House,” about growing up in a safe haven without the harsh devaluation of black women, with their essential beauty nurtured. They never knew they were not accepted by the unfair standards of society and could draw on the strengths of their roots as they went vulnerable into dangerous

places.

“In faith, we draw on strong roots to go out on a limb,” he said. “In ministries out on a limb we find God. If we go out on a limb, it helps to have an invitation by a colleague to come try it. We go out because we believe we are supposed to go. We go because God says to go. We go out on a limb with the best fruit.

“The guy who told the story of the girl going to college and the goofy guy had no memory of giving a lollipop to a freshman boy to give to a freshman girl,” Rob said. “Years later, the young woman looked him up and told him the difference he made in her life. His stupid joke gave her courage to do more than she thought she could do.”

She invited him to her wedding marrying the boy in the registration line.

“We need to pay attention to people, to reach out and invite them forward into opportunities,” said Rob.

Congregations share how they go out on a limb in ministry

During Annual Meeting 2016, members of PNC congregations shared ways they are going “Out on a Limb,” reflecting on the theme of the Annual Meeting held April 29 to May 1 in Wenatchee.

Welcome strangers

Tim Devine, pastor of St. Paul UCC in Ballard, told of plans to rebuild after the church suffered a fire the Tuesday after Easter. He also said that the building was saved because a homeless person camped in the back called in the fire.

The congregation is worshipping in the fireside room of First Lutheran Church nearby.

“With pews out, we have three weeks to decide if we will have pews or chairs,” said Tim.

“We participated in work parties to help Little Farms UCC work to rebuild in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. We raised \$1,000 at a spaghetti dinner,” Tim said. “Now we are the disaster and are learning to accept an incredible amount of support.”

Tim was heartened when a neighbor was quoted in the newspaper saying even though he was not a member, the church, to him, represents hope.

Tim said the congregation, which worshipped in German through World War I, may “go out on a limb.” If they choose not to have pews, they might be able to offer use of their space to the Muslim community, who some perceive to be the “enemy” today.

Because someone homeless, reported the fire and stayed until Tim came and he told what happened. In another 20 minutes, the church would have been burned down.

Giving out love letters

Cynthia Whistee at Magnolia UCC told of a woman in New York City who wrote love letters and handed them randomly to strangers on the streets of New York as a reminder: “You deserve all good



Tim Devine at St. Paul's UCC



Cynthia Whistee of Magnolia

things.” “Don’t give in.”

“I have decided I want to do that. It’s about connection. I can go out on a limb with this idea. My idea is to come up with unique notes and leave them in the community,” Andy said.

She gathered several at the church. They wrote cards, put them in envelopes inside plastic bags.

“We brought them to church and Joy Haertig blessed them.

Training on anger

Becky Hepworth of Everett said Everett UCC invited to participate in a new Disciples of Christ church, Our Common Table, arising out of a Disciples in Edmunds.

They provide worship and



Jenn Hagedorn of Plymouth

non-worship activities as a safe place for street people to have a 12-step program and a dinner serving street people, growing from four to 10 people a week, and now 25 to 60 come to church for shelter, a warm, safe, dry place.

Many are mentally ill and struggle with substance abuse, said Becky.

One came and was angry. He flipped a table.

“We had to have training to deal with angry people,” she said. “We are still on a learning curve, having taken welcoming to a whole new paradigm, welcoming people and caring for each other.”

Turning over tables

Jenn Hagedorn, social justice intern with Plymouth UCC in Seattle told of a United Methodist pastor, John Hilmer, inviting people to go out on a limb and participate in Table Turning Monday, the Monday after Palm Sunday. It re-enacts Jesus turning over the tables of the money changers in the temple.

Table Turning Monday is organized by White Denominations Against Racism and EPIC (End the Prison Industrial Complex). In King County 8 percent of the population is black, but 50 percent of those in detention are black.

The group is challenging City Council and those proposing to build a new youth detention center.

“The Justice Leadership Program taught me to put together an action,” said Jenn. “We decided to wet up a card table, put coins on it to represent our morals and values. We tipped over the table, acknowledging our role as the white community in imprisoning blacks.

Compassion charter

John Eisenhauer of Eagle Harbor UCC on Bainbridge Island told of going to a 2008 TED talk to hear British housewife Karen Armstrong, who now travels and promotes the Charter for Compassion.

“Compassion is at the heart of all religious traditions,” said John. “Religion is about eliminating suffering of all creatures and the sanctity of every human being. It’s about treating people with equity and justice.

Eagle Harbor UCC, a church with under 200 members, has signed the Charter for Compassion.

From our small spot on the planet, we can reach out. Thousands are part of the charter.

Respond to hate

Recently Curry Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, two miles from Prospect, had swastikas and the “N” word spray painted with other graffiti and the words, “Go back to Africa.”

The church held worship on their 67th anniversary with tears in their eyes.

Prospect offered a community prayer and breakfast from 10 a.m. to noon, April 30, raising an offering to help pay for costs of clean-up. Andrew Conley Holquin sent a letter

Crocheted hearts

Judith Rinehart-Nelson, pastor at Zion Philadelphia in Ritzville, told responding to be-

Continued on page 12

Congregations go 'out on a limb' to share love in many ways

Continued from page 11

ing put off by Christians who put out tracts showing Jesus as a shepherd or hanging on a cross, saying if the person doesn't believe, they will go to hell—messages of threats and hate.

"Zion Philadelphia went out on an evangelical limb," she said. "Members hand crocheted hearts and give them to people, saying, 'I have something for you.'"

"The response is amazing, big smiles, and people ask who we are," Judith said. "We say we are Zion UCC and our message is simple. It is love."

She told of going to breakfast in Leavenworth and giving one to the cook. When she said she was a member of the UCC and "our message is simple, it's one of love," he asked, "What kind of church are you?"

Judith said she told him that the UCC is an old church, established by people who came on the Mayflower. "We have been a church so long that we have learned lessons, and the bottom line is love," she said.

Sold building

Spirit of Peace, which started in Sammamish UCC, was the only progressive church on the plateau, said Glen Hall. The founding minister died of cancer over two years ago and membership declined from 100 members.

"In 2005, we went through a discernment process to decide how the church could continue," Glen said. "In 2007, we hired David Shull as part time pastor. In 2012, we decided to sell the church property and invest the money to use the interest for ministry."

"We use 10 percent for mission. Last year, we hired a youth minister, Rob, who resigned the end of May after finishing college," Glen added. "We looked to the needs of youth ministry and plan to hire a new one."



Bill Kirlin-Hackett at UCong UCC



Dennis Hollinger-Lant of Wayside



Mary Olney and Steve Clagett of All Pilgrims Christian

Serve homeless

Bill Kirlin-Hackett, a specialized minister with University Congregational UCC, serving the Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness in Snohomish and King Counties.

The church, now in its 125th year, decided to include housing and homelessness ministry in a new way in its mission.

It had Tent City in its parking lot, looking at evictions. Movers were hired to move tenants' belongings to storage at the tenants' expense. Women run through the house grabbing things as the movers took things out.

"She looked for someone who would know she and her family would be homeless," Bill said. "It's violent. Police are there with their hands on holsters. They drink water from your cups and use your bathrooms while the mother wonders, 'What do I need?"

Where is my medicine? Where will we go?' Evictions like this happen hundreds of times across the country.

"We need to go out on a limb to the least, the last, the left behind who are our neighbors. We need to see the look on their faces when they learn that no matter who they are or where they are on their journey, they are welcome. We need to leave our palaces and go out on a limb. God accompanies us on the limb."

Justice internships

Hillary Coleman and Kathryn Murdock said they went out on a limb to live on \$400 a month in an apartment with other justice leadership interns.

"I have learned to live my passions and be a leader to find my place as a young adult," said Hillary, who came back to Seattle to serve as a justice intern with All Pilgrims and the Coalition on Homelessness.

She as discovered her pas-

sion in addressing homelessness, which is a growing issue.

Transgender study

Dennis Hollinger Lant, pastor of Wayside UCC in Federal Way for 21 years, told of his church's experience four years ago when a teen announced that he appreciated growing up in the congregation and was going on a journey from being a he to a she. The congregation gave a standing ovation.

Members started study groups on what it means for children and youth to identify gender difference.

A man who was a family practice physician came for help dealing with his transition.

Families and transgender people come to learn and talk. One came for a potluck, but hesitated when the group moved to the chapel, wondering if it was okay to talk about such issues there.

Music ministries

Steve Clagett and Mary Olney-Lloyd of All Pilgrims Christian Church, a Disciples of Christ and UCC church, said the church believes "God loves you and there's nothing you can do about it." They opened their church as the home for the Justice Leadership Program youth.

For some time, the church was struggling financially about being a bricks and mortar church and a church that valued sacred music and paid musicians as part of the ministry.

All Pilgrims did an event in May, "Architecture of Family: Families Celebrating Freedom," about re-understanding and reconciling a family to include the mother, father, two children and the father's new husband.

Mary said once a month for two years they have done Nightsong, drawing young people to an intimate concert, with an acoustic guitarist and drawing 15 to 25. There is no overt Christian message, just talking about life experience.

Mike Denton preaches on 'right words' of 1987 apology

Preaching at the Annual Meeting 2016 closing worship on Sunday, May 1, Conference Minister Mike Denton recalled that in November 1987, former Washington North Idaho Conference Minister Jim Halfaker and nine other Christian denominational leaders signed a Public Declaration of Apology to the tribal councils and traditional spiritual leaders of the Indian and Eskimo peoples of the region.

"They acted to right wrongs of their churches' participating in destroying Native American religions by protecting their spiritual teachings and pledging to stand in solidarity with Native Americans on religious issues and treaty negotiations," Mike said, asking people to reflect on: "How have we done?"

"What have we done to right the wrongs, to enhance native teachings, to stand in solidarity and be advocates?" he asked. "How might we do better?"

Those questions are important as the religious leaders of today approach the 30th anniversary and prepare to sign a renewal of that public declaration.

Picking up on the focus verse for the weekend repeated at the Annual Meeting, he said, "The right words at the right time are like apples of gold in settings of silver."

Mike acknowledged that "the host people on whose lands we meet" were among the recipients of the formal apology.

"The letter then was the first letter of its kind and inspired letters all over the world," Mike said. "It's now part of academic curricula. It gives power to religious organizations. It has not solved the aftermath of the destruction, but it gives basis for conversation."

The apology was the "right words at the right time," coming out of festering wounds the churches let happen.



Mike Denton with staff, Courtney Stange-Tregear, Wade Zick, Michelle Doherty, Mark Boyd and Arlene Hobson.



Edwin Gaelai, pastor, and members of the Faavae Fou Samoan church were welcomed into the Pacific Northwest Conference of the UCC during the Annual Meeting. Outgoing moderator Andy CastroLang of Westminster UCC in Spokane and new moderator Peter Ilgenfritz of University Congregational UCC of Seattle are in the front row.

A listening process began decades before the apology and led to the moment. Over time 84 churches have been asked to support it, but it has no state support or recognition of the need for restitution.

"History says don't hope this side of the grave," Mike commented. "What was written came out of decades of listening. Regardless, the acts never should have occurred."

Since 1987, religious leaders have reaffirmed the letter in 1997 and in 2007.

Mike is involved with the group looking at the 30th anniversary and talking with indigenous people.

"It's not meant for denominations to pat themselves on the back, but now it includes opposing and repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery," Mike

erty rights and was used again and again.

In 1792, President Jefferson took over native American land and made part of U.S. land. The Supreme Court in 2005 used it to establish property rights over tribal groups.

"The wrong words spoken and enforced are like a knife to the heart," Mike said. "There is a place and time to call for new right words, so for 2017, we are working to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, which was also used in Asia, Africa and Latin America. European churches rationalized establishing control and ownership."

In the coming year, a group of UCC leaders will address the new situation, so it will not just be an anniversary of the apology of 1987, but a new call for next steps to welcome work for liberation and give up what has been held.

"May the Holy Spirit lead us to new right words," Mike concluded.

said.

The UCC General Synod in 2013 voted to repudiate the papal bull of 1432 in which the Holy Roman Empire claimed land it discovered. It declared that any time Christians found something or went to a new land, the people there were discovered. It established prop-



Jeff Barker of Columbia Lakewood in Seattle and Steve Erickson of Shalom in Richland help serve communion

Pastor challenges churches to be transforming agents

Scott Lovaas, interim lead minister at Community Congregational UCC in Pullman, shared insights on paradigm shifts for churches for the 21st century during an Annual Meeting 2016 workshop.

Since the 1970s, mainline churches began declining with the UCC losing more than 48 percent of its members since 1974 while the U.S. population has increased 49 percent.

Parallel to it has been the rise of neoliberal economic policies as “the new dominant religion” with a clear doctrine on good vs. bad, spread by evangelical missionaries. They espouse individualism, strong defense, family values, supply-side economics and anti-big government policies.

Scott said these changes have moved the Christian church into “its ninth iteration since its birth,” so he says Church 9.0 has three tasks: promoting intellectual and spiritual independence in community, developing local outreach and articulating new narratives through arts and storytelling.

Five components of neoliberal economic policies are deregulation to limit government power to regulate trade; privatization of state enterprises such as schools and prisons claiming the private sector is more efficient; reducing taxes on the wealthy in particular; eliminating trade barriers and reducing the size of labor unions, and financial liberalization opening currencies, trade and property ownership to foreign countries.

“These policies permeate every sector of society, but bring wealth and growth to just a small segment of society,” Scott pointed out. “Inequality grows in job loss, wage stagnation and debt.”

Scott said that in churches neo-liberalism cherishes individualism over community, moving “us from a ‘we’ society to a ‘me’ society,” blinding “us



Scott Lovaas reflects on role of churches in 21st century.

to what we have in common.”

The result is the decline in churches and service groups.

In the 1990s, the new religious ideology accelerated with the market as the measure of self worth leading to life being a commodity and compassion, social responsibility and mutual obligations being antiquated.

“The hyper-individualism set off massive consumer consumption and waste,” he said. “Wealth and political power became concentrated at the top.”

“People can work at Walmart and not make enough to live on,” he said. “Americans compete for wages with people who can live on less around the world.”

People are “atomized,” each living in their own space and home, not gathering to talk about war and peace.

In Seattle’s tech boom of the 1970s, Scott said churches operated in a collective sphere. Then neo-liberalism began destroying companies that provided high wages, eliminated jobs, and destroying towns, universities, institutions and media.

The culture of violence has increased with more violent movies and TV, deaths in

Iraq and Afghanistan, suicides, more military spending, police violence and ending pensions.

“Violence is the elephant in the room no one wants to address,” he said. “America has always been violent with genocide of native people, slavery, attacks on labor, attacks on protesters, mass incarceration, video games, domestic violence and structural violence.”

“How is the Church 9.0 responding to the changing landscape as wealth is increasingly concentrated?” Scott asks.

Some have adopted the language of individualism, so people go to church “to work on themselves” and churches follow technology changes.

Scott said for the church to help people do more than adapt and survive, it needs new tools, ideas and alternative voices.

“Professional clergy need to do more than just hold onto their jobs, he said, noting that “the rate of change is so rapid the church may be stuck by the side of the road.”

Scott lived in Colorado Springs early in the economic crisis when people stopped giving to institutions. A community center near the church

closed.

“To address the community center’s closing, I developed a broad-based partnership model that raised \$800,000 from civic and business groups. The church I was serving provided \$30,000. It was a great return on our investment in the community,” he said.

“Churches used to be about transformation. Now many are concerned about survival and maintenance,” said Scott calling for new models so churches can reinvent their polity, mission, language and leadership.

Given the gap between what media report and reality, he said faith communities need to speak “a language of truth, authenticity and hope” to convey the failures of neoliberalism and communicate how to build something new.

He suggests that faith communities create new stories and narratives through art, because artists “see things others cannot and often see things before others.” Art and storytelling expose undercurrents that allow a shift in social consciousness.

“Radio and print remain excellent low-cost media for articulating new narratives,” Scott said. “Authentic moral voices have the capacity to build relationships of mutual trust and understanding, and build social transformation.”

He urges faith communities to start neighborhood programs that change lives, using member donations as accelerators, and multipliers of their limited resources to transform lives and the community.

“The church’s time has come to step forward once again to set a new agenda for this new era.”

Scott, executive director of Seven Bridges Institute, served seven churches and was a missionary in South Africa. He also worked in mental health.

For information, email slovaas@comcast.net.

Linda Crowe recounts teens creating peace quilt

Linda Crowe, retired pastor from Veradale UCC who served as interim near Minneapolis, recently preached at Westminster UCC in Spokane, telling of the peace-theme quilt junior high campers at N-Sid-Sen made last summer.

Each camper and counselor was given a square of plain fabric and invited to decorate it with a fabric marker with a design or message.

They knew the quilt would be given away, discussed possibilities and voted to give it to Hospice House to give comfort and love to a resident in “the closing season of life.”

The theme for the camp was “peace,” so peace symbols and the word, “peace,” are many places on the quilt.

Once they made their squares, they put the pieces on the floor of Stillwater Lodge and discussed where to place them amid yellow and green patterned pieces.

Linda stitched the pieces together and to the quilt top to use as a backdrop for closing worship. Recently, she stitched the quilt top to batting and backing, and added binding to finish it.

“It represents the community at a specific church camp during the summer of 2015,” she said.

“It was created to be given to a person in need of comfort, a resident of Hospice House we do not know,” she said.

Some of the words written on quilt squares are “Stay strong.” “Peace, hope, love is probably what you need.” “God will surround you with courage and love.” “Love is all you need. “God’s love never fails.” “Peace like a river, may you know God’s peace in all of your life.” “May God bless you with peace.” “Peace be with you.” “Peace, peace, peace.”

“These words of comfort and peace made the quilt a comforter in the truest sense of the word,” Linda said, noting that



Linda Crowe displays quilt made by junior high campers last summer at N-Sid-Sen.

a quilt brings physical warmth and is beautiful to look at. “It warms our bodies and hearts.

Love, hope, memories and prayers are often stitched and tied into a comforter.

“It reminds us that we all need a Comforter, another name for God,” Linda said. “We often need more than a physical comforter.”

Linda pointed out that people’s lives can be so painful, lonely and difficult that “we need a COMFORTER with capital letters,” she said. “We all need a comforter,” she said.

“We may have sleepless nights that even a beautiful quilt won’t help. We may feel like the pieces of our lives are coming unstitched, and we need mending. Or we may feel that our lives are so terribly complicated that our threads are all tangled and full of knots,” Linda said. “There are so many times when each one of us needs a comforter.”

Psalm 86, Isaiah 66:13 and John 14 all give images of God as a comforter.

“The understanding of God as comforter is an important image for us to hold when we feel like our lives are in bits and pieces,” Linda said.

“Sometimes God gives comfort through people around us,” she said.

Linda told of a friend who made a quilt for a co-worker. Not only did it comfort her during chemotherapy, but also as the friends made squares stitched it together, they were comforted and able to deal with their friend’s cancer.

“Through hearts and hands of others, God provides comfort,” she said. “God comforts us when we turn to God in prayer.”

Linda remembered a time when prayers and pieces for a patchwork quilt were mixed together. On Oct. 20, 1991, when a fire raged in Oakland and Berkeley while she was studying for her master of divinity degree at Pacific School of Religion, she and dorm-mates prayed. The sky was black with smoke. Students had bags

packed. While waiting for possible evacuation, she did calligraphy and cut quilt squares.

The winds shifted and saved her housing, but 3,000 homes were lost. Prayer helped her during that time.

Linda pointed to the quilt hanging from a frame and said that quilt would be a comforter for a person in his or her last period of life. Someone would be given the quilt to cover and comfort him or her.

“I hope the person will understand that someone cared enough to make a comforter,” she said. “Not everyone has a tangible symbol of comfort and love, but every one of us has a Comforter who loves and cares for us always, through all our joys and sorrows, struggles and celebrations, through all the seasons of life.

“When you feel terrified, imagine yourself wrapped in a comforter made of God’s love,” Linda said.

For information, call 509-714-8171 or email revlindacrowe@gmail.com.

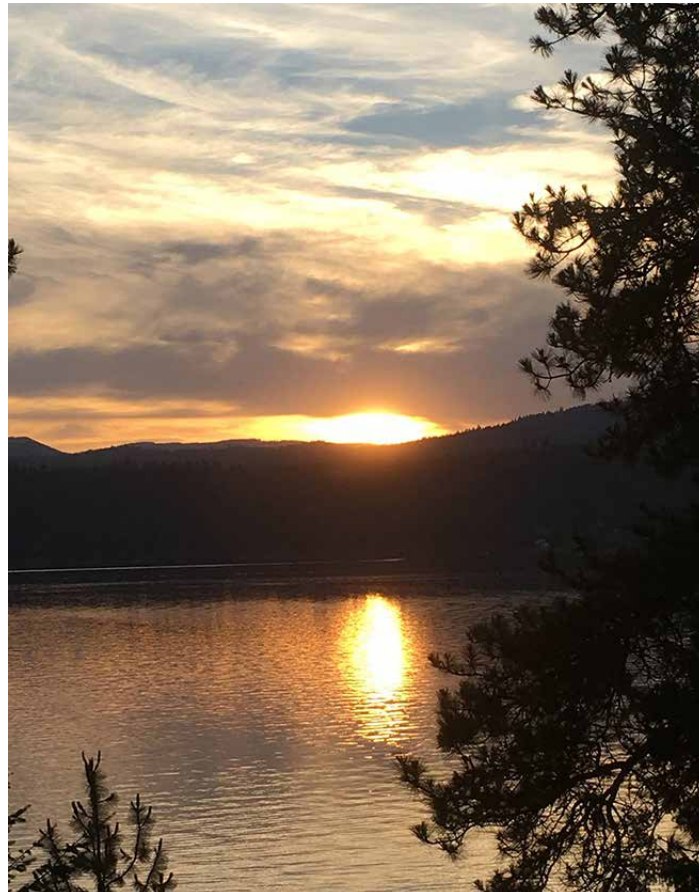
Facebook posts keep campers 'present' at N-Sid-Sen by showing scenes and by reflecting on their meaning in everyday lives

For the 2016 season, N-Sid-Sen and Pilgrim Firs are using "Fearless Faith: Courage in Community," a curriculum to help campers draw courage from biblical characters, their friends, families and communities of faith to help them stand up to mistrust, injustice and fear in society. The program invites campers to reflect on life, forgive others, change attitudes and welcome people, said Mark Boyd, managing director of N-Sid-Sen.

Throughout the year, N-Sid-Sen connects with campers and members of the region's United Church of Christ churches through Facebook.

Almost every day, Mark posts a reflective entry, connecting a photo of a sunset, water, meadow, flowers, woods or other camp scenes with a faith insight.

Many people comment—not on Facebook but in person—about how they appreci-



One of the recent sunset photos Mark Boyd posted with reflective comments.

Photo courtesy of Mark Boyd

ate the postings.

"It's a way to remind folks who do not live in places like this how they need to slow down, look around and see what's important," Mark said. "We are hit with so much misinformation as mass media try to keep us distracted. "

I say look around, look at our lives, our moments and our times," he said.

Through Facebook, he primarily reaches parents, who are the ones to decide about their children going to camp.

Some recent reflections are:

- The setting sun appears to have leaked under the hillside reminding us that our review of yesterday is reflected back to us in many ways.

- Sometimes all we need to do is stop and say awe.

Say awe to the day we just had, even if we really mean awe.

Say awe to the people who surround us, when we mean ahh.

Say awe to the day ahead, when we want to say ohh.

Sometimes we just need to stop and let life hold us in awe.

- A solitary tree stands tall in the meadow. Reaching for the sky, extending it's branches toward spring and new growth.

The solitary tree stands on its roots tapping deep down into the earth. Down it grows towards abundant fresh water.

The solitary tree is not alone. True, there is no other tree just like it. True, it stands tall and by itself. Yet just like us there are so many unseen and unrecognized ways the tree

is supported and cared for. One might even say loved.

What (or who) is holding you up?

What (or who) is giving you sustenance?

We get to decide which view we will choose to become our reality. It is only in recognizing that it is simply our choice of how we choose to preserve those memories, that makes those special to us. It is harder to hold close that others will see yesterday differently and ours is not the only way to hold memories.

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit n-sid-sen.org.

At Pilgrim Firs, Wade Zick is hosting a meal after the PRIDE Parade.

Because the camp depends on volunteer leaders and counselors, Mark and Wade Zick, managing director of Pilgrim Firs, are developing a program to train counselors and leaders aged 15 and older to increase the pool of volunteers to help run camps. Pilgrim Firs will host the Counselor in Training program July 10 to 16.

For information, call 360-876-2031 or email wade@pilgrimfirs.org.

2016 Pilgrim Firs camp schedule

Work Camp June 16 to 19

Senior High Camp
June 27 to July 2

Junior High Camp
July 3 to 9

Kids Camp - July 10 to 13

Intermediate Camp
July 10 to 16

For information, call 360-876-2031 email wadezick@pilgrimfirs.org register at n-sid-sen.org

2016 N-Sid-Sen camp schedule is:

Work Camp - June 13 to 18

Young Adult - June 17 to 19

Kid's Camp - July 3 to 6

Intermediate Camp - July 3 to 9

Senior High Aqua Camp
July 10 to 16

Family Camp #1
July 24 to 30

Junior High Aqua Camp
July 31 to Aug 6

LGBTQ Camp
Aug 5 to 7

Family Camp #2 - Aug. 7 to 13

For information, call 208-689-3489 email mark@n-sid-sen.org register at n-sid-sen.org