

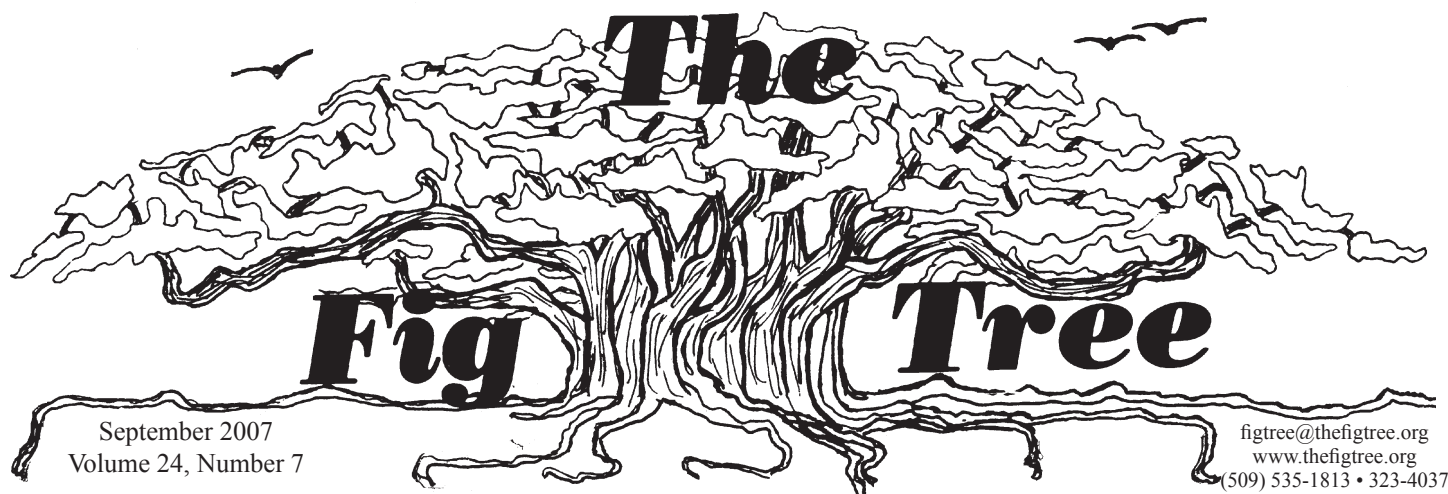
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Monthly newspaper covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest

Inter-religious dialogue can quell conflicts

By Mary Stamp

With part of his life in each tradition, Father Patrick Baraza, a Kenyan priest serving in the Diocese of Spokane, sees African traditional religions strengthening community, Christianity bringing hope and Islam being practical.

He believes each faith has positive contributions to make in the African context, but he sees that often the imported faiths—Christianity and Islam—have not respected African traditional religions. They have brought Arabization, Americanization and Europeanization that deny respect to African traditional religions.

Because those faiths also have brought to Africa their internal divisions and their hostilities to each other, Father Patrick considers inter-religious dialogue crucial for resolving conflicts in Africa.

He came to Spokane in 2005 to teach in Gonzaga University's Religious Studies Department and help offer Masses at Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral.

For him, inter-religious dialogue in Africa must include Christianity, Islam and traditional religions—each integral to his heritage and who he is.

His village, Bungoma, practiced traditional African worship of one God through honoring the spirits of their ancestors.

His grandfather converted to



Father Patrick Baraza advocates inter-religious respect and understanding.

Islam when he fought with the British in World War I in Burma. Although the community hated him for not renouncing Islam, Father Patrick loved him, and often went with him to the mosque because he was curious to learn more about Islam.

Because he lived near Kitare 300 miles West of Nairobi, Father Patrick attended Catholic schools and became Catholic.

"If I had lived in Southern Kenya, I would be Seventh Day Adventist, or in Central Kenya, I would be Presbyterian, Methodist or Anglican," he said.

Ordained in 1982, he served a parish, taught philosophy at his diocese in Kenya and served among the Pokot, nomadic people who hold traditional beliefs, before he came to the United States in 1993 to do master's and doctoral stud-

ies in Islam at the University of California-Berkeley, the Graduate Theological Union and the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, Calif.

After completing the degree in 2002, Father Patrick returned to work another three years with the Pokot in Kenya. In 2005, he came to Spokane to teach Catholicism in the context of African culture and to teach Islam at Gonzaga

University. While here, he helps support his diocese and family.

Most of his family became Christian, he said, not because he "converted" them, but because of what they saw in him.

He had preached at a Mass before an interview with The Fig Tree. His sermon was about Nathanael asking Philip if anything good could come out of Nazareth. Philip said, "Come and see how he prays, come and see how he loves." (John 1:45-51)

"To African traditional religions, which worship one God and have no concept of future, Christianity brings a sense of future and hope, hope for life today," he said. "Africans who have nothing to eat go to a Christian crusade where they dance and praise. They come home fed with hope from worshipping God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength.

"I said Mass for 35 minutes this noon. That's unheard of in Africa! I would have been reported to my bishop for underfeeding the people," he said.

"Islam's gift is that it is practical. The five pillars are five things to do. In contrast, my faith is dogmatic and theological," he said.

"African traditional religions hold their communities and their culture together as people honor

Continued on page 5

Directory distributed in summer

Resource connects faith and nonprofit communities in region

Malcolm Haworth brings skills in research and a commitment to student volunteerism to producing the Directory of Congregations and Community Resources, a new publication of The Fig Tree.

Although it's the 35th edition of the directory, he had to enter many data files to update content in the 2006 edition produced by the Interfaith Council and in The Fig Tree database.

The directory includes information on more than 1,100 congregations and 1,700 agencies—in contrast to 850 congregations and 900 agencies last year—in the zip codes beginning 838-, 990-, 991- and 992 in Eastern Washington and North Idaho. An online version will be expanded to the Fig

Tree circulation area, which also includes Central Washington zips of 988-, 993- and 989- and some of North Idaho's 835- zips.

Information on national faith groups and churches is included in print and expanded online with links to their websites.

To gather data, he sent out forms to congregations and agencies requesting information; called regional offices, congregations and agencies; cross-referenced with other directories and online, and made personal connections.

Malcolm, a 2001 history graduate from Washington State University, earned a master's in history at Eastern Washington University in 2005, and began in February 2007 working with The Fig Tree

through AmeriCorps as community outreach coordinator.

Editor Mary Stamp said the directory builds on The Fig Tree's commitment to foster awareness, interaction and cooperation among the faith and nonprofit communities of the Inland Northwest. She said it creates a sense of the "infrastructure of caring in the region."

The directory provides an annual print version of the resources, updated regularly online, expanding The Fig Tree's online "Connections" pages.

Malcolm said that "after events like Sept. 11 and Hurricane Katrina, we know we cannot expect government to provide all the services people need."

So he believes it is essential to know about local community services responding to needs, such as networking on justice issues and dealing with medical and housing needs.

He knows that awareness of those resources is essential for service-learning opportunities for students. Having taught some

Continued on page 4

For Fig Tree Dialogue in October:

Julia Esquivel will bring voices of Guatemalans

Through poetry, theology and action, Guatemalan Julia Esquivel has advocated for human rights, economic justice and political power for indigenous people.

She will share through her poetry and presentations with several groups when she visits Spokane from Saturday, Oct. 13 to Monday, Oct. 22 related to The Fig Tree's Faith in Action Dialogue.

The Fig Tree is organizing events in collaboration with Women Walking Together, Gonzaga University, Whitworth University, Bioneers and the Kalispel Tribe.

Plans include a talks and poetry reading at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 16, at Gonzaga University's Cataldo Hall; at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 17, at Weyerhaeuser Center at Whitworth University, and talks during the Bioneers Conference on Friday, Oct. 19 and Sunday, Oct. 21.

She will also read poetry at 3 p.m., Monday, Oct. 15, at the Women's Hearth, 920 W. Second. She will spend Thursday, Oct. 18, visiting the Kalispel Tribe.

For Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp, it will be a reunion with a friend she spent six months with at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, Switzerland, in 1969-70 and again at the 6th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1983 in Vancouver, B.C., while Julia was living in exile.

"We promised each other at our parting: 'Je suis avec toi,' French for, 'I am with you,'" Mary said. "Sharing interest in writing, poetry, ecumenism, justice, peace, human rights and care for the environment, I keep her in my prayers, hearing of

Continued on page 3

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Faith leaders use worship places in AIDS fight

Colombo, Sri Lanka (ENI). An international interfaith conference on HIV/AIDS in August called religious leaders to use their facilities to help fight against HIV and AIDS. Organizers said this would enable faith organizations to be voices to raise awareness and reduce discrimination.

“We acknowledge that we have not done enough in this area, and have at times contributed to a sense of exclusion and stigmatization for those living with HIV and AIDS,” participants said in a statement during the International Interfaith Conference in Colombo. More than 200 Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim delegates from across Asia attended the conference, which was jointly organized by the Asian Interfaith Network on AIDS, the Christian Conference of Asia, and the Geneva-based Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, which is linked to the World Council of Churches.

Reformed leader urges condemning injustice

Geneva (ENI). The general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Rev. Setri Nyomi, has marked the centenary of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda by urging it to speak out boldly against injustice in the next 100 years.

He congratulated it for “coming through” the 1994 genocide that killed almost a million people and that divided churches without retreating into a “spiritual ghetto of self-preservation or the protection of its own tribes.” Instead it committed itself to “prophetic witness” as it sought to transform Rwandan society. “We need to expose evil in every form without being afraid,” Nyomi said. Protestants are a quarter of Rwanda’s population of 10 million, which is mostly Roman Catholic.

Damaged Jaffna church becomes peace center

Jaffna, Sri Lanka (ENI) - Christ Church’s building on Jaffna’s main road—as nearly 30,000 buildings on the Jaffna peninsula—stands pock-marked by shell holes. It is a reminder of the battles in 1990 and 1995 between Tamil rebels and Sri Lankan forces in northern Sri Lanka. The 1871 Anglican church is having a face lift with walls patched and new roof tiles to ensure structural stability.

“We’re converting this church into a war memorial and peace center offering seminars on conflict analysis and interreligious concerns,” the Rev. S. P. Nesakumar, the archdeacon of Jaffna, told ENI. The center opened in April 2006.

Regular worship services are not held, but local people treat it as a sacred place, coming to pray at a statue of Jesus in front of the church. In 1988, when the church was packed with refugees of all faiths, a giant shell landed on the building but did not explode. Struck by the miracle, the people put up the statue near to where the shell landed.

Groups agree on conversion between faiths

Oslo (ENI). The signing of a declaration between a group representing Muslims and another group, Christians in Norway—that supports the right to convert between faiths without harassment—is the first pact of its type in the world they say.

Faith leaders praise Vatican-Tripoli dialogue

Tripoli (ENI). African religious leaders meeting in the Libyan capital Tripoli for the Inter-Faith Action for Peace in Africa praised a more than 25-year-long dialogue to bridge the faiths between Libya and the Vatican as a positive contribution to good relations between Christianity and Islam. Libya is predominantly Muslim but there is also a small Roman Catholic presence in the former Italian colony. The talks focus on refugees, education and promoting unity in diversity.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Series begins with ‘Eating Is a Moral Act’

Advocating changing the world with forks and knives, Brother David Andrews of the Catholic Rural Life Conference will give the first lecture, “Eating Is a Moral Act,” for the 2007-2008 season of Catholicism and the New Millennium.

The lecture will be at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 6, in the Barbiari

Moot Court Room at the Gonzaga University Law School.

He will discuss life in the post-industrial era, the time of peak oil and climate change when lifestyles and practices require change by individuals and institutions, said organizer Tim Clancy, SJ.

Brother David will discuss liv-

ing in the Ecozoic Era, a period of “Quantum Agriculture,” that links ecology and economy.”

He encourages a way of eating that links farmers and consumers, environmentalists and economists, the global and the local, Catholic social teaching and world religions.

For information, call 358-4273.

Groups observe International Peace Day

The United Nations Association-Spokane, the World Affairs Council of Spokane and the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane will observe the International Day of Peace at 7 p.m., Friday, Sept. 21, in Cataldo Hall, at Gonzaga University.

The organizations are reach-

ing out to involve individuals, families, civic groups, schools, churches and businesses.

British filmmaker Jeremy Gille worked for two years to recruit national and international leaders throughout the world to establish Sept. 21 as the International Day of Peace, a day of global cease-

fire and non-violence, a day for all nations and people to cease hostilities.

Raymond Reyes, associate professor of diversity at Gonzaga University will speak on the theme, “Peace One Day.”

For information, call 838-7870 or visit www.peaceday.org.

Buddhist relics are on display in Spokane

The Sravasti Abbey and the Coeur d’Alene Dharma Friends invited the Heart Shrine Relics Tour to stop in the area as an opportunity to encourage inter-religious dialogue.

The tour is being presented Sept. 21 to 23 at Unity Church, 2900 S. Bernard St.

There will be an opening ceremony at 7 p.m., Friday, and the display will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

This collection of more than 1,000 Buddhist relics is touring the world before being placed in a 500-foot Maitrea Buddha statue being built in Kushinagar, India.

Bhikshuni Thubten Chodron, the founder and abbess of the Sravasti Abbey near Newport, plans some public talks before the relics arrive.

The relic tour is offered by Thubten Zopa Rinpoche, a Buddhist teacher who has made his

personal collections available for worldwide tour.

Some of the relics were saved from statues in Tibet where they were enshrined thousands of years before the Chinese came into Tibet in 1959. Other relics were donated by museums and monasteries.

For information, call 447-5549 or visit www.maitreyaproject.com/en/relic/index.html or www.sraasti.org.

March to end domestic violence planned

In recognition of October as Domestic Violence Month, Faith Partners against Domestic Violence will for the second year hold a march to end domestic violence, beginning at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 2, at the YWCA, 829 W. Broadway.

Last year, nearly 100 people marched through downtown Spokane to bring awareness to the many lives threatened locally

and across the country. Women around the world march, some risking their lives. In 2001, more than 1,200 women were killed in the United States by intimate partners.

The march will proceed as last year to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes, 1115 W. Riverside, for a prayer vigil in remembrance of victims of domestic violence.

“We call people of faith to join

in this cause, to come together and say NO to this violence,” said Sandi Thompson-Royer, coordinator of Faith Partners Against Domestic Violence.

“When people of faith gather in solidarity and take action for justice, the violence can be stopped and these victims can be restored to the full life God intends for them,” she said.

For information, call 534-2307.

Mennonite Auction will be on Oct. 6

The 30th Mennonite Country Auction and Relief Sale will be held Saturday, Oct. 6, on the Menno Mennonite Church grounds between Ritzville and Moses Lake. The event raises funds for the Mennonite Central Committee.

It begins with a breakfast from 7 to 9:30 a.m. Booths open at 10 a.m., and the auction begins at noon. Demonstrations include stone grinding wheat and corn, making apple butter in a copper caldron over an open fire and apples being pressed into cider.

There will be food booths with baked goods, African peanut stew, hamburgers, sausage, sandwiches, Amish cheese and more. Other booths include quilts, rummage, crafts, a children’s corner and information on Mennonite history.

For information, call 659-0926.

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The Fig Tree is published 10 months each year, September through June.

Deadlines:
COPY - 3rd Fridays ADS - 4th Tuesdays
It is published by The Fig Tree, 1323 S. Perry St., Spokane, WA 99202, a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.

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Knitters and crocheters make afghans for Afghans

An Afghans for Afghans campaign invites knitters and crocheters to make blankets, hats, mittens, socks, sweaters and vests for youth from seven to 14 years old in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The goal is to receive 80 cartons of blankets and garments—about 5,000 items—by Oct. 12, when they will be air-shipped to Kabul.

Church World Service, which distributes the items, needs the volume to make the transit and distribution more efficient and provide warm clothing before winter for girls and boys under their care.

The gifts will be distributed at children's rehabilitation and health centers in Kabul and Bamiyan. These centers treat children traumatized psychologically and physically by the years of war and poverty.

At the centers, the children engage in physical recreation and have lessons in health, hygiene, nutrition, social skills and peace-building. Church World Service has supported the region since 1954 and works in partnership with Afghan organizations.

In 2003, the organization clothed 500 families in Balkh Province through a CWS-supported agency.

Guidelines and mailing addresses are available at www.afghansforafghans.org/blanket.html.

Human rights advocate spent 12 years in exile

Continued from page 1
her life over the years and reading her poetry. Her words and life helped shape who I am."

At the assembly, she told of the vast economic disparities in Guatemala, with the masses in poverty while two percent were super wealthy. Then she warned, "I tell you this so you will know and recognize what is happening when it happens to you."

Julia knew that injustices in her land were tied to corporate interests in the United States.

Women Walking Together coordinator Sandi Thompson-Royer met Julia on her first trip to visit CEDEPCA, a Central American center for ecumenical and pastoral studies and encounter.

Julia worked as a teacher, principal, pastoral social worker, writer and human rights activist through 30 years of civil unrest, dictatorships, resistance movements and

civil wars in Guatemala.

She has spoken out on behalf of thousands of Maya, Quiche and other indigenous people who were murdered or who survived and faced communal trauma.

While some took up arms, Julia followed a path to peace, editing a magazine, *Dialogo*, as a way to witness to God's justice and compassion, and to bring healing to her land.

Death threats and harassment forced her into exile in 1980. She lived eight of her 12 years in exile with the nuns of the Grand Champs monastic community in Switzerland, and then in Mexico and Nicaragua.

Julia also traveled from these bases throughout Europe, the United States and Canada to speak and advocate on behalf of those suffering in the "Guatemalan holocaust."

She considers suffering a school

of wisdom, "part of our education as Christians."

Having known so many who experienced fear, torture and death, Julia used her exile to heal, reflect and pray—facing her own suffering and the wounds of her nation.

Julia eventually resettled and began a ministry of reconciliation in Guatemala. Working with global solidarity movements, churches and Guatemalan communities, she expresses truth and compassion in her poetry, wisdom in the face of suffering and a longing for love and hope to prevail.

Her books include *Secrets of God's Reign* (2002), *The Certainty of Spring* (1993) and *Threatened with Resurrection* (1982).

The Fig Tree and Women Walking Together seek volunteers and donors to share the costs of her visit and draw people to events.

For information, call 535-1813.

Youth help rebuild homes in Mississippi

Eighteen high school students from 11 parishes in Eastern Washington went to Waveland, Miss., on the Gulf Coast Aug. 11 to 19 as part of Catholic Charities' Katrina Relief Service Team.

They built a small deck and a wheelchair ramp for an elderly man who found access to his own house difficult. He said, "You made an old guy with little hope and receiving hospice care very happy in my fall of life."

The teens also put up sheetrock and did finish work for bathrooms

in two other families' homes.

Catholic Charities underwrote the trip from donations made after the hurricane hit.

Scott Cooper, director of Parish Social Ministry, said that "the Katrina Relocation program has now been closed, and this seemed like stewardship for the remaining funds."

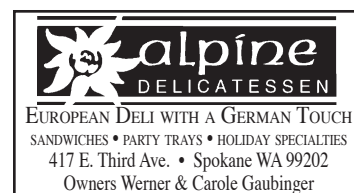
The teens will share their experiences with their home parishes and with high school classes.

Seven adult chaperones accompanied the teens and supervised

the work operations.

Because the need continues, plans have been made to arrange a similar service trip to the same community next summer.

For information, call 358-4253.



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Transitions program plans a breakfast and a luncheon

Transitions, which provides programs for homeless women in Spokane, will host its fifth annual breakfast and its first annual lunch, on the theme "People Who Care Helping Women Who Dare."

The breakfast will be at 7 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 10, and the lunch will be at noon, Thursday, Oct. 11, at the Red Lion Hotel at the Park.

The events raise funds for and awareness about Transitions programs: Women's Hearth, the Transitional Living Center,

EduCare and Miryam's House.

The featured speaker will be Joy Milos, CSJ, a professor in the Religious Studies Department at Gonzaga University.

Other speakers are Kathy, a past resident of Miryam's House who is working on her master's degree in social work, and Becky Ward, the Transitions Board chair who will speak on behalf of women who are no longer alive because of violence against women.

A video will depict Transitions' outreach to homeless women.

For information, call 325-6702.

The Fig Tree's 2007 Faith in Action Dialogue

Women Walking Together, Gonzaga University, Whitworth University, Bioneers and the Kalispel Tribe present



Guatemalan poet, theologian, and human rights advocate

Julia Esquivel

Oct. 13 to 22, 2007

Her poetry and stories touch human rights and indigenous people in the midst of poverty and oppression

Mon., Oct. 15 - Women's Hearth

7 p.m., Tues., Oct. 16 - Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga University

7 p.m., Wed., Oct. 17 - Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University

Thurs., Oct. 18, Kalispel Reservation

Friday to Sun., Oct. 19 to 21, Bioneers Conference

**For information, call
535-1813 or 534-2307**

The 25th Annual YWCA Women of Achievement Luncheon

Tuesday, October 9th, 2007 ★ Convention Center



Featuring Keynote Speaker

alfre woodard

A triumph of talent, Alfre Woodard is known for her outstanding performances in *The Forgotten*, *Beautyshop*, and recently she has added an appealing twist to the hit show, *Desperate Housewives*, as the mysterious "Betty Applewhite."

Off screen, Woodard is an activist who supports progressive causes. Committed to political activism in the United States and Africa, Woodard helped found Artists for a New South Africa, a nonprofit organization dedicated to democracy and equality in South Africa and civil rights in the United States. She also has been active in efforts to raise AIDS awareness and promote physical fitness and access to healthcare. A voice tinged with emotion and passion for her work and the causes she believes in, Woodard creates an afternoon that you will never forget.

★ **Doors 11 a.m. Program Noon** ★ **RSVP 509.326.1190x154** ★

In recognition of our 25th Luncheon a minimum donation of \$125 is suggested. Proceeds benefit the YWCA of Spokane.

Info www.ywca.org/spokane

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Through preparation of Directory of Congregations and Community Resources

AmeriCorps member seeks to encourage service-learning opportunities

Continued from page 1
courses in social movements, and in Native American and European history, he considers service learning helpful in history and social science education.

From his involvement in the Practicum in Community Involvement (PICI) class at Lewis and Clark High School, Malcolm saw the value of students helping in community service.

He has also participated in outreach through his involvement in Cooperative Ministries in Higher Education campus ministry programs at both WSU and EWU. He has helped build cinder-block houses in Mexico and Habitat for Humanity houses in Spokane. He also organized interfaith dialogues after Sept. 11 in Pullman and went on an Urban Plunge, touring and volunteering at downtown Spokane outreach programs.

In addition to the directory being a resource for teachers seeking community service for their students, it is an information-and-referral tool for the faith, nonprofit and business communities.

Geographically, Malcolm found an overlap in regions, districts, synods, conferences and other sub-regions of the faith community, as well as nonprofits.

"We added agencies in rural and outlying communities, expanding beyond Spokane, because it helps the congregations be aware of the networks and resources available, and the gaps," he said. "What we have produced is a start, an example of programs available."

While the advertising and sponsor base supporting publication of the directory is primarily in Spokane, he hopes the content will extend into the wider geographic area it covers.

Congregations in smaller communities often collaborate with other churches in food banks, child care, youth programs, senior housing and other ministries, he found.

"We included a question on the update forms to learn about



Malcolm Haworth carries a box of directories into The Fig Tree office at Unity House at Gonzaga University.

community outreach of congregations," he said, believing that providing information available in a common resource will expand awareness and collaboration among congregations.

Malcolm seeks to recruit more volunteers to assist in compiling more information on church outreach programs and making it available online.

Volunteers helped make the 2007-2008 directory possible. Some helped by calling regional offices and congregations. Others helped with proof reading and distribution. Assistance with distribution is still needed.

The Fig Tree printed 5,000 directories—1,000 more than last year. About 700 of them are still available at the office, religious book stores and at displays.

While directories are free, do-

nations make the effort possible.

After a "user evaluation" meeting in the spring, several features were added and content was reorganized. Changes include tabs to denote different sections, a one-page table of contents on the opening page, a calendar, discount pages, a partly blank page for notes and emergency contacts on the last page.

Despite issues in updating the database, verifying information and dealing with computer glitches, Malcolm has received calls and emails regarding only a few dozen corrections, less than one percent.

He said that changes emailed during July were not received because the email overloaded, so he encourages people to re-send the information.

Malcolm hopes congregations

and organizations will continue to send updates to include online.

As he continues in a second term with AmeriCorps through July 2008, Malcolm seeks to expand some sections, such as retirement centers and senior programs, and to add some sections, such as one on arts and culture.

He would also like input from people who use the directory regu-

larly, so he can consider their suggestions in next year's edition.

For information, call 323-4037 or email directory@thefigtree.org.

A Course in Miracles Introduction

Oct, 20 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

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Whitman - Council on Aging & Human Services (800) 809-3351

Northern Ferry - Ferry County Community Services (509) 755-0912

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2008 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is 100th

Churches throughout the world are preparing for next year's Week of Prayer for Christian unity, which marks the 100th anniversary of the event.

Worship resources on the theme, "Pray without Ceasing," were prepared by ecumenical partners in the United States. They are on the World Council of Churches, www.wcc-coe.org.

Christians first joined in prayer for Christian unity during a week-

long celebration bridging the feasts of St. Peter and St. Paul, in 1908 at Graymoor, N.Y. In the northern hemisphere, Jan. 18 to 25 is the traditional date. In the southern hemisphere, it's Pentecost.

Explanations about the theolog-

ical and historical background of the week are given in a brochure jointly published and produced by the WCC's Commission on Faith and Order and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.



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Sorrento Centre has a variety of **fall retreats** to meet the needs of those seeking spiritual renewal. **October** marks our annual **Thanksgiving Work Weekend** with a focus on "Thanksgiving: In Spirit and In Truth." **November** there are two retreats offered: "Exploring the Signs, Symbols, and Meaning of the Book of **Revelation**" and "The Sorrento Centre **Silent Meditation Retreat**."

Kenyan's heritage includes Islam, Christianity, traditional religions

Giving priest a respect for each and awareness of how dialogue can help in African conflicts

Continued from page 1
the dead," he said. "Christianity and anthropologists misunderstood that as worship."

Father Patrick said that each of the religions has elements that should be discouraged, aspects that need to be challenged. Each tends to absorb the cultural influences under which they grew, but each tends not to distinguish the culture from the faith.

"Each religion has positive teachings that should influence people to live peacefully. Each also has negative aspects which can result in violence," he said.

Father Patrick expanded on that concept at a spring conference offered by the U.S. Institute for Peace, Pax Christi and Gonzaga University.

He also addresses effects of Christianity and Islam as imported religions in his recently published book, *Rival Claims for the Soul of Africa*, written in 1995, published and available on Sept. 1.

"Neither Christianity nor Islam is a super religion. Both need to learn to respect each other and traditional religions," he said. "There is no dialogue if a religion considers itself superior. We only achieve dialogue in the context of equality."

In Kenya, about 30 percent of the people are Catholic, 38 percent Protestants and 15 percent Muslim. Many also continue some traditional practices.

Each transferred conflicts

Father Patrick said that after the Prophet Mohammed began preaching monotheism in Saudi Arabia, polytheists formed an army and fought against his followers. After he died in 632, there was a battle for succession, which continues through the generations, with backers of different leaders killing other leaders in a cycle of revenge that led to the battle of Karbala in southern Iraq, he said. Since then, two groups formed in Islam: Shiites and Sunni.

Conflicts in Islam were transferred to Africa, and the Arabization of North Africa accompanied the spread of Islam.

"Africans were made Arabs by intermarriage and culture," he

said. "Arabization and Islamization continue now."

Christianity came in the 19th century with the colonial scramble for Africa, dividing Africa among European imperial powers who arrived with agents of religion.

Christianity has also had its conflicts, battles and divisions. It has been involved in wars in Europe and the Americas. It brought those divisions to Africa, reflected in granting different territory to different European nations and their churches.

For example, Italians came to Somalia, Eritrea and Libya, bringing Catholicism. Christianity arrived in Kenya in 496 with the explorer Vasco da Gama.

Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of the Republic of Kenya, said "there was no difference between the missionaries and the colonizers."

"Originally, we had the land. Missionaries arrived with the Bible and asked us to close our eyes and pray. When we opened our eyes, we had the Bible and they had the land," Father Patrick said, clarifying that "missionaries did wonderful things, but came with the colonizers, who used three methods: God (religion), glory (power) and gold (economic), to force people to move."

Father Patrick said both Muslims and Christians enslaved Africans, influencing their cultures. To avoid being enslaved, the Mursi people of Ethiopia sought to make their wives ugly with mouth stretching. It worked so that became part of their culture."

As Europeans set borders, tribes were divided.

"My ancestors lived on both sides of the river that now divides Uganda and Kenya. They have at times been denied permission to see relatives across the river," he said. "Boundaries affected people. Religions and governments worked together setting those boundaries."

Africans welcomed both

Father Patrick said African traditional religion welcomed both Islam and Christianity because of the African philosophy of commu-

nity: "I am because we are."

That philosophy, he believes, can today prepare the ground for dialogue and for solidarity that can build peace.

"In African traditional religion, the future is a dream and yesterday is a memory. We live now when we can make time for dialogue," Father Patrick said.

"Dialogue is not a monologue about one being superior and another being inferior," he said.

Starting points for dialogue include mutual respect and understanding, without accepting teachings of the other religion.

Dialogue is possible

He believes dialogue among Christians, Muslims and traditional religions is possible.

In Africa, many families are mixed—the father Muslim, the mother Christian and the children something else. That reality is conducive for dialogue, because families share common values despite the diverse beliefs.

He points out that dialogue requires understanding meanings and attitudes, taking risks, and engaging in give-and-take. For example, he has spoken and read the Koran in Tanzanian mosques to convey respect.

"We need to be humble for change to take place," he said.

The Golden Rule is common among religions, calling individuals to live in harmony, to do to others what they want done to them.

He also called for people to come together and learn the sources for disagreements, such as conflicts in the Nile Valley between the Dinka, Nuer and Nubians related to Islam, Christianity and traditional religions.

Sources of disagreement

Father Patrick listed some of the sources of disagreement and hindrances to dialogue:

- There is competition between Christians and Muslims for followers and land.
- Racial differences cause conflicts between Muslims, such as in Darfur, as well as between religions, such as the conflict between North and South Sudan.
- Conflicts result in refugees,

hungry children and widowed mothers struggling to survive.

• Theological hindrances to dialogue include mutual negative attitudes, bitter political exchanges and distortions, misunderstandings and rejections of other faiths' teachings and practices.

Father Patrick quoted a Swahili proverb that says, "where elephants fight, the grass is hurt" to make the point that as Islam and Christianity struggle in Africa for faith and ideologies, African culture and life are harmed, particularly in villages and slums.

"We need to consider who suffers when the giants fight in Africa," he said. "Christ's birth in a given place and culture reminds us of the need to respect each locality and culture."

Finding bonding points

So he promotes looking for bonding points among the faiths.

- He suggests dialogue at the grassroots, rather than waiting for dialogue among the leaders.
- In Africa, community forums

occur in market places, enhancing community solidarity. People talk about common concerns and ask leaders to make positive, sustainable change, he said.

• He encourages dialogue on Christian and Muslim holy days, when people can share their faith understandings and bridge cultural differences.

• Weddings and funerals are times Muslims, Christians and African traditional religion adherents come together as communities.

Father Patrick said that, while extremists in religions and politics use violence, people of faith need to use nonviolence to resolve social problems.

Inter-religious dialogue can make it possible for people to hear the voices of the voiceless and realize that the voice of those who suffer is God's voice.

In that common voice of God, Father Patrick believes there is common ground.

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Women Walking Together plans visit to Guatemala

The Jan. 17 to 26, 2008, Women Walking Together Journey to Guatemala will take women and men from the Inland Northwest to Guatemala to meet Guatemalan women working to end gender violence.

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Churches plan cooperative worship, action in Hillyard neighborhood

By Kathy Dellwo
For 97 years Hillyard has had a community gathering the first weekend of August. In the past, it has included a Sunday Worship in the Park, planned and led by one neighborhood congregation.

This year, four neighborhood churches came together on Sunday, the last day of the three-day Hillyard Festival, to celebrate Worship in the Park.

The Rev. Betty Krafft of St. Peter Lutheran suggested to festival planners that she would organize several churches to plan the service.

So on Sunday Aug. 5 four churches put signs on their doors: "Gone to the Park."

The sounds of music and laughter as people gathered for the 10 a.m. service filled Hillyard's Harmon Park.

It takes many caring people to make the Hillyard Festival happen, said Desi Bucknel, who has been the coordinator for six years. She was excited with the community involvement in the setup, a breakfast raising funds for the food bank, the traditional parade, motorcycle show, skateboard competition, booths and worship.

Three pastors joined Betty in planning and leading the worship—the Rev. Greg Luce of Minnehaha Covenant, the Rev. Cary Peden of Fellowship Church of God and the Rev. Mark Wheeler of Lidgerwood Presbyterian.

The choir included people from all four congregations.

After Betty welcomed people, there was prayer and singing.

Four community leaders were recognized for their contributions to the Hillyard neighborhood. They are Barb Stout and Sean Mock of the Minnehaha Neighborhood Council, Paul Hamilton of The Market housing nonprofits in Hillyard and Mike Fagan of the Hillyard Neighborhood Steering Committee.

Several people dramatized the story of a house built on the rock rather than sand. Children were rain, wind and floods. One man fell. One man stood like a rock.

Greg's sermon was about a God who takes "our want-to-get-away fright" and turns it into "come on down"—The Price Is Right phrase—based on story of Luke 19:1-10.

He believes "we need to serve the entire community not just an individual congregation."

He said he "was thrilled" to find support in Spokane for living out this value: "There is only one church in Spokane, and it belongs to Jesus. We need each other."

Greg, who is involved with the Greater Spokane Association of



**Clockwise:
Betty Krafft
opens worship;
worshippers, crowd
in; Cary Peden
leads singing; choir
sings, and children
join the festivities.**

Evangelicals, said the organization encourages the churches to come together in worship.

He said Worship in the Park "exactly what we should be doing."

Greg believes "Catholic" means "we are one Church with many church 'families' and a variety of ways to express our love for God. God has a big heart and enjoys our different ways of worship."

In the 1980s and 1990s, Holy Names Sisters Carol Lee and Bernadine Casey and Father Tom Caswell at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Hillyard exemplified that thought as they developed interchurch connections.

Father Tom met with several other Hillyard ministers for lunch once a month to share ideas of how to encourage caring community in the neighborhood.

Sometimes they had a Saturday evening ecumenical worship service.

Mike and Marge Brewer of St. Patrick's were active in those events as part of their expression of loving and caring for their neighbors. They have been active for 53 years in the Hillyard neighborhood.

Today, Greg said, he and other pastors in Northeast Spokane share goals to:

- demonstrate unity in Christ by understanding and accepting different ways to worship;
- serve the community in a tangible way,
- create opportunities for people to respond to the Good News of Jesus, and
- learn more about the people in our community.

Greg, who previously served

First Covenant Church in Spokane and taught at Snoqualmie Middle School for four years before returning to Spokane and ministry in 1995, told of partnerships churches are building with the community.

For example, his congregation hosted a "Night Out Against Crime," sponsored by the Minnehaha Neighborhood Council. Many neighbors came, along with people from Block Watch, the police and the fire department.

A few days later there was a picnic under their big Sycamore tree for members of Minnehaha Covenant Church and the Slavic Church of Mercy, which shares its building.

His church also works with Cooper Elementary School to serve neighborhood children.

Five years ago, they started a program called Bus Stop. The church was experiencing vandalism and had boarded up some windows.

One day they decided to take the boards off the windows and made signs inviting youth to have some free cocoa, cider and donuts before their school bus arrives each morning.

"It has made all the difference in relations," Greg said. "Now while waiting for their bus, children can come under an outdoor shelter and have a place that welcomes them."

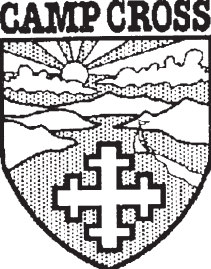
There are as many as 30 middle school youth at one time. They have had no vandalism since they started this ministry.

The church also has an after school program called JAM Club—Jesus and Me—from 3:30 to 5 p.m., Wednesdays. Of the

25 first to sixth graders who take part, few belong to the church. District 81 honored the church with a thank-you ceremony three years ago.

Greg said that he is "grateful to be of service to the community and to do so in Jesus' name."

For information, call 483-2552 or 487-4843.



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Honduran missionary becomes urban missionary in Spokane

Once a missionary in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica and Honduras, Ruth Palnick continues to work with Mission to the Americas. Now she's an urban missionary in Spokane.

As one of 300 missionaries supported by Mission to the Americas, a program of the Conservative Baptist Association in Denver, Colo., Ruth serves two days a week as a Hospice of Spokane chaplain, two days as a volunteer at the Women's Hearth and one day a week speaking and leading retreats and workshops.

Mission to the Americas appoints people "to do what God wants them to do," Ruth said, telling of finding her niche "outside the box on the front lines of specialized ministries, working beside people" at Tegucigalpa and Roatan in Honduras, in Phoenix and in Spokane.

Believing that God called her to Spokane, where she knew only one person, Ruth's ministry was full within three weeks of arriving.

At Hospice and the Women's Hearth, Ruth's ministry is simply to be with people, to converse with and befriend them.

A member of Hillyard Baptist, she describes herself as an evangelist called to follow Jesus by reaching out to people.

In her work one-to-one with women at the Women's Hearth, she gives spiritual care, prays with women and leads a knitting and crocheting class.

Ruth began by teaching these skills on Fridays with six women. Now the class involves 60 women with 25 usually coming each week. Sitting in a circle knitting or crocheting is a natural way to initiate conversations.

"Women who come to the Women's Hearth have many needs. They love to talk, share and be listened to," she said. "The knitting class always needs more volunteers to befriend them."

For the classes, she relies on donations of knitting needles, yarn, unfinished pieces or funds to buy the needles and yarn. Sometimes yarn shops donate supplies.

"We work with what we have. The women usually make multicolored objects, because they may not have enough yarn in one color. Necessity breeds creativity," Ruth said.

A mentally ill woman watched the group knit for 18 months. One day, she asked if she could learn to crochet. She was unstoppable once she learned. Her outlook changed when she sat in the circle and talked with other women.

"Homeless people are usually on the receiving end, but women at the hearth may knit a prayer shawl for a woman with cancer, or make scarves and caps to give away," she said.

Ruth said her upbringing in a low-income family of an American Baptist pastor in Salem, Ore., helped her identify with people on the "hard roads of life."

"I could not do what I do on my own. God is the foundation of my life," she said.

After graduating from Seattle Pacific University in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in nursing, she was a nurse for 11 years and served on the state certification team in Olympia for five years.

In 1986, she went to Western Baptist Seminary in Portland, earning a master's degree in 1989



Ruth Palnick holds a multi-colored knit ball.

in intercultural ministry—a combination of cultural anthropology and theology.

During her last year of seminary, she lived with a family and worked in a hospital in a poor ghetto in the Dominican Republic. She helped an ophthalmologist with cataract surgery.

In December 1989, she went to Costa Rica to study Spanish for a year.

The next eight years, she lived in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, helping a Honduran doctor run a hospital for people with AIDS in the red-light district, surrounded by 60 brothels. She was also nurse and chaplain for the clinic and hospice in a village 25 miles from the city.

Early on in the city, when she saw five transvestite prostitutes wearing miniskirts and earrings, she told God it was "a big mistake" for her to be there, because she would have a hard time loving them.

She asked that God love them through her. Patients included business people as well as street people, because the clinic was the only place dispensing drugs to treat HIV.

At first, one businessman was suspicious of the street people. Even though he was rich, no one else would treat him. He had no place else to go.

The doctor put him with an outspoken dying man who loved God, and they became friends.

In Honduras, Ruth also hosted short-term teams from various

denominations, visiting and staying in communities, buying and preparing food with local women and helping with local projects.

By 1996, the AIDS clinic was staffed by Honduran nurses, so Ruth was sent to Roatan, an island off the Honduran Coast, to replace a nurse at the clinic who needed to care for her mother.

"When Mission to the Americas' missionaries train local people to run the programs, the missionaries leave," she said.

Ruth trained staff and nurses at Roatan for two years until Hurricane Mitch hit. Although it killed 14,000 Hondurans, no one on Roatan died. She drove a truck full of people to the other side of the island to weather the storm. The clinic survived.

Because of hurricane damage and because Ruth's rheumatoid arthritis began to make it difficult for her to do nursing, another mission crew was sent, and she came home to live in Phoenix.

There, she continued to work with Mission to the Americas as a Hospice chaplain, serving many Hispanic patients.

After Ruth, who has lived with diabetes for 35 years, learned in 2002 that she also had Parkinson's disease, her mother commented: "Three strikes and you're still not out."

Ruth has also followed the advice of a friend who said, "Let God teach you how to use having Parkinson's."

Missing the Northwest and seeking a dry climate because

of her arthritis, she moved in September 2004 to Spokane, where she is "letting God use my Parkinson's," serving as president of Spokane's Parkinson's Resource Center.

When a woman at the Women's Hearth said she couldn't knit, because her hands were too shaky, Ruth told her to watch her knit.

"My hands were shaking with Parkinson's," said Ruth.

As a hospice chaplain, she finds that as she helps dying people face the end of life and reconcile with God and their families, people often ask, "Why me?"

"I wish I had an answer, but I believe God is with us through suffering and pain," she said.

Ruth also directs Tremble Clefs, a 15-member choir of people with Parkinson's. They sing in nursing homes. Singing, she said, helps loosen their stiff facial muscles and vocal cords.

In retreats and workshops she leads for church groups, Ruth also deals with why God allows suffering and what people can

African exhibit starts

The Zimbabwe Artists Project Exhibit and Sale with story quilts and wall hangings runs Sept. 30 to Oct. 28, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Fort Wright Dr. It is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Mondays to Fridays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., weekends.

Proceeds go to women artists in rural Zimbabwe to buy basics for living. For information, call 323-6703 or visit www.zimbabweartistsproject.org.

learn from it.

"Having a handful of chronic diseases—arthritis, diabetes and Parkinson's—helps me understand others who experience hard times," she said. "God enables me to keep going."

For information, call 624-1454 or visit www.mtta.org.



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Media literacy specialist depicts how media manipulate people

Decades ago, Wellesley College graduate Jean Kilbourne saw a disturbing ad that changed her life.

The ad said a product “works the way women think,” implying women were too stupid to remember. It showed a woman doing laundry on Monday, ironing on Tuesday and so forth.

“It was insulting,” she said, speaking at a recent conference on “Surviving and Thriving,” sponsored by the Women’s Leadership Conference and the Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media at Spokane Community College.

Jean began putting ads on her refrigerator, each painting an image of women. In the 1970s, she wrote *Killing Us Softly* and overcame her terror about public speaking. She now talks on media literacy around the world.

She is recognized as a pioneer in her work to challenge alcohol and tobacco ads and images of women in media.

While there have been some improvements, some aspects of the problem are worse.

“It’s hard to raise healthy children in a toxic cultural environment,” she said, “so we need public education to help us realize we are citizens, not just consumers.”

“Ads are a powerful educational force in society through which industries sell attitudes, not just products,” she said.

While 50 corporations controlled most information in the United States 20 years ago, now just a handful control 90 percent of the information, she said.

“Most people think they are not influenced by ads, but they are exposed to 5,000 ads a day and spend two years of their lives watching ads,” Jean said.

New techniques include pregnant women allowing corporations to tattoo logos on their bellies for a fee and parents auctioning naming rights for their children to corporations.

“You can’t grow up in America and not be influenced by ads. The influence is quick and subliminal. Only eight percent of an ad message is received by the conscious mind,” she explained.

For example, people still smoke even though “cigarettes kill more Americans than alcohol, cocaine, heroin, fires, car crashes, homicides, suicides and AIDS combined,” she said. “It is the most addictive drug and the hardest addiction to kick.”

Jean knows. She started smoking at 13 to look glamorous and numb her depression after her mother died when she was nine.

She says information to free people from addiction is censored.



Jean Kilbourne persists in her efforts to spread media literacy.

“Ads lie. Young healthy people are shown in ads promoting cigarettes. Men tie masculinity to smoking one brand that actually lowers testosterone and causes impotence. It first was marketed to women, until Marlboro realized women would use a man’s product but men would not use a woman’s product,” she said. “Half of teens who smoke smoke that brand, which spends \$50 billion on ads.”

“Cigarette advertisers say they just seek to influence adults to switch brands, but the purpose is to recruit new users—replacement smokers, because 2,000 smokers quit and 1,000 die each day, so they need 3,000 children to start smoking to replace those who quit or die,” Jean said.

Ads present an ideal image of beauty women strive and fail to achieve, because photos are digitally altered to erase scars, blemishes, pores and even weight.

“Bodies of celebrity women are horrifyingly small and thin, as if to say women should take up less space or even disappear,” Jean observed.

She attributes eating disorders to ads. Language once related to sexual morality now relates to eating. A girl or woman considers herself “bad” if she breaks her diet.

Jean said women’s magazines send a double message, promoting a diet beside a cover photo of a rich dessert.

“Because American media are global,” she said, “models in ads are young, thin, white, blonde and blue-eyed all over the world, making women everywhere feel bad about themselves.”

“The solution is to transform our cultural attitudes,” she said.

Jean decries sexualizing little girls and infantilizing adult women. The lines of porn are blurring

with more and more graphic sexual messages.

Because of that, she believes age-appropriate sex education in schools needs to dispel dishonest information children learn about anatomy and relationships from TV programs and magazine images.

Her work challenges the way ads turn people into products, commodities or objects, not subjects of relationships.

She relates the widespread violence against women to advertising dehumanizing women and she sees an increase in all types of violence in TV programs, as well as in advertising.

Ads make men feel they are failures if they do not make enough money. A rich, unattractive old man can have a beautiful woman, but there is contempt for older women, Jean said.

“Relationships are trivialized. Alcohol, cigarettes and food are sexualized. Sex images are used to sell,” she continued.

A sign of hope is the change in alcohol and tobacco advertising. Cigarette ads are off TV and ads elsewhere must tell the dangers.

Thirty years ago, she felt alone in her work. Now there are many books and workshops evaluating media and advertising.

Media advertising in corporate trade publications, however, continues to suggest that the purpose of media is to deliver people to advertisers, as if advertisers rent the eyeballs of TV viewers and media exist to round up an audience for advertisers.

“The alcohol industry does not sell just bottles and glasses of alcohol but a fantasy of happiness, athleticism and sexuality. It does not express the reality of sexually transmitted diseases, birth defects, rapes, accidents, deaths and im-

tence alcohol creates in men and women,” Jean said.

“Advertising helps create addiction to alcohol and promotes a normalization of drinking that denies the realities of how damaging it is as a public health issue.”

In programs on media literacy, Jean accompanies verbal presentations with slides of ads demonstrating her points.

An ad agent advertised: “If you have high ambitions, hire us. He did!” It’s accompanied by a photo of President George W. Bush. It goes on: “If we can create ads that persuade Hispanic people to vote Republican, we can persuade them to buy your products.”

“Advertising spin leads people to vote against their own best interests,” she said.

“Our environment cannot sustain the level of consumerism

promoted,” she added. “We need to be concerned about both our health and our freedom.”

Her books sum up her message: *Can’t Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel*; *Killing Us Softly*; *Slim Hopes* and *Calling the Shots*.

For information, visit www.jeankilbourne.com.

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Project counters appeal of gangs with jobs

Jobs Not Jails is both a slogan and an organization.

The logo appears on clothing and accessories to create community awareness while it deters gang life by providing jobs for young people in West Central Spokane through Project HOPE (Helping Our young People Excel).

"Too often, 'gang' has become a four-letter word no one wants to talk about. Our goal is to help people find constructive ways to talk about gangs and to help young people choose viable options—especially employment as an economic incentive—to reduce the appeal of gang life," said Pat Copeland-Malone, who is coordinating several efforts at workforce development in the neighborhood through Project HOPE.

Jobs not Jails logos are printed on T-shirts, tank tops, coats, handbags, tote bags, hats, work shirts, dress denim, sweatshirts and other items on display at the Book Parlor, 1414 W. Broadway. Organizers are seeking other outlets.

Pat said they will also produce shirts for the Riverfront Farm Project and God's Gym, which re-opened in early August at Salem Lutheran Church, 1428 W. Broadway with five former gang members serving as volunteers.

"Nothing stops a bullet like a job," said Pat.



Theo volunteers to help at God's Gym and Jobs Not Jails.

Other workforce development programs he is encouraging include a Youth Entrepreneurship Program and a Youth Landscape Business, as well as the Riverfront Farm Project.

He also is researching what other products to produce in partnership with other outlets, including churches.

"As we mature, we will learn more about what people will buy and will find more ways to involve youth in building skills and leadership," he said,

He believes that churches will become interested in the social

justice aspects of the anti-gang effort.

God's Gym, which operated in the 1990s at Central United Methodist Church downtown, is an avenue for drawing youth into recreation and awareness of alternatives to gang life.

Having former gang members who are now in school and employed engaged in the effort makes it more credible, Pat said. Their stories of turning their lives around can motivate young people more than a nonprofit director or counselor can.

For information, call 280-1702.

Our Place observes 20 years of meeting needs

Our Place Community Ministries recently celebrated 20 years of working in partnership with faith-based and other organizations to assist neighbors in West Central Spokane with unmet needs or emergencies to improve their quality of life.

Located for about six years at 1509 W. College, the outreach center is expanding into the half of the building previously housing other offices.

With that expansion, it will soon be able to offer laundry services, in addition to having expanded space for its food bank storage and its clothing bank.

It serves primarily people living south of Montgomery and west of Division to the Spokane River with food from Second Harvest in the Inland Northwest, Northwest Harvest in Seattle and neighborhood food donations.

In addition, the center accepts and distributes clothing and personal hygiene items.

In the first six months of its fiscal year, Our Place served 2,946 households.

Our Place was founded in 1987 as one of several ecumenical neighborhood outreach centers



Our Place held open house and celebration.

started in that period.

Churches supporting Our Place Ministries are Salem Lutheran, St. Joseph's Catholic, St. Nicholas Orthodox, St. Paul's United Methodist and Westminster Presbyterian.

The Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary joins those con-

gregations too support the ministry with grants and volunteers.

More than 60 volunteers make the effort possible. Our Place is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and the last Saturday of each month.

For information, call 326-7267 or email ourplace@cet.com

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Will media just cover terrorism as usual or find intriguing peace stories

Media are part of the communication cycle that helps create and encourage terrorism.

Entertainment media provide ideas—scenarios such as “Towering Inferno” in 1977 depicting planes crashing into the World Trade towers and the Pentagon.

News media criteria for what is news and how to cover it lend to providing the saturation coverage terrorists want.

Media also feed the spiral of violence, by saying the public “wants” violence.

Many in media believe that their audiences want revenge—more violence which stirs more revenge and cycles of hate, mistrust and injustice.

In reports of violence against innocent victims, they serve the terrorists’ desire to send a message to people in power in governments. Sadly, governments do not discern the cry against human hunger, immoral media and economic injustice.

Imagine if media understood how to present peace as compelling, dramatic,

exciting, creative and possible. Imagine if more media helped us see ways to resolve conflicts, find solutions, enter dialogue, discern cooperative action, respect differences and hear about needs.

Where is the splash media coverage reporting that the United Church of Christ is circulating a petition seeking 100,000 signatures—a petition calling for an end to the war on terror, the war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan—all wars.

The petition and prayer call for the “humility and courage to acknowledge failure and error, to accept the futility of our current path and to seek new paths of peacemaking in the Middle East.”

It calls for “responsibility for the destruction,” repentance in our nation and “recognition in our churches that security is found in submitting to Christ, not by dominating others.”

Imagine living our faith! We know it’s possible! The Fig Tree offers intriguing articles about peace- and justice-making.

A recent issue of “Media Development,” the quarterly publication of the World Association of Christian Communication, focuses on “Media Terror.”

Articles struggle to define “terrorism,” which is generally considered to be violence against civilians for political aims—applying to states as well as non-governmental groups.

The writers cover how the “war on terror” is intended to create a “culture of fear”—leaving the average person vulnerable to manipulation by all three parts of what they describe as the triangle of terror: terrorists, government leaders and media.

We have often discussed in our editorials how fear blinds us to reason and promotes acceptance of policies that are counter-productive for the society, civilization and individuals. For example, we often hear that we are fighting for freedom, but meanwhile, policies to provide security against terrorism are eroding treasured freedoms of habeas corpus, free speech, free travel,

immigration, human rights and privacy. From the Cold War enemy in a competing state and ideology, we now have an amorphous enemy—the terrorist, the foreigner, perhaps our neighbor.

When the trilogy of government, terrorists and media conspire to teach us to hate and fear, they erode our faith, which says to love and respect, to welcome strangers, to do good to those who hurt us.

We recommend reading articles at www.waccglobal.org/mediadevelopment and checking what your denomination has done or said at national gatherings over the summer.

We suggest searching for “media terror” on the web to find out what’s being said.

We also encourage thoughtful evaluation of what you watch and read. Who is trying to influence you to do what? Who will you influence to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly?

Mary Stamp
Editor

Grandmothering stirs broad reverence for life, hope for a better world

“So what’s a baby sister, anyway—and why am I supposed to be so excited about the idea?”

This seemed to be my grandson’s unspoken question when people asked him about the impending arrival.

Jackson seems to have been aware that something was going on, and he was befuddled and easily upset, besides being two.

One of the blessings of being grandma-in-waiting has been watching his glimmers of understanding, while helping to keep his life as normal as possible during the two weeks before his sister’s birth and the week after.

Books from the children’s section of the library about being a big brother told him what babies can’t do. Then he began looking at his own little album about his first month, pointing out “Baby Jackson” and BJ with each of his close relatives.

He had been given a baby doll earlier. His interest heightened the day his mother

put a diaper on it. There was something he could identify with! He spent much of the rest of that day diapering and undiapering the doll. Once as he removed the diaper, he looked intently inside it and proclaimed, “Stinky baby!”

He seemed to be catching on. He was curious about the baby on our visits to the hospital, but he didn’t ask to hold her.

He brought a plant for Mommy and a birthday card for the baby to present on the first visit.

On the second visit, he demonstrated a new animal train to Daddy.

After the visits he started using the baby’s name, practiced the complicated parts and made some observations about it.

We sat playing with a toy carpentry set while waiting for the car to pull in. His welcome home card for his baby sister has been colored and “signed.”

When the car pulled in, both he and

the dog rushed for the door. The dog had been as lonesome as Jackson had those three days.

In the evening, Jackson asked to hold the baby, but she cried before she was given to him. Hesitant, he decided to wait.

When she was quiet again, he and Daddy read her her first bedtime story—a book of animals and the sounds they make.

In just two-and-a-half weeks, a little boy became aware and respectful of a new life in his family.

They will probably be normal siblings, but we can still hope that those feelings will continue even when he has no specific memory of meeting his sister, and that they will expand to include humanity in general.

Let us hope we can all become respectful enough of life to concentrate on growing more skillful at finding the paths to peace and justice instead of the roads to war.

How can we say we value life if we don’t

promote what gives life value and stop sending our grandchildren off to wars that don’t prove anything except who has the greatest variety of weapons?

Life is precious, all life—not just pre-birth, not just shortly after birth, not just in childhood innocence, but throughout all life.

That’s why we encourage our children when they bicker to make up and forgive. If we expect that of our children, why not expect it of our communities, our politicians, our religions, our media, our nations and all our encounters on this planet?

What do grandmothers hope for their grandchildren? We hope for good education. We hope they will find good jobs with good pay—meaningful work—a vocation. We hope for quality health care, economic justice, a healthy environment and global peace. We hope to teach the gifts of the spirit to make it so.

Nancy Minard - Editorial Team

Letter to the Editor

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

It takes effort to turn away from fear or sadness. The number of young men and women from our region who are dying in Iraq grows. There is plenty to worry about. There seems to be plenty to fear. This is not how we are meant to live. This is not why the gift of life has been given.

Even in the darkest times we still have the words of the prophets and of Jesus to remind us that we are not alone. “I will never leave you.”

So we are called to courage in our personal lives and courage on behalf of those who need our strength. Let us live lives of such hope and such faith that we change our culture of fear. Let us move slowly to judgment and quickly to compassion. Let us remember the sacredness of our lives.

The Rev. Andy CastroLang
Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ

Consumerism, bigger is better, might makes right, greed, “what’s in it for me” and nationalism. The “evil one” comes in such seductive packages. “It is so natural. Everyone is doing it.”

To be a follower of Jesus is to place our citizenship in the Realm of God before all others. Jesus calls us to think and act in terms of the Realm of God not in terms of our culture.

We have to move from our own self-centered interest to seeing the larger picture, to see from the perspective of God. Jesus prayed that though we live in this world

that we not be of this world. I know that this is an entirely different mind set I am asked to have, so I must evaluate who I am and what I do on a daily basis.

The Rev. David Helseth
Englewood Christian Yakima

We know that if we are going to make it we have to pull together. If we are to succeed, we have to learn a new way. Hard times present us with choices. We can retreat or we can pool our resources and make something happen. We can throw up our hands and go back to what is familiar or we can build on our strengths, work through adversity and move forward. We have to find strength we never knew we had.

How about if we see a situation as an adventure calling us to a deeper faith and commitment to Jesus?

The Rev. Ann Frerks
Emmanuel Lutheran Cheney

The late Harry Emerson Fosdick began his speech this way: “I do not ask any of you here to change your religion, but I do ask all of you to face up to this question: What is your religion doing to your character?”

Today that question is more relevant than ever, and not just for Muslims and Jews. Paul wrote of the fruit of the Spirit, developing within each believer’s character the qualities of love, joy, peace patience, kind-

ness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. That’s what our religion will do to our character, according to the Apostle Paul.

Many folks emphasize doctrines, laws and supposed biblical timetables for the future rather than spiritual growth. Jesus said, “You shall know them by their fruits.” A church sign recently stated, “God wants spiritual fruits not religious fruitcakes.” Amen to that!

The Rev. John Temple Bristow
Country Homes Christian Church

Being persons of faith does not mean that we should believe everything we read or hear. It pains me how gullible some Christians can be! It appears there is a shortage of critical thinkers. Mainly I am thinking of the falsehoods that are spread so easily by email. While some of these are merely funny, there are others that spread misinformation. Our Christian Scriptures urge us to “test everything” and to “hold fast to what is good.”

The Rev. Steve Eriksen
Shalom UCC, Richland

Pluralism is what happens when people value their own culture and live comfortably and even proudly within it, but nevertheless realize that people of other cultures have something important to teach them, something valuable to give them and so become willing to learn from those who do not think at all like they, and to accept

the gifts of those who live very differently. Its value stems from the conviction that people really matter, and that we are all members of one another, tied together in a community that transcends all individual communities.

The Rev. Bill Ellis, Dean
Episcopal Cathedral of St. John

Fifty years have seen war and the promise of peace; marching for civil and women’s rights, the dismantling of legal segregation in our country and apartheid in South Africa. We have had 10 presidents, two were impeached, one resigned and one was assassinated.

Fifty years ago, we would never have thought of talking on the phone while we drove the car. Landing on the moon was a pipe dream and smoking was encouraged for your health.

Fifty years has changed our culture and our church. In 1957, the number of women ordained in the Methodist Church could be counted on one hand. We felt secure in our churches and in our families.

Fifty years seems like a long time, and yet it is no time at all. The most provocative question is: What are we now waiting for? What new wonders and possibilities are in front of us? All in all this day is a wonderful time to be a church family ready to be delighted and surprised at where God will take us in the next 50 years.

The Rev. Joyce O’Connor-Magee
Manito United Methodist Church

Restaurant relay raises funds for food

On Saturday, Sept. 15, the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant is planning a relay walk from URM, a grocery wholesaler on Hamilton and Trent to St. Paul's United Methodist Church at 1620 N. Monroe.

Since 1988, the restaurant has grown from serving one dinner per week to eight people to serving nutritional meals on Tuesday and Thursday evenings to more than

100 people who might otherwise go hungry.

The goal is for the relay to help meet the project costs of \$166,000 per year.

Teams of five people will each load 100 pounds of food on hand-trucks at URM, which provides food to the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant.

The teams will push the food on the hand-trucks to St. Paul's, passing the food from one team member to the other at prearranged sites along the Centennial Trail.

At St. Paul's, team members will carry the food down the staircase to the restaurant.

Each team is being asked to raise \$500 in sponsorships.

Following the relay, there will be a carnival in the St. Paul's parking lot.

For information, call 487-3420

Bioneers offers practical solutions

Spokane will host a satellite broadcast of the 2007 Bioneers Conference on "Solutions to the Planet's Most Pressing Problems" from Oct. 19 to 21 at Spokane Falls Community College.

In response to the United Nations' Millennium Ecosystem Report warning about human activity is putting a strain on the natural functions of earth, the Bioneers Conference offers practical solutions and technologies to help restore the earth's ecosystems and heal human communities.

Local presenters at afternoon workshops will explore solutions to local and regional issues.

Guatemalan poet Julia Esquivel, Guatemalan will speak on Friday evening and Sunday.

For information, call 209-2394 or visit www.sustainspokane.org

October events set

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., October 8 to 12, there will be an **iconography class** with a Russian Master at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox, 1703 N. Washington. For information, call (208) 687-202

The Annual **YWCA Women of Achievement Luncheon** will be held at noon, Tuesday, Oct. 9, at the Convention Center. The featured speaker is Alfre Woodard, TV actress and activist promoting health care in Africa and the United States. For information, call 326-1190 ext.154.

Centolia Maldonado Vasquez an indigenous leader from Oaxaca, Mexico, will speak on "Connecting the Dots: Free Trade, Migration, and the Popular Resistance in Oaxaca," at 7 p.m., Monday, Oct. 15, at Gonzaga University and at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 16, at Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University. For information, call 503-287-7847.



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Calendar of Events

- Sept 6

• Catholicism for a New Millennium, "Eating Is a Moral Act," Brother David Andrews, Catholic Rural Life Conference, Barbiari Moot Court Room Gonzaga Law School, 7:30 p.m.
- Sept 8

• "Salaam on Islam: Waging Peace on Muslims in the Spirit of Christ—A Fresh Approach to Looking at Islam for Christians, Paul Gordon Candler, Episcopal priest working in the Middle East, Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave., 9:30-11:30 a.m., Cheney, 2-4 p.m.
- Sept 9

• Dedication of iCHOICE Life Services center, 519 B St., Cheney, 2-4 p.m.
- Sept 10

• "Peace One Day," free screening of film for International Day of Peace, Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, 7 p.m.
- Sept 11

• Congregational Crises: Healing from Organizational Injuries, Nancy Isaacson, Institute for Congregational Leadership, Clare Center, 4624 E Jamieson Rd., 9 a.m.-3 p.m. – 897-9223
- Sept 12, 26

• Pax Christi, St. Joseph's Church, 1503 W. Dean, noon.
- Sept 13

• Informational meeting for Community Leadership Academy, Salem Lutheran, 1428 W. Broadway, 7 p.m. – 533-4706
- Sept 15

• iCHOICE open house, Cheney, 4-6 p.m. – 327-0701
- Sept 15

• March to End the War in Iraq, ANSWER Coalition, Thornton Murphy Park on 29th & Ray, Rally, 1 p.m., walk to Southeast Blvd. – 838-7870
- Sept 16

• "Total Denial," EarthRights International film, Magic Lantern Theatre, 25 W. Main, 3 p.m.
- Sept 17

• Phil Hough, Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Jepson Center, Gonzaga University, 5:30 p.m.
- Sept 20-21

• Grand Opening for the Saranac portion of Community Building, 25 W Main
- Sept 21

• "Peace One Day," International Peace Day, Raymond Reyes speaking, Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga University, 7 p.m.
- Sept 21-22

• American Christian Writers Conference, Mirabeau Park Hotel, 1100 N. Sullivan – 924-9000
- Sept 21-23

• "Quaker Spirituality: A Spirituality of Holiness," Carole Spencer, recently at the Friends World Committee in Ireland, 1612 W. Dalke: Friday, 6 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. – 327-7852
- Sept 22

• Heart Shrine Buddhist Relics Tour, Unity Church, 2900 S Bernard, 7 p.m.
- Sept 22

• Friend to Friend 5-K Fun Walk/Run, starting at Avista, 1411 E. Mission, 10 a.m. – 483-1600
- Sept 25

• Need to Know, "The Future of Food," a film on farming, Emmanuel Lutheran, 314 S. Spruce, 6:30 p.m.
- Sept 26

• Futurewise Feast with Friends, progressive dinner and discussion, Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, 6-9 p.m. – Kitty@Futurewise.org
- Sept 27

• Spokane Hope for a Wild Future dinner and auction, Conservation Northwest, Davenport Hotel, 6-9:30 p.m. – www.conservationnw.org/about/spokane-auction
- Sept 27-29

• Greek Festival 2007, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 1703 N. Washington 11 a.m.-2 p.m. lunch, 4:30-8 p.m., dinner – 328-9310
- Sept 28

• "Standing Up, Speaking Out: Writers and Musicians Take a Stand for Peace," Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Fort Wright Drive, 7 p.m. – 323-8708.
- Sept 29

• Troops Out Now! Coalition March on Washington (D.C.).
- Sept 30

• Community Welcome Home Picnic for Veterans, Spokane's Coeur d'Alene Park, Browne's Addition, noon-5 p.m.
- Sept 30-Oct 2

• Zimbabwe Artists Project Exhibit and Sale, Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Ft. Wright, daily – 323-6703
- Oct 2

• March to End Domestic Violence, Faith Partners Against Domestic Violence, YWCA, 829 W. Broadway, to Our Lady of Lourdes, 5:30 p.m.
- Oct 3

• Fig Tree distribution, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m.
- Oct 4

• Fig Tree Board, Manito United Methodist, 3220 S. Grand, 9 a.m.
- Tues-Sat

• Habitat-Spokane work days - call 534-22552
- Fridays

• Colville Peace Vigil - call 675-4554
- 1st Sat

• Ministers' Fellowship Union and Minister's Wives/Widows Fellowship, 806 W. Indiana - 624-0522
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eMinistry trains lay leaders through telephone classes

While eMinistry began as a way to provide teleclasses to train lay Episcopalians, the Rev. Elizabeth Hasen envisions ecumenical expansion and outreach to rural, as well as urban, communities.

Teleclasses are taught to groups of people gathered by telephone in a conference call.

In her 10 years as rector of St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Louisville, Ky., Elizabeth found lay people needed more resources and practical expertise and training for outreach and spiritual ministries.

Near the end of her ministry there, she took a telephone class with more than 50 others around the world to learn to become a personal coach. She saw teleclasses as cost-effective lay training.

When she moved to Spokane in January 2005, she combined the need and the teaching approach to develop eMinistry, now a non-profit organization.

To support herself while she builds eMinistry, she does supply preaching at St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Ephrata and sells real estate, which gives her a flexible schedule that allows her to continue eMinistry.

Elizabeth grew up Episcopalian in Manhattan and earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from Amherst College in 1977. She wrote a thesis on the ordination of women in the Episcopal Church, but worked four years in social work and four in publishing before she thought of going to seminary. As a pre-teen, she thought of being a minister, but didn't think it was possible.

In 1986, she began the ordination process in Vermont, while working a few years with Habitat for Humanity and with a community center. In 1988, she went to Virginia Theological Seminary, graduating in 1991. Her field work included assisting at an African-American parish in Washington, D.C., working with Hospice in northern Virginia and assisting the rector of three villages in Newfoundland.

Ordained at the Episcopal Cathedral in Burlington, Vt., she was assistant there from 1991 until she went to Louisville in 1994.

In 2003, she trained as a personal coach, working one-to-one to help people to achieve goals, sometimes in person and sometimes over the phone.

In Sept. 2005, she realized she could offer teleclasses to help lay people improve skills for specialized ministries.

"While seminaries offer long-term training focused on Scripture and theology," she said, "eMinistry gives short-term training on practical matters."

For example, in Kentucky, a



Elizabeth Hasen

parishioner organized the congregation of 120 people to collect school supplies that the 30 teachers at the local elementary school were normally expected to provide.

Elizabeth thought it would have been helpful if she had known of other churches doing similar projects, so she could connect the member doing the project with someone who had experience.

"Rectors lack the time to research such information to support projects and ideas that lay people develop," she said.

Teleclasses are a way to do it. Elizabeth goes across the United States by checking websites to find out who is doing what in Episcopal churches and then contacting those people by email.

Through the searches, she recruits people to teach teleclasses and works with them to develop hour-long classes.

"It's cost effective lay education, giving people in the pews information they need when they need it," she said.

"We have an incredible loss of intellectual capital in ministry resources. We ask people to spend time to prepare and lead workshops at annual diocesan conventions or national events. They give the class once, and that's it," she said.

So Elizabeth set up a website and created the eMinistry website at www.eministry.org to describe the program and list classes.

Teleclasses start and end with prayer, and Elizabeth encourages teachers to tell how their faith relates to what they are teaching.

With endorsement from Bishop Jim Waggoner of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane, she incorporated eMinistry as a nonprofit in Nov. 2005—on her 50th birthday, she noted. This past March, eMinistry received tax-exempt status.

By December, she had some teachers. Bob Runkle, diocesan outreach coordinator and member at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in

Coeur d'Alene, developed a test class, which he offered in March 2006 for eight people in eight dioceses.

She pays teachers \$35, so classes need to have three students, paying \$12, to cover the cost.

From September 2006 to May 2007, 187 different people attended 31 classes. The next classes will be held September to November. She plans to offer classes six months of the year.

"Marketing is the challenge," said Elizabeth.

She promotes classes by emailing dioceses to have them announce the classes and by doing displays at diocesan and national conventions.

Elizabeth described some of the teachers and topics:

- The communications officer for the diocese of Southern Ohio led classes on congregational communication plans and writing press releases.
- The development officer of the Chicago diocese taught a class on preparing a narrative budget.
- A college chaplain led a class on parish-based campus ministry.
- A New Jersey author offered a class on forgiveness.

Other classes have been on substance abuse, the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals, congregational health ministry,

Christian formation, labyrinth meditation and lay preaching.

The eMinistry website provides a web page for each class, including the class outline and links to websites with other resources.

A national Presbyterian Church (USA) staff person in Louisville learned about eMinistry and asked Elizabeth to help her develop classes for Presbyterian women.

"I think the idea would be attractive to people in many denominations, connecting people on topics they feel passionate about," Elizabeth explained.

"We don't know what people in the next congregation or diocese are doing. People are hungry for the chance to connect," she said.

From preaching at Ephrata, she also knows of needs rural congregations have for educational programs.

She sees eMinistry as a way to provide accessible, affordable education.

Because she does the ministry part-time, she needs volunteers to help with registration, reminders and follow-up.

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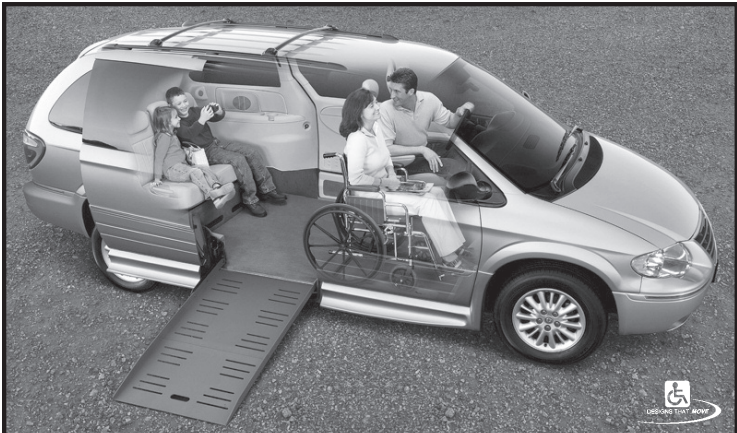
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