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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest online at [www.thefigtree.org](http://www.thefigtree.org) • check The Fig Tree Facebook page daily for news and links

# Cranes capture prayers for peace

By Mary Stamp

Jayce Keeling, Mike Donovan and Roger Hudson helped organize, fold and install more than 1,300 white origami cranes surrounding 85 red cranes in one skylight tower of the sanctuary at Covenant United Methodist Church.

It is now a prayer center called “Peace and Remembering the Fallen.” It is an ongoing prayer for peace, and for the end of violence and mass shootings.

A basket held another 300 cranes donated since it was installed.

The church’s worship team came up with the idea at its August meeting, said Jayce, chair of the team.

“We wanted to have a witness about mass shootings and an ongoing prayer to cease the violence,” said Jayce, a member for 31 years.

While it’s within the church, she sees it as a service for the community.

Patti Osebold, an origami artist and member of the congregation for 30 of its 36 years, is Japanese American. For years, she has folded tiny origami crane earrings.

Mike, a member for 25 years, retired after 30 years as an engineer with Boeing in Seattle and Spokane. He and his family moved to Spokane in 1990.



Roger Hudson, Jayce Keeling and Mike Donovan share the story of prayer center.

Roger started as pastor four months ago, moving to Covenant after serving three years as pastor of Wilbur Uniting Church, a combined ministry of the Lutheran and Presbyterian churches there.

In his first month at Covenant, he visited church members Chuck and Linda Anderson at their ad agency, Helveticka, where a crane with an 18-inch wing span—folded by Patti—hangs in the entry.

“To be a peace thing, we needed 1,000 cranes,” Jayce said, telling the story of how classmates folded 1,000 cranes as a get-well wish for Sadako, a Japanese girl who suffered from leukemia after being exposed to atomic fallout at Hiroshima. She died at age 12.

As they prepared the display, they told that story.

After the worship team proposed the prayer center, Roger identified 85 mass shootings since 1982.

“Each red crane represents a shooting. The 1,000+ cranes represent our prayers for peace and our grief for victims of violence,” said Jayce.

In June, Patti had a stroke so she said “with God’s grace” folding cranes became part of her recovery. She folded cranes and taught others

*Continued on page 7*

## Graffiti stirs community to stand up against intolerance, hate and bias

Police came to the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center Nov. 15 and saw the “N” word scrawled in red spray paint on the side of one of the buildings. They called it a hate crime.

“This type of hatred will not be tolerated in our community,” said Freda Gandy, director of the center for 16 years, at a gathering later that day to paint out the word. “Children of all races come here in the spirit of Martin Luther King Jr.

“The hatred someone intended to unleash on this organization and this community will not be

tolerated,” she said, asking the community to stand against hate and report bigotry.

Freda called people to stand against such racism now before it continues to spread.

She invited those not familiar with the center to visit on Saturday, Nov. 19, or go to [mlkspokane.org](http://mlkspokane.org) to learn about the programs, learn how to be involved and support the center’s work and capital campaign for a new building on the same site at 845 S. Sherman.

The week after the incident, Freda said the center raised \$20,000 for the building and also

funds for security cameras. Many have volunteered.

Children who came on Nov. 15 to the before school program saw the graffiti before going to school. Staff kept the other children inside, when they normally would have been on the playground and would have seen the graffiti.

“This is not right. This is not okay. We will not stand by,” Freda said. “What are we teaching our children? It’s not okay. I shouldn’t have been calming the children before they went to school that day. We just want to do good work and be here for families. That’s it. Our kids didn’t ask for this!”

Freda asked the faith community to pray for the center, for the person who did this and for the community.

Leaders in the faith community who were there Nov. 15 included Episcopal Bishop Jim Waggoner, Jr., Joe Wittwer of Life Center, and Walter Kendricks of Morning Star Baptist Church.

Joe asked people to hold hands and pray for overcoming the “us-

*Continued on page 5*

## Good Neighbor event is Dec. 3

The Gonzaga University Institute for Hate Studies and three other organizations are advocating for peace and goodwill by hosting the “Good Neighbor Conference: Addressing Hate through Advocacy and Action” from 6 to 9 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 3, in Jepson Center, 330 E. DeSmet Ave.

Other organizers include the Spokane Interfaith Council, Spokane Faith & Values and Spokane County Human Rights Task Force.

**There will be discussions, workshops and seminars** to equip community members to be better advocates for themselves and their neighbors. Sessions will address hate crimes, online hate, LGBTQ advocacy, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, cultural competency, immigrants, standing together, courageous conversations and “gracism”—the art of inclusion.

Concern about acts of intolerance, aggression and vandalism call for the attention of people of goodwill, said Skyler Oberst, president of the Spokane Interfaith Council.

**“There is a time as a community to come together** in rallies and vigils,” Kristine Hoover, director of the Gonzaga University Institute of Hate Studies added. “There is a deep need in our community to mobilize and act in a clear, respectful manner to stand against all forms of bigotry, intolerance and defamation.”

**“Citizens of Spokane are calling for the tools** to be better advocates for each other,” said Dean Lynch, president of the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force.

The event is free, but people may donate for the Hate Studies’ Eva Lassman Student Research Award or the Spokane Interfaith Council’s Meet the Neighbors Campaign.

For information, contact Skyler Oberst at [r.s.oberst@gmail.com](mailto:r.s.oberst@gmail.com) or 360-989-8217 or visit [gonzaga.edu/goodneighbor](http://gonzaga.edu/goodneighbor).

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### Around the World

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#### Conference on Korean peninsula peace convenes

Improved inter-Korean relations and peace on the Korean peninsula were the focus of a Nov. 14 to 16 conference in Hong Kong attended by 58 people from churches and related organizations from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and 11 other countries.

The International Ecumenical Conference on a Peace Treaty for the Korean Peninsula was organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and hosted by the Hong Kong Christian Council. Discussion focused on the history of ecumenical engagement and accompaniment of Christians from both North and South Korea in their search for peace and reunification after more than 70 years of division.

Delegations from the Korean Christian Federation from the DPRK and the National Council of Churches in Korea from South Korea provided key information, analysis and recommendations as the group focused on the prospects and impact of a peace treaty.

**Ending the suspended state of war** that has existed since the Armistice Agreement of July 27, 1953, is both long overdue and critically and urgently necessary, the conference communiqué said.

"The absence of a formal end to the Korean War still colors and obstructs inter-Korean relations today, and encourages the escalating arms race and militarization of the peninsula and region. The DPRK has repeatedly called for a peace treaty, but the USA has rejected such calls," the communiqué said.

#### Survival of God's creation is at stake

"We have come a long way but have made little progress," said Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, in his message to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), referring to 22 years of UN conventions as an unacceptably long period to respond to the environmental crisis.

The UN climate change conference is, in some ways, occasion for celebration that the world's nations responded to the urgent call in Paris to address and agree on the agenda that lies before them, said Bartholomew I. However, the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP22) is also a painful reminder that 197 countries have ratified a convention enforced after the Rio Earth Summit of 1992 only now.

**"For 22 years, the world's leading authorities** and politicians have fundamentally agreed on the problems of global climate change and have held endless consultations and high-level conversations on something that requires practical measures and tangible action. It is an unacceptably long period to respond to the environmental crisis, especially when we are conscious of its intimate and inseparable connections to global poverty, migration and unrest," he said.

**Now it is finally time for everyone to discern** the human faces impacted by our ecological sins, said Bartholomew I. Human beings, all of us, especially the "least" and the most vulnerable or marginalized among us, are irreversibly impacted.

**"How can any nation justify the suffering of its people?** How can any industry defend the exploitation of its customer? Unless we all perceive in our attitudes and actions, as in our deliberations and decisions, the faces of our own children—in the present and in future generations—then we shall continue to prolong and procrastinate the development of any solution."

**"What price are we prepared to pay for profit?** How many lives are we willing to sacrifice for material or financial gain? At what cost would we forfeit or forestall the survival of God's creation? It is our humble, yet bold prayer that all parties at the COP22 will recognize and respond to the high stakes involved in climate change," Bartholomew I wrote in a message to the UNFCCC on Nov. 16.

Delegations from the ACT Alliance, Lutheran World Federation and WCC at the conference in Marrakech, Morocco jointly demand a more rapid transition to a low-carbon economy based on clean energy in order to stem rising global temperatures.

## REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

### Conference calls for taking responsibility to act

The 2017 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference speakers and workshops will address "Taking Responsibility: Acting Together in Faith." It will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 28, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave.

The event will feature a panel discussion on poverty, based on the Spokane Regional Health District report about life spans in different zip codes and the 2016 Washington State Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Poverty.

There will be workshops on environmental issues, education,

criminal and racial justice, housing, youth concerns and recognizing propaganda.

A representative of the Washington State Catholic Conference, and the Rev. Paul Benz, co-director of the Faith Action Network, will give briefings on issues before the 2017 State Legislature.

The Rev. Gregg Sealey, the new Inland District Superintendent of the United Methodist Church, and other area faith leaders will present reflections and prayers.

Nonprofit agencies and ministries will bring displays to share

resources about their programs.

"This educational event invites people of faith to consider how their faith teachings call them to be involved shaping policies on hunger, housing, creation, jobs, education, justice, equality, taxes and more," said Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp.

Organizers include The Fig Tree, Catholic Charities Spokane, the Faith Action Network and the Inland United Methodist District.

For information, call 535-1813 or email [mary@thefigtree.org](mailto:mary@thefigtree.org). Fliers are available at [thefigtree.org/FigTreeEvent.pdf](http://thefigtree.org/FigTreeEvent.pdf).

### Organists guild plans carol singing, organ music

For the third year, the American Guild of Organists (AGO) in Spokane is sponsoring the annual Christmas Church Walk and Carol Sing from 2 to 4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 26, on the South Hill and downtown.

The event begins at Manito Presbyterian Church, 401 E. 30th Ave.

Two downtown churches will

share in hosting the event, which features listening to organ music, singing Christmas carols and enjoying Christmas decorations with family and friends, said Carolyn Payne of the AGO.

After singing carols at Manito Presbyterian, participants will drive to Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington St.

Then they will walk two blocks to Central Lutheran Church, 512 S. Bernard, for more singing, organ music and refreshments.

Helen Byrne, organist at Manito Presbyterian will play there. Janet Ahrends, an AGO member, will play at Westminster. Alice Hosteler, organist at Central Lutheran, will play there.

For information, call 535-7145.

### VOA's Crosswalk uses Go-Fund-Me appeal

The Volunteers of America's Crosswalk Youth Shelter is facing a financial crisis.

It serves vulnerable youth and homeless teens ages 13 to 17, offering meals, emergency shelter, a school to complete a high school diploma or GED, substance abuse counseling and access to on-site nurse care.

Crosswalk's main federal funding source was not renewed. Funds went elsewhere, said Fawn Schott, the new executive director.

"This was 36 percent of our annual budget for operations at

Spokane's only youth shelter," she said. "This greatly impacts our ability to help these young people become stable young adults."

Crosswalk cannot apply for the funds again until next October.

The program provides housing for youth.

When they turn 18 and must leave the Crosswalk Shelter, they can transition to an apartment with support from a case manager to help them be successful.

The Crosswalk Youth Shelter was a safe haven for more than 100 homeless youth last year,

Fawn said. Volunteers of America and SafetyNet have joined together to ensure that the homeless youth shelter does not have to close because of a lack of funding. SafetyNet has started a Go-Fund-Me page to fill the financial gap.

"We are asking organizations and individuals to donate to this fund to keep these vital services here for our city's homeless youth," said Fawn.

The Go-Fund-Me link is: <https://www.gofundme.com/help-us-help-spokanes-kids-2wbxxjpk>.

For information, call 624-2378.

### New computer program speeds Christmas Bureau

A new computer program is streamlining the process to check in recipients at the 71st annual Christmas Bureau from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Dec. 8 to 17, at the Spokane County Fair and Expo Center, 404 N. Havana.

Catholic Charities Spokane, Volunteers of America and The Spokesman-Review coordinate the event. In 2015, they served 8,142 households, and 14,683 children received books and toys. The Spokesman-Review's Christ-

mas Fund received more than \$526,000 in donations for grocery vouchers and gifts, said Judy Lee, Christmas Bureau coordinator with Catholic Charities.

She said the new software eliminates hand-written intake cards. Recipients will go to computer stations where volunteers will verify and enter their household information—number of adults and children at their address.

Recipients will receive a printed gift certificate, good at any of five participating grocery stores. They will also receive a "gift ticket" to pick out a book and toy for each child in the household, Judy said.

Those without children receive candy and winter gloves.

Persons seeking assistance can come during Christmas Bureau hours. There are no geographic boundaries or income requirements, said Judy, adding that adults just need a photo ID and proof of their address. They verify the children with a letter from a school, day care, DSHS or other agency.

Donations are mailed to The Spokesman-Review Christmas Bureau, P.O. Box 516, Spokane, WA 99210. For information, call 358-4254 or email [jlee@ccspokane.org](mailto:jlee@ccspokane.org).

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## Spokane County Human Rights Task Force unites efforts to challenge acts of hate

The Spokane County Human Rights Task Force (SCHRTF) called a press conference on Nov. 22 and asked community leaders to "Stand United Against Hate."

The task force formed last spring to fill gaps as it works with long-standing organizations addressing human rights, said Dean Lynch, SCHRTF president.

He recognizes people are scared, "worried they are not sheltered from hateful acts of a few." Law enforcement consider two incidents in Spokane and one in Pullman hate crimes. Students at EWU, GU and WSU also have been targeted for race or ethnicity.

Dean praised how Spokane comes together for Tom's Turkey Drive, the Christmas Bureau and other events. He also praised elected leaders who came to show solidarity and commitment to challenge acts of hate, bigotry and intolerance.

Summaries of some comments are on page 10 in Sounding Board.

**Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich** said "it's time for us—local, state and national elected leaders—to say no more hate."

**Spokane Mayor David Condon** was proud of the community coming together to support the Martin Luther King Jr. Family

Outreach Center after a racial slur was painted on a building. "We came together to clean up the graffiti, now we go forward."

**City Council member Amber Waldref** said the campaign stirred up divisions. "Hate will not take root in soil that is not ready for hate," she said. "We need to prepare our soil to grow compassion, acceptance and respect."

**Assistant chief of the Spokane Police Department Justin Lundgren** said "we will not tolerate hate and bias crimes. We will enforce the law with fairness and transparency, investigating hate crimes and holding people

accountable." He asked people to report incidents to Crime Check.

**Representative Timm Ormsby** expressed resolve to counter the incidences of hate. He and other area legislators call for tolerance, respect and understanding: "We are one community and have to take care of each other. Hate leads to fear which drives victims into their homes. That's the worst thing to do. We need to have community conversations."

**The SCHRTF is partnering** with other groups on six initiatives.

• The Victim Support Committee is exploring ways to model inclusiveness and increase

understanding.

• GU's Institute for Hate Studies and area universities will research needs of groups addressing hate.

• In January, PJALS and the Center for Justice will offer safe bystander intervention training.

• The police department, sheriff and universities are developing mechanisms to track hate activity and the effectiveness of community efforts.

• The Good Neighbor Conference (page 1) offers tools for people to be advocates.

For information, visit [spokanehumanrightstaskforce.org](http://spokanehumanrightstaskforce.org).

## Kairos Prison Ministry recruits volunteers to lead retreats for women affected by incarceration

Kate Nowlin, communications director for Kairos Outside Eastern Washington Prison Ministry, is recruiting volunteers to help facilitate a Kairos Outside Weekend retreat April 21 to 23 at Clarkston United Methodist Church (UMC).

The weekend retreat began in 1989 for women affected by incarceration of a loved one or themselves. Women volunteers 20 years old or older are to be open-minded, active listeners offering encouragement.

Kate, who is from Clarkston, participates in Kairos Prison Ministry, which began in 1976. About 20 women from the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley, Northern Idaho, the Tri-

Cities and Spokane are involved.

Internationally, the ministry has 30,000 volunteers who minister to men and women in prison with Kairos Inside, to women affected by incarceration with Kairos Outside and to incarcerated youth with Kairos Torch.

To qualify, volunteers take 36 hours of training from January through April. Sessions are from noon to 5 p.m., Jan. 14, at Colfax UMC, Feb. 10 to 11 at Audubon Park UMC in Spokane, from March 10 to 11 at First Church of God in Clarkston, and Saturday, April 8, at Clarkston UMC.

During the weekend retreat, volunteers pamper the women by serving meals, giving

gifts, facilitating discussions and letting participants know they are loved, Kate said.

Retreats seek to involve women in support groups for ongoing relationships to help them deal with living outside of prison or having family members in prison.

"When one person goes to prison the whole family goes to prison," said Kate, whose son went to prison on drug charges.

"We are a Christian group, but we involve women of all denominations and nonbelievers," said Bobbie Van De Veer, a volunteer who lives in Newport.

She volunteers because of her commitment to peace and justice as a member of

the Spring Valley Mennonite Church. Bobbie moved to Newport in 1975, living there nine years, then living in Spokane nine years until her husband was appointed District Court Judge in Newport 16 years ago.

"My denomination sees crime as a peace issue," she said. "We have Victim Offender Reconciliation teams in urban areas working through law enforcement and courts."

She also volunteers because 40 years ago, when her first husband was in prison, it affected everyone in the family. They couldn't plan for the future and lost income.

For information, call 208-816-9565 or email [kjnowlin@yahoo.com](mailto:kjnowlin@yahoo.com).

## Tree of Sharing has 7,500 gift requests to fill by Dec. 11 at three area malls and by partners

The 2016 Tree of Sharing tables will be open through Sunday, Dec. 11, at the JCPenney court on the second floor of Northtown Mall, near Santa on the first floor of River Park Square and at the Macy's entrance to the Spokane Valley Mall.

The program serves forgotten people in the community, said Carl McConnell, co-coordinator with his wife Joan.

Volunteers staff tables the hours the malls are open and help

shoppers choose tags for gifts they purchase and return to the table.

Sponsors include KREM-TV, the Washington Air National Guard 242nd Combat Communication Squadron and Thomas Hammer Coffee Roasters. Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ helps recruit volunteers.

Twice a week, the National Guard moves gifts from the malls and business partners to the Tree of Sharing warehouse.

"We lost two sponsors this

year and did not receive a financial grant that in previous years provided support to fill gift requests not taken at the malls or filled by our business/community partners," said Joan. "So the need for donations is greater this year."

Twenty-five businesses and community groups agreed to fill 2,500 of the gift requests not given out at the malls.

The 2016 Tree of Sharing added five new agencies for a total of 57 agencies that have requested

7,500 gifts—1,000 more than last year. They include public schools in low-income neighborhoods, The Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations, the YWCA Women's

Opportunity Center, the Collins Apartments and more.

For information, call 808-4919 or email [mcconnelltos@gmail.com](mailto:mcconnelltos@gmail.com).

## Statue unveiled at YWCA symbolizes a survivor's new beginning

During Spokane's First Friday Art Walk, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., Dec. 2, the YWCA at 930 N. Monroe will unveil a sculpture dedicated to survivors of domestic violence. Other local artists' work on display will honor various aspects of women's journeys.

Spokane philanthropist and YWCA supporter Debra Garrett commissioned the sculpture by local artist Ildikó Kalapács to symbolize a survivor's dedication to a new beginning by partnering with the YWCA.

"I want to honor family members and others who survive domestic violence," said Debra. "It takes courage to walk through the YWCA's doors."

Ildikó titled the bronze cast sculpture "Refuge." It depicts a

woman and her two children on a foundation that reads "Enter Here for Peace." She guides her children through a doorway.

"Ever since I was a little girl, I have been keenly aware of the uncertain and painful domestic situations of some women and their children, including my mother's and many other

women's sufferings in my larger family and neighborhood back in Hungary," said Ildikó. "This sculpture is about solidarity with those who leave unbearable family situations, lifting them up, making them feel safe and loved."

For information, call 326-1190 or email [ericas@ywcaspokane.org](mailto:ericas@ywcaspokane.org).

### SAVE THE DATES HOST A TABLE



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**For information, contact**

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# Jewish Family Services addresses people's emergency and social needs

Neal Schindler, director of Spokane Area Jewish Family Services (SAJFS) for the last two years, shifted his goals from journalism and media to counseling so he could spend time meeting with people and addressing their needs for food, socializing, emergency services and culture.

SAJFS originally started to pick up some of the rabbi's pastoral care responsibilities, particularly visiting seniors. For a while, volunteers did that. In 1999, Temple Beth Shalom established it as a nonprofit to serve seniors.

After graduating in 2001 from Oberlin College with a bachelor's degree in Spanish and creative writing, he worked for a newspaper in the Detroit area, where he grew up in the Jewish suburb of Huntington Woods. In 2002, he moved to Seattle to work for weekly and daily newspapers.

Deciding he wanted to spend more time with people, he moved to Spokane in 2011 to do graduate studies in counseling at Eastern Washington University.

He met his wife Elizabeth, who grew up in Spokane and had a friend in Neal's graduate program. After earning a master's in 2013, he worked for a year with families involved with child protective services and then at the EWU counseling center.

Since beginning with Jewish Family Services in 2014, his role has involved visiting people, primarily seniors, in their homes.

**Neal advocates for** and transports a growing number of low-income, non-senior, non-Jewish clients.

SAJFS offers cultural programs, such as a monthly senior luncheon on second Thursdays at Temple Beth Shalom and the Jewish Cultural Film Festival.

The lunch is prepared in Temple Beth Shalom's kosher kitchen. The program is usually a speaker or music performance.

Most who come are Jewish, but the lunch is open to everyone, Neal said. Attendance varies with 10 to 15 in the winter when many go south and 25 to 35 the rest of the year.

There were also some off-site events last year, such as going to the Jundt Museum at Gonzaga or Spokane Community College's Inland Northwest Culinary Academy.

**"We do home visits** with seniors who do not have family in town, are socially isolated or home bound," Neal said.

Some just appreciate connection with the community. At Rosh Hashanah, volunteers deliver homemade challah bread and honey, and during



Neal Schindler stands beside a shelf with food bank food.

Purim they deliver homemade "hamantaschen" cookies.

Volunteers also visit seniors to learn how they are doing.

**Jewish Family Services has** a small food bank, a cabinet and shelves on a stairway landing. They store nonperishable items for non-senior, low-income clients.

"Some individuals or families come for several months, and some just need temporary help," he said. "We have also helped some low-income people with a utilities bill, up to \$75 a year. "It helps in a pinch," he said. "We are not the only place people can turn."

In addition, Jewish Family Services directs people to other community services, such as no-cost legal services at the Gonzaga Law School Clinic or energy assistance at SNAP.

**SAJFS also provides books** at the temple and manages subscriptions for PJ Library, an international program that offers free Jewish themed children's books and CDs.

Jewish Family Services puts on themed programs for families with young children, and sponsors story times at the South Hill Library with grandparents reading books and doing crafts.

They also co-sponsored children's activities as part of the Global Day of Jewish Learning Nov. 20 at the temple.

"It's hard to engage families because many live far away, so the PJ Library puts Jewish education resources in homes. In larger cities, there are larger Jewish communities with activities outside the temple," he said.

**The Jewish Cultural Film Festival** will be held in January. It reaches within and beyond the community to provide understanding of Judaism, Jewish culture and global community.

"It's important to have visibility in media," Neal said. "We want it to be meaningful for the Jewish community and to people who do not understand the Jewish community and come to be informed."

**"I was raised to not forget** the poor just because we were an affluent family. My parents modeled charitable giving and concern for the homeless," he said. "While our Jewish suburb of Detroit was affluent, the city was poor. There was a big disparity."

Deciding in Spokane to be connected with people living in poverty, the Schindlers live in West Central Spokane. Elizabeth, who grew up near Mead, visited

West Central Spokane as a child when her mother volunteered with Christ Clinic. Later she was an intern with Project Hope.

"I'm not very religious but this is a meaningful way for me to be involved with the Jewish community," Neal said. "It connects me with people's lives."

In the process, he has learned that some people feel there is inadequate response when they reach out for help.

Many feel shame about asking for help, but they humble themselves to ask because it's for their families.

"Many are thankful for the smallest amount of help," he said.

**Neal grew up in a Reconstructionist Jewish congregation,** a newer, smaller Jewish movement founded in the first half of the 20th century. It incorporates elements of Conservative Judaism—more Hebrew than in Reform services and more emphasis on traditional melodies.

"Like Reform Judaism, Reconstructionist Judaism is progressive and inclusive of LGBT individuals and couples, and embraces interfaith families. It is also politically progressive and social justice oriented."

"My Reconstructionist background informs my political and religious views, and my commitment to help people," Neal said. "People are important to me and social services need to help them when they do not have

family or friends to turn to." **Neal's wife is Lutheran.** They attend both Congregation Emanu-El and Salem Lutheran Church in West Central Spokane.

"I am part of the community at Salem, not as a Christian or a member, but I feel accepted. There are many parallels with Emanu-El," he said.

Now parents of a baby boy, they will expose him to both faith traditions.

We are in each community as a family," he said. "We seek to be models."

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## ECEAP teacher teaches children what they need to do to be successful

Talibah Adeeba, lead teacher for the Extended-day Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) for three years at the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center, kept children in her class inside the day a racial slur was painted on the house beside the playground.

She wanted them to feel safe even though she felt disheartened.

"We need to stick together and stand together," she said. "The center is an important part of the community. We have a waiting list, because there is more demand than we have room to serve."

"Children are my life. I want them to be prepared to be good citizens and to feel good about themselves, rather than feel bad



Talibah Adeeba reads a story to Haya Alsulimaneen during recent open house at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center.

because they are black, white, mixed or other races," said Talibah, who grew up in Boston with a Portuguese mother and African-American father.

Her challenging childhood, she believes, helps her deal with children like herself, so they respect themselves and others.

Talibah finds that her 30 years of teaching experience are reinforced in her two years of studies in education at Spokane Falls Community College. She plans to complete a degree at Whitworth.

Her years of teaching include home schooling her three children and running a preschool in her home in Seattle. She also taught two years in rural areas in Botswana and Kenya.

"Martin Luther King Jr. was about all people. He is my hero forever. The home preschool I ran for eight years in Seattle was called King's Dream," she said.

Talibah was first hired to teach in the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center's half-day program from 1995 to 2000.

"I have learned to be a compassionate teacher here at the MLK Center," Talibah said. "We teach children what they need to do to be successful."

She chose her name her third year celebrating Kwanzaa in 1980 in Seattle. "Talibah" means seeker of knowledge in Swahili. "Adeeba" means literary woman.

For information, call 455-8722 or visit mlkspokane.org.

## Community leaders speak out and plan events to counteract hate

Continued from page 1 them" mindset.

"It's just us, and we need to stand together. We are thankful for Freda and the great work at the center. Our hearts are broken. We are angered by this. We pray for a change of heart for the person who did this. This hatred will not do any good. Help us as a community. There is so much anger across the community and country. Help us stand with each other for justice. Help us love our neighbors."

The crowd of nearly 200, including city officials, the religious community and supporters were invited to take a paintbrush and share in painting over the words with paint that repels graffiti.

The next day Freda was inspired and heartened by the outpouring of support from city officials, the community, donations, people dropping off food and people calling to ask what they could do and how they could help.

She is preparing a list of ways to support the organization that embodies the life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.

"The incident provides a platform to talk about what happened and is happening, not only for African Americans, but also for Jews and Muslims," Freda said. "People are scared about what will happen in the next four years."

She said one of the children asked her if the President-elect would close the center because he does not like black people.

"I shouldn't need to answer that question or have children here see

racial slurs on the building," she said. "I want to put together a conversation so people unite and feel safe."

Phil Tyler, president of the Spokane NAACP, stopped the people before they painted out the words and called for people to step aside so they could see the graffiti.

"Let the community see what hate looks like before we wipe it off. We cannot wipe off the damage done to community. This is the reality of racism," he said. "Racism did not end with the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. It does not end with desecration of the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center."

Phil reminded that this is not new, and it's not just because a new President was elected.

"This has been going on for years. The community and country need to wake up," he said. "Racism is here in Spokane. It is not a relic of the past or the South."

"It's not about raising paint brushes one day or for one incident. We need to open up our minds. When we see misbehavior, we need to speak to it. I love freedom. This community has poured out money and time for many nonprofits," he said, inviting people to support the center's capital fund drive to build a new building to support local children.

"I'm mad. To the individual or individuals who did this, I want you to know you did not break us or change us. You strengthened our resolve," Phil said.

While some people painted out the word, others sang "we shall overcome" and "we are not afraid."

Skyler Oberst, president of Spokane's Interfaith Council, reported the next day a swastika painted on a Logan neighborhood garage with the words, "Can't stump the Trump, Mexicans."

Governor Jay Inslee has invited Skyler and other faith, immigrant, refugee, LGBTQ and minority communities leaders to a breakfast to discuss how Washington can continue to be "a place that values diversity, inclusion and equality," and a "place of hope, dignity and respect for women, the LGBTQ community, immigrants, communities, people of all faiths and people of all abilities."

"I'm so grateful my leaders are committed to making our communities better through loving their neighbors," said Skyler, "but we need to be both proactive and reactive to address these concerns."

The Interfaith Council is connecting with the Institute of Hate Studies at Gonzaga University, the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force and Spokane FAVS to hold an event on "How to Be a Good Neighbor" from 6 to 9 p.m.,

Saturday, Dec. 3, in Jepson Center at Gonzaga University.

Skyler has also connected with such advocacy groups as the Council on American Islamic Relations to lead a workshop on addressing Islamophobia and the Anti-Defamation league on addressing anti-Semitism.

Kristine Hoover, director of the Institute for Hate Studies, said she brings two concerns to the conversation:

"The institute is committed to care for the whole person and for all people. Higher education can offer teaching, research and service to better understand what is happening in our communities and to focus our energy on becoming our better selves," she said.

"We are looking for our role when there are incidents such as the racial slur at the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center, the graffiti in the Logan neighborhood or anti-Semitic words written in the dust of a car windshield," Kristine said.

"We need to ask how we can coordinate our efforts with the good work of others to have the greatest positive impact to move forward," she said.

Speaking on behalf of the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force, Dean Lynch, president, said that the recent hate activities will not be ignored. The task force will coordinate efforts so all residents feel safe, honest disagreement can be shared and everyone can improve their lives physically, emotionally, intellectually and economically.

In a joint statement, State Senator Andy Billig, and Representatives Timm Ormsby and Marcus Riccelli expressed their outrage at the slur painted on the center:

"We seek to expand tolerance and understanding. As leaders, we want everyone to feel free and safe in their community. Actions like this hateful vandalism only set us back. We cannot allow hate to spread, alienating and dividing this great nation."

They urged citizens of the Spokane area to stand in support of the MLK Center, which "is a beacon of hope."

"We will overcome this act of hate and prove that the foundation of love that the MLK Center has created in our city will not waver," they said.

For information, call 455-8722.

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# Congresswoman challenges NAACP to continue to overcome racism

Congresswoman Maxine Waters from Los Angeles challenged those attending the Spokane NAACP's 97th Freedom Fund Banquet on Nov. 12 to speak up and protest, so decades and generations of efforts to overcome racism and discrimination are not lost. She calls the country to live up to its ideals of freedom, justice and equality for all.

Maxine came to the banquet at the invitation of Alice Moore of Spokane. She and Alice share a granddaughter.

**"I'm proud of the NAACP.** It is the oldest, largest and most widely recognized civil rights organization that has worked to secure rights for black people," Maxine said. "It has organized resistance to racism and discrimination that has led to legislation in state and federal governments and legal battles in the Supreme Court."

Opening her talk, she said she rewrote her speech because of the election results.

"Many are traumatized by what was the most contentious, polarizing campaign," she said. "Many talk about healing and America coming together in the best interest of the country. It sounds good. It sounds sincere. Meanwhile, young and old are protesting in cities around the country."

In Los Angeles, her hometown, 8,000 were in the streets protesting threats to immigrants, racist slurs, homophobic hate, name-calling, insults to women, disregard for protocols, and disrespect for opposition.

**Maxine said people are fearful** for the future, fear immigrant families will be broken up, fear the welcome on the Statue of Liberty will be undone and fear Russian President Vladimir Putin's influence.

"The President-elect has railed about 'draining the swamp of Washington D.C.,' but his appointments show he is filling that swamp," Maxine said. "He said the right words about working together, but can we believe that?"

She would like an apology for the name-calling and bullying.

Maxine said if "he pushes us hard, we need to push back. We have come too far, cried too hard, made too many gains to go back. We will fight racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, voter intimidation and suppression."

**The NAACP has fought** voter suppression by promoting early voting and challenging new voter identification laws. Maxine promised to work for voter rights and will investigate reports of voter suppression by voting machines



Maxine Waters says NAACP has much work to do.

not working, having too few voting machines and intimidation.

"Hillary won the popular vote, so some want to have the Electoral College system changed," Maxine said.

"We are up against challenges and need to discuss them," she said.

She is concerned with reports that Trump defrauded students; cheated some contractors out of pay; misused donations to his foundation; assaulted women and bragged about it, did not release his taxes, and called Hillary Clinton a crook, while he faced 75 outstanding charges.

**Maxine believes America is already great.**

"We believe in democracy and will struggle for it to support infrastructure, and education," she said.

While unsure if the wall will be built or Obamacare undone, Maxine is disturbed that his tone has emboldened forces of racism and hate.

She said the way he demeans women will make it hard to work with him.

Maxine believes today's NAACP members have the same determination the founders had.

"We have much work to do. We cannot roll over and say everything will be okay," she said.

As a ranking member of the House Financial Services Committee, she called people to pay

attention to what happens with regulators, like the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

"We did not pay attention in 2008, and the country faced a recession," said Maxine, who worked to pass the Dodd-Frank Reform of Wall Street. "It will happen again if we do not break up institutions. With Republicans in control of the three branches of government much is at risk."

She expects tax breaks for the richest 1 percent and an undoing of laws and regulations that protect people.

**For the NAACP, it means** fighting the same old fights, as well as new fights. That includes building low-income housing and challenging war-on-drugs laws that incarcerate too many people of color.

Appealing for support, Maxine said the NAACP is especially important today.

She called people to protest peacefully, because "we have the right to voice our opinions and challenge government."

**"Think of how far** we have come, of the sacrifices of our forefathers and foremothers. Think of our children and grandchildren. Think of the many peace treaties that are in place so we can avoid nuclear annihilation."

She challenged people to wake up each day inspired to act, so "we

do not go back or roll over."

NAACP president Phil Tyler reminded those at the banquet:

"Your voice matters. You have amazing skills. Now more than ever we need to be involved with our neighborhoods, our cities, our state and the country."

For information, call 209-2425 or visit [naacpspokane.org](http://naacpspokane.org).



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# Prayers for ending violence can inspire those who pray into action

*Continued from page 1*

to fold them. The women's group folded cranes one evening, and about 40 of the 160 people engaged in the congregation helped fold cranes—some folding more than 100.

Patti helped fold and string about 300 on fish wire. Jayce, who folded 80 cranes, and Diane Ketcham and Jackie Richardson, who also folded many cranes, helped string them on fish wire.

Roger suggested that people pray as they folded each crane.

One woman said she would read the newspaper in the morning, fold a crane and pray about issues and people in the news.

Mike created a wooden frame with six spokes at the top. A member brought a lift from his building supply company so Mike could hang the frame from cross wires in the tower. Strings of cranes hang from it on swivel hooks. His goal was to create a sense of upward movement so the cranes rise like the prayers toward heaven.

Roger and Mike folded the red cranes. Roger wrote on both sides of the cranes' triangle backs the number killed and the number wounded—5/5. On one side of the tail, he wrote the date and on the other side, the place.

He also found information on the kind of gun, the shooter's name and motivation, he said, noting that all the shooters were male.

One group who folded cranes worried that making the cranes red, like blood, was too stark. The worship team discussed it and considered blue for mourning, but once they saw "the beauty and visual impact of the red cranes," they decided red should be used, Jayce said.

"We realized we couldn't soft pedal the shootings," Jayce said.

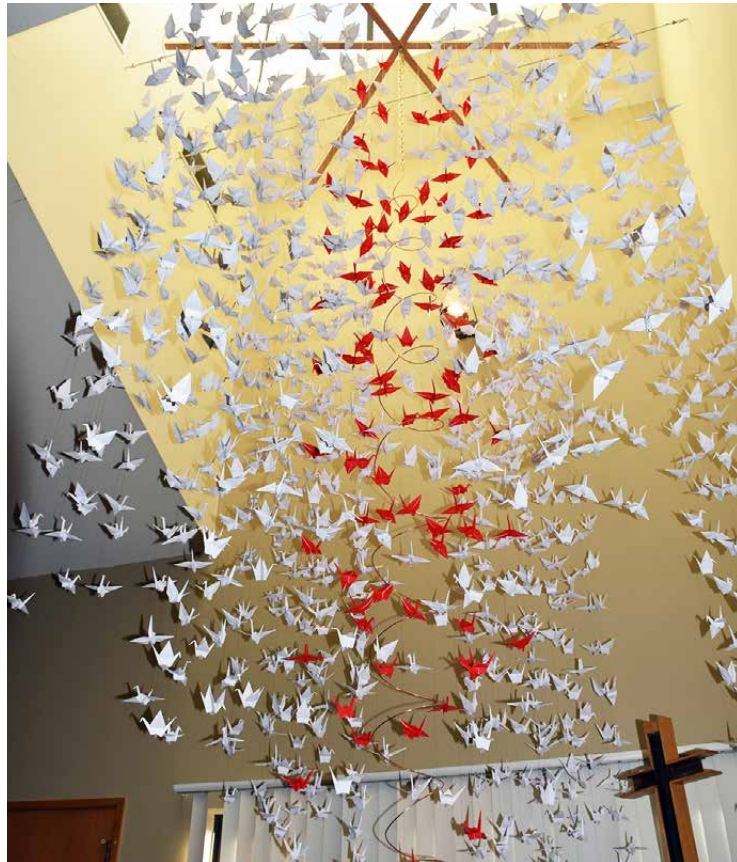
"Pastorally, I struggle with what to say to people when something so tragic happens. It's hard to put into words what we feel," Roger said. "This is a visual prayer, leaving open the opportunity for people to find their own way to articulate their sadness, aware there will be more shootings."

When there is a new shooting, the worship team is considering holding a Taizé style prayer service with candles, silence and communion.

"The cranes are beautiful at night with light on them and the sanctuary dark," said Mike.

For him, it's an inspiration when he and others do not know how to deal with trauma, sadness and hurt that seem beyond control.

"The white and red cranes help me let it go," he said. "They do not change the reality. We need to surrender our pain and sorrow to God, even though we think we



1,300 white cranes and 85 red cranes fill church's tower.

should fix a problem or control it."

"When people don't know what to do, they can pray to God," Roger said. "We need to let go of burdens that cause guilt or anger. The visual prayer helps us give it to God. We hope the Spirit is moving each time we see the display or add a red crane."

Jayce said it's letting go, but not letting go of responsibility. It's about helping people deal with what they can't control.

It is an ongoing prayer for solutions. She added that it is "a prayer for the end of this, so we can lay down our feelings of helplessness and are not paralyzed by grief. Then we can start to see what we can do."

Part of that, Mike said, is to "turn it over to God."

"Then watch out," said Jayce. "It can inspire those who pray into action, to find solutions to address the deep-seated issues that cause mass killings."

Two red cranes have yellow ribbons hanging around their necks. Those represent two mass killings—one was the killing of 10 Amish girls at West Nickel Mines School in Lancaster County, Pa., and the other was the killing of nine people in a Bible study at Mother Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, S.C.

In both cases, survivors forgave soon after the killings.

Representatives of the Amish community went to the house of the killer's parents saying, "You are not our enemies. We grieve your loss." Their son killed himself. The Amish were at his fu-

neral. When his mother had stage four cancer, they built a house for the family, and one mother cared for their younger child.

"They practiced decisional forgiveness," said Roger. "They acted out their forgiveness, rather than grieving and later forgiving. Scripture says to forgive 70 times seven. Their forgiving speaks of Christ's hope."

"They reflected what happened on the cross and the triumph of love that transforms," Jayce said.

The AME church drew attention because of the speed with which some members expressed forgiveness to the 21-year-old shooter, believing love overtakes hate.

"We are on a journey to learn how God's spirit redeems the world's darkness. Who knows where it will lead," said Roger, telling of a Mennonite man who goes around Colorado, asking people to turn in their guns and forging them into "plowshares," melting the metal to make picks, shovels and other garden tools.

"I'd like to know why they owned guns and what led them to give them up," said Jayce.

To share stories of peace and redemption, the group is setting up a Facebook page.

Jayce grew up in Seattle, attending Presbyterian, United Methodist and Lutheran churches. She started a degree in teaching at the University of Washington and finished it in 1979 through Fort Wright College while living in Omak. Her husband's job in juvenile rehabilitation brought them to Spokane, where she finished a master's degree at Whit-

worth in 1983. She taught gifted children for 27 years in Spokane. She and her husband, Marty, are both retired.

Mike, who has gone to El Salvador as part of Covenant's sister church since the late 1980s, said members' visits have created an awareness of justice and mercy, as well as of what violence does to the innocent and the perpetrators.

Roger, the son of a Methodist Church of Southern Africa pastor, moved to Dallas, Texas, when his father studied at Perkins School of Theology. Roger earned a bachelor's in business in 1982 at the

University of Texas and a master of divinity at Perkins in 1986. He, his wife Carla, and their two sons lived in South Africa from 1989 to 2004, working to end apartheid and seeing many die in violent clashes. He returned to be pastor of the Community UMC in Leavenworth and at Manito UMC in Spokane.

"Coming from South Africa, I was surprised there was so much gun violence here," he said. "As followers of the Prince of Peace, we need to equip young people to be peacemakers."

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# Incarceration is about social justice, racial equity

Amy Levad, the 2016 Fall Flannery Lecturer at Gonzaga, urges people to think of mass incarceration and criminal justice in terms of social justice, racial equity and racism, not just as law and order or crime issues.

"We need to think of it as communities struggling in poverty, the failed education system and the lack of resources," she said. "Instead of expecting a just response, the thought of police coming scares people. We need to think of the community as a whole, including communities on the margins."

She addresses many concerns in her book, *Redeeming a Prison Society: A Liturgical and Sacramental Response to Mass Incarceration*.

Family members and people out of prison for years struggle in poverty because a criminal record makes it hard for someone to find a social safety net with housing, employment and basics on how to live, said Amy, whose sister was incarcerated.

Amy grew up Catholic in Grand Junction, Colo., where her mother was a director of religious education and her father was a high school educator.

**When she was in college**, her older sister who was in her 20s, suffered mental health issues and self-medicated with stimulants, making bad choices to support her habit.

Looking to the church for resources, Amy found little. She began to learn about the criminal justice system, how many are thrown in prison and then left out.

"It turned into a personal, political, social and theological issue for me," said Amy, who earned a bachelor's in math and religious studies at the University of Puget Sound in 2001.

Planning to go to graduate school, she asked the American Academy of Religion what was written on mass incarceration and criminal injustice.

**"I thought theologians** needed to think about these issues from a theological perspective," she said.

So Amy began graduate studies in Atlanta, completing a master's in theology at Emory University and doctoral studies on Christian social ethics at Candler Seminary.

Working with four Protestant seminaries in Atlanta through the Atlanta Theological Association, she started a program for seminary students and faculty to teach classes in Metro State Prison, so inmates in a women's prison could earn a theology certificate in a year.

After completing her doctoral studies in 2009, Amy became an associate professor at the



Amy Levad says criminal justice needs to be about restoration.

University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., where she is still on the faculty.

**As a life-long Catholic**, trained at Protestant institutions, she dove into Catholic thinking on these issues, related to liturgy, sacraments and ethics.

"The Eucharist is about justice and reconciliation when people harm each other," she said of efforts to help the Catholic Church develop a response to mass incarceration.

"I speak and write about the inclusiveness of Christ's table, which is not the way it is practiced. Ideally the table is for all people, but the practice is flawed."

**As she seeks to repair** relationships and bring people back into communities, she meets tension because of alienation over the sacrament of reconciliation.

**"We can't just apply** the theological to the secular," she said.

Amy looks for ways the church can fix relationships, respond to victims, repair harms and restore community, rather than have the criminal justice system framed around retribution.

"My sister's sentence affected many lives, not just hers, leaving her two-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter stigmatized and living with other family," she said.

Amy's sister had a breakthrough after prison, learning from an Oprah show about adult ADD, after she had been misdiagnosed with depression and directed to mental health channels.

Her sister was able to stabilize, but it is still hard for her to find jobs and live above the poverty line. The children are okay, but on the edges.

"We need to realize that mental health challenges are often not treated in the health care system,

but in the prison system," she said.

Although she is white and middle class, Amy learned that the criminal justice system affects African Americans, Latinos and poor people more harshly. In addition to her classes in criminology and sociology, she went to a women's prison several times a week, listening to the stories of women and what led them to be there.

"So many women are in prison because of problems with men. In conversations, I learned that many were there because of drug crimes and murders," she said.

The education program surfaced talent and insights so women could see that what they had to offer was much more than the worst thing they had done.

**In her lecture**, Amy recounted recent incidents of police officers killing black men and the resulting protests. She said protestors call for recognition of the humanity of people of color, reformation of policing, and liberation from the oppressive constraints of violence, profiling and implicit bias. Amy believes response to these incidents must account for a broader crisis of criminal justice built on racism, social injustice and retribution.

The incidents reveal the subtle violence wreaked by mass incarceration on everyone as members of a "prison society," she said.

**"Statistics about** incarceration of blacks are troubling enough to raise serious questions about our criminal justice system's discrepancies related to race, ethnicity and class," said Amy, who is on the Board of Directors of Restorative Justice Community Action in Minneapolis.

For information, call 404-788-2475 or email amy.levad@stthomas.edu.

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**We invite you to join us for reflection and contemplation.**



# PJALS marks 40 years of standing up and speaking out for justice

As the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2015 and 2016, it focused events around its values of gratitude, nonviolence, peace, action, passion, community, equality and justice.

At its anniversary luncheon in October, Liz Moore, director since 2009, discussed justice as a PJALS value.

“Justice,” she said, “means standing up and speaking out together, challenging isolation and fear, inviting people to be part of the community and world, people supporting each other for the long haul, and naming realities of power differences in the society and economy created through policies over centuries.”

Working for justice is for the long haul, not as a sprint or marathon, but as a relay, said Liz. It’s also “how we walk together.”

“Celebrating justice means ‘Calling Us All In,’ recognizing the power of differences created along lines of class, race and gender,” she said.

“Calling Us All In,” the luncheon theme, means “those of us not targeted by a particular form of oppression need to be all in, humbly and accountably, to challenge and transform systems of violence,” she said.

It also means “we call each other in, into the movement of peace and justice, because we need and value each other,” she said, pointing out that “Valuing each other must sharpen, not diminish, our commitment to challenge and transform structural violence that distorts and destroys the humanness of both oppressor and oppressed.”

Liz said a longtime PJALS member in a religious order has made monthly donations since before PJALS had a database. When she donates, she attaches sticky notes with tiny messages: “Easter/Spring blessings to each of you” “Thank you for your great work!”

One message was, “Blessings on your prophetic work.”

Not coming from a religious tradition, Liz didn’t know what to make of that message until she and others began looking at old pictures and signs in preparation for the anniversary. “Our work is prophetic!” she said.

**Liz listed some examples:**

- In the first march in 1975, people carried signs saying, “Budget for people, not bombs.”
- PJALS began standing for LGBT equality in the early 1990s.
- PJALS helped identify Spokane psychologists as architects of the U.S. torture at Abu Ghraib and other sites. They now face a lawsuit for war crime and inhu-



Liz Moore engages young peace and justice leaders.

mane treatment.

- Thousands marched in 2003 opposing the Iraq War starting, knowing it would be disastrous.

- Fifteen years ago, 12 PJALS members protested to oppose the war in Afghanistan.

- PJALS members have stood with striking nurses, machinists and aluminum workers, and marched with union members against free trade agreements and unjust corporate power.

- PJALS speaks for people living with consequences of mass incarceration, aware that African Americans are 1.9 percent of Spokane County’s population, but 12 percent of those in the county jail.

- PJALS continues to call for fair hiring so people with conviction records can work.

- PJALS is among those calling the city’s police department to be accountable.

In celebrating examples of prophetic work, “we call each other into this movement across lines of identity, oppression and privilege. We make the road of justice as we walk it,” she said.

Liz, who grew up in Deer Park, was seeking resources on the war in Iraq in 1990. She was concerned at the lack of critical thinking about it. So she looked up “peace” in the phone book and found the Peace and Justice Action Center of Spokane. Rusty Nelson, director, invited her to Youth for World Awareness.

In 1995, she earned a degree in environmental studies with minors in history and women’s studies at Oberlin College in Ohio. She did internships at PJALS on trade and farm worker justice, worked six months on a pesticide-free vegetable farm in Virginia, and cooked at Mizuna while working part-time for various organizations in Spokane.

In 1998, Liz came on staff with PJALS to work for a minimum wage initiative. Then she worked four years with the Progressive Leadership Alliance in Las Vegas, and five years with health care union workers in Long Beach until the Service Employees International Union took over the local union.

In 2009, Rusty and Nancy retired and she began working at PJALS 30 hours a week. After two years she was full-time.

Liz has had staff assistance for seven years from students at the Eastern Washington University School for Social Work.

PJALS re-launched the Young Activist Leaders program six years ago. In monthly workshops, participants learn about recruiting, public speaking, organizing and doing self-care.

Issues that have been consistent include police accountability, LGBT equality and safety, international human rights and peace, anti-immigration and racist bigotry, criminal justice reform and opportunities for youth and young

adults to be leaders.

When PJALS plans protests, vigils, civil disobedience or other nonviolent actions, it trains participants in active nonviolence—using anger as a positive force for change, not returning verbal or physical assaults, following directions, and refraining from insults or violence.

“The challenge is the difference between the size of our mission

and our capacity,” said Liz.

PJALS addresses that by engaging members in leadership.

“People need to know they are part of something bigger and that their funds go for their values,” said Liz, adding that PJALS is working to nurture relationships with congregations.

For information, call 838-7870 or visit pjals.org.



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## The cycle of giving circles in the faith and nonprofit world to strengthen all

With ongoing appeals from candidates and causes this fall, we may feel overwhelmed about giving. Now we're in the "giving" season and appeals continue to come, many from nonprofits concerned about how new policies may affect how they can respond to the many human needs.

**Before tightening giving**, it's important to remember a key dynamic known in rural communities: The more people spend locally, and the more times the money circulates in a town before it goes out, the more prosperous that community will be.

The same is true for nonprofit and faith

communities. The more organizations and individuals in them support each other's benefit events, funding appeals, volunteer needs and underwriting opportunities, the more resources are available to cycle through each nonprofit for the good things they do, before they cycle into other nonprofits' work, *and back again*.

That dynamic of economic health is important to keep in mind given the recent turnovers with retirements in many agencies. Nonprofits rely on nurturing relationships, so with staff changes, there is need to re-establish relationships to continue the

cycle of mutual support.

**We have been retelling** The Fig Tree story to build new relationships, so new people know the unique role of our publication in enhancing lives of nonprofits here.

Plus our editor and staff donate to and do business with many of our advertisers/underwriters, along with providing coverage to inform people of nonprofits and ministries. In addition, our readers donate to and give their business to our advertisers/underwriters. Our experience is just one example of the cycling or resources that keeps our nonprofit infrastructure healthy.

**We also realize how crucial** our relationships are in face of the recent hate incidents. If we isolate ourselves, we may feel discouraged or wonder why try to make a difference. The reason to keep on doing what we do—standing up for respect, dignity, equality, justice, peace, compassion, love and sustainability—is because we always need to do that. The Fig Tree reminds us by sharing inspiring stories of people who are making a difference.

We must discern our role in continuing the sacred cycle of giving.

Mary Stamp - Editor

## As campaign rhetoric turns into hate crimes, community is ready to act

The election unveiled a mood among some in society, after a campaign that allowed underlying fears, anger, alienation and hate to emerge.

Having an African-American president may not have meant that the progress many wanted was attained. We know that for people with rigid ideologies and beliefs, policies crafted by give-and-take may feel like defeat, rather than as part of a healthy democracy.

**It is disheartening to be clearly aware** of the hate, but we must persist in efforts to challenge and overcome it. We must keep doing what we have been doing and more.

We must encourage and empower each other to persevere. We must continue to work for the values we hold dear. We must continue to be in solidarity with those who are targeted. We must continue to urge media to be responsible, because having a free press is crucial to democracy and freedom.

**Sadly many in mainstream** and social media, fall into traps of celebrity and daily crises—"breaking news"—over covering outrageous things being said. While it was good for ratings and profits, in the process, many media may have helped entice people to follow a "pied piper."

Daily challenges, however, unfold. Some challenge the election results, the electoral college, the gerrymandering of districts and the influence of money. Others challenge conflicts of interest, media relationships, cabinet selections and changing policies. That's part of healthy democracy.

**How will we decide** our responsibilities for the coming years. How will we support each other? How will we discern what fears are real given the spread of "false news"? How will we keep our frustrations from overwhelming us?

How will God be revealed in these times?

Where will we find hope in these times? What will we give in these times?

**Some answers are coming** as the community steps up to confront divisions, distrust and damage fomented by hate.

Some are already challenging the ramifications as a few people feel freed to express their animosity toward "other" people.

In Spokane County, elected officials, law enforcement leaders, university and nonprofit leaders have denounced hate and have pledged to make more concerted efforts of educating people and engaging them in conversations.

**We have to look at our own biases** and model our affirmation of those who differ from us. We must learn about the diverse people in our communities and celebrate how we are enriched by encounters with people of different races, cultures, religions, ages, genders, abilities, identities and

insights, even in our own families.

We have much still to learn and do.

We have much to celebrate and share.

We have to connect and persevere, even when we think our own perspective prevails. Without diligence, we may step back from the road to peace, justice, liberty, equality, love, sustainability and goodwill.

**We need to keep informed.** We keep sharing our lives and giving our lives, because the journey continues. We are not alone. We must care about both those who travel with us and those who may seek to block our way.

The reason we study faith teachings, gather for worship, participate in community and seek spiritual nurture is to be sustained for the long journey of faithful living.

Mary Stamp  
Editor

Reflections

## Sounding Board

Overcoming Hate

## Incidents of hate, vandalism stir community to come together and act

**The recent hate activities** in Spokane County are acts of intimidation and cruelty and will not be ignored. We continue to strive for a community in which all residents feel safe, where honest disagreement can be shared and discussed and where opportunity exists for all to improve their lives physically, emotionally, intellectually and economically. We ask you to join us in collaboration with other like-minded organizations and people of Spokane County.

Dean Lynch - Spokane County  
Human Rights Task Force

**I am saddened and frightened** by the number of racist, anti-Semitic and bigoted events that have happened in Spokane in recent weeks, and I have had many conversations with community members, friends and family across the country who feel the same.

As I have thought about it more, I realized that all this racism and bigotry has been undercover in our country for a long time, and now that it has surfaced, we have the opportunity to confront it directly.

My hope is that we will speak out, protect one another, and create new personal and communal connections across lines of faith, class and race. As we come together to combat the expressions of hate in our midst we will give rise to new expressions of compassion, unity, trust and strength.

I am grateful for all the freedom we do enjoy in this country, and the ability of human beings to find faith in the midst of hardship, and to care for one another.

Rabbi Tamar Malino  
Temple Beth Shalom

**After seeing my post** from a few days ago, my neighbor (a Trump voter) came over tonight to talk to us about how we felt. We had a great conversation about the election, what it's like to be an American Muslim and what some of our hopes and fears are. He is in the military and said that he hadn't met Muslims before but was grateful that we are neighbors and that he

will work to protect our rights.

It was heartfelt and brave for him to come over and I challenge myself and others to reach out and form human relationships with people different from ourselves.

Admir Rasic - Spokane Interfaith  
Council Board and Spokane County  
Human Rights Task Force Board

**As I am sitting in my office** this morning reflecting on the outcomes of the election season, I am saddened by some of the results and encouraged by others. I find myself also reflecting on the phrase on the back of my church t-shirt, "All are welcome."

There are some days where this is a hard statement to live out because of disagreements and different points of view. Yet we are all children of God. I am also mindful of my African American, Latino, Middle Eastern and Indigenous brothers and sisters who are worried about what the future holds.

To all of you, I say that I will continue to work and advocate with and for all of God's children to be cared for equally. To my brothers and sisters in the LGBTQ community, I also commit to standing alongside you and advocating with and for your rights. To my brothers and sisters who follow different faith traditions, I will continue to speak out about your right to follow the faith that you have found your Truth within. To my brothers and sisters who don't always see eye to eye with me, I will continue to listen to your point of view as I also provide my own. I say all of this because we are all Children of God and I must affirm that all are welcome.

The Rev. Chris Snow  
North Hill Christian

**In a democratic republic**, someone gets voted in. Had the other side prevailed, would there still be this kind of response? Probably yes! But angry demonstrations or weeping and wailing won't help.

We have to work hard, and be patient and understanding. We have to stand firm in what we believe is right and just for

all people, working for justice, mercy and equality. Do not give in to fear, but strengthen your back and your spirit to do the work that must be done.

If peaceful demonstrations give way to angry rants and violence, then the wrong message will be heard. If reasonable goals are set, good work is accomplished. Do not give in to fear. Do not give in to violence. Stand firm in faith that God is present, and that in God's hands all things are possible.

Tara Leininger  
Metaline Falls First Congregational  
United Church of Christ

**Many of us are shocked** and disheartened by the recent rash of hate-motivated incidents in Spokane. More than ever, our community needs elected officials, law enforcement and nonprofit leaders to come together to send a clear message that Spokane is too great for hate. Spokane has taken important steps to make that happen. However, we all need to make sure that this voice is consistent and backed up with action to make sure that everyone in the community is safe and welcome.

Rick Eichstaedt - Center for Justice

**I am so proud of our community** for standing together against hate at the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force press conference. Coming together gives us hope in the multi-ethnic communities. Like other multi-ethnic community members, I have great concerns and am always watchful of the environment. Many times I avoid areas where I feel isolated. Coming together for the press conference gives me great comfort and it is great to know that we are not alone in this fight and that the community will stand by us. Let us keep this going for the common good.

Ben Cabildo - AHANA and  
Community-Minded Enterprises

**We live in a nation that prides** itself for having liberty and justice for all. That's the vision of America, the vision America and this community need to live up to. Some have

decided to commit acts to divide the community, to make minorities and people fearful by using "weaponized fear." It's time for us—local, state and national elected leaders—to say 'no more hate.' We need to stop the rhetoric and live to the vision that is the United States.

Ozzie Knezovich  
Spokane County Sheriff

**I am disappointed to see acts** of hate across the country and in Spokane. We do not accept or tolerate hate or the hateful acts of a few in this community. The Spokane community rallies in support. We need to come together. We continue to address issues. Hate, intolerance and bias are not welcome in our community.

Spokane Mayor David Condon

**This year it has been tough** watching the divisive Presidential campaign. When we see hate in our community, 1) we need to support action now—vigils, community conversations—and plan to prevent discrimination and promote human rights for the future; 2) we need to be models for our children so they learn to be tolerant and open, and stay open, and 3) leaders need to look inside themselves to address their own biases and learn from people they disagree with so they build respect.

Amber Waldref  
Spokane City Council

**Five hate incidents targeting** minorities in Spokane County in one week deserved a strong response from our elected leadership and law enforcement. At a Nov. 22 press conference, they declared that hate has no place in our region. They reassured us they will do everything they can to keep us safe. They offered ways to partner with law enforcement to report and prevent future hate incidents. They announced initiatives that will promote unity and safety for all segments of our population. With Thanksgiving close, I departed the press conference feeling once again hopeful and grateful about living in the great Inland Northwest.

Hershel Zellman - Temple Beth Shalom  
and Spokane County Human Rights



# Calendar of Events

- To Dec 11** • **Tree of Sharing** at Northtown, River Park Square and Spokane Valley Malls, 808-4919, mcconnelltos@gmail.com
- Dec 1** • **Little Black Dress**, YWCA, collecting bras for Our Sister's Closet, Nectar Tasting Room, 120 S. Stevens, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., 798-9304, ywcaspokane.org
- Dec 1, 8, 15** • **The Voice of Our Prayers**, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, 7 p.m.
- Dec 1-24** • **"All Is Calm,"** 1914 encounter of soldiers in No Man's Land told in words and song, Modern Theatre Spokane, 174 S. Howard St., Thursday-Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sunday at 2 p.m., themoderntheater.org
- Dec 1, 15** • **Peace & Justice Action** Committee, planning People's Inauguration in January, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870, pjals.org
- Dec 2** • **Celebration of Women and Domestic Violence Survivors**, unveiling of sculpture, YWCA, 930 N. Monroe St., 5 to 7:30 p.m., 326-1190, melaniew@ywcaspokane.org
- **Magic Lantern Theatre** re-opening with "A Man Called Ove," 25 W. Main, 5:30 to 8 p.m.
- Dec 3** • **"Advent: Then and Now,"** Linda Schearing of Gonzaga University, St. Pius X Faith Formation Center, Coeur d'Alene, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 208-765-5108
- **Pullman Islamic Center**, Open House, 1155 NE Stadium Way, Pullman, 2 to 5 p.m.
- **Advent Day of Prayer**, Sr. Patty Novak, OSF, The Ministry Institute, 405 E. Sinto, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 313-5765, bartletts@gonzaga.edu
- **Good Neighbor Conference**, Jepson Center, Gonzaga, 330 E. DeSmet, 6 to 9 p.m.
- Dec 6** • **"Is Violence Preventable, Like the Flu?"** Community Conversations, Northwest Associates for Biomedical Research, Stacy Wenzl, Spokane Regional Health District, at O'Doherty's Irish Grille, 525 W. Spokane Falls Blvd, 5:45 to 7:30 p.m., nwabr.org/conversation/spokane
- **St. Nicholas Day** - International
- Dec 8** • **Transitions Holidays at the Hearth**, 920 W. Second, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., 328-6702, mtracey@help4women.org
- **Feast of the Immaculate Conception** - Christian/Catholic
- **Bodhi Day** - Buddhist
- Dec 8-17** • **Christmas Bureau**, Spokane County Fair and Expo Center, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 459-5453, jlee@ccspokane.org
- Dec 8** • **PJALS Holiday Party**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870, pjals.org
- Dec 9** • **Cookies and Cocktails** - Benefit for Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center, silent auction for Building Dreams Capital Campaign, Spokane Community College Lair Building 6, 1810 N. Greene St., 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., 455-8722, https://www.facebook.com/events/365646770434873/
- Dec 9-11** • **Singing Nuns**, "Mary's Christmas," Mt. St. Michael, 8500 N Saint Michaels Rd., 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday, singingnuns.com
- Dec 10** • **Smart Justice Spokane**, showing the documentary "13th" and BlackOutWA Black Prisoners Caucus legislative summit, Morning Star Baptist Church, Time TBA, 838-7870, pjals.org
- **Human Rights Day** - United Nations
- Dec 10-11** • **"Gloria,"** Whitworth University Christmas Festival Concert, Martin Woldson Theater at the Fox, http://bit.ly/2eHuwiA.
- Dec 11** • **Gingerbread Build Off** - Christ Kitchen Fundraiser, The Davenport Grand, 10 S. Post, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., cckckministry.org
- **Blue Christmas**, Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, 15319 E. 8th, 3 p.m.
- **Handel's Messiah Sing-Along**, First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 4 p.m.
- **Affiniti-Celtic Christmas Concert**, Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague, 7 p.m., bingcrosbytheater.com/events
- **Eid-Maulad-un-Nabi** - Islam
- Dec 12** • **Fiesta of Our Lady of Guadalupe** - Mexico
- Dec 13** • **St. Lucia Day** in Sweden
- Dec 16** • **Celebrate Another Year of Justice**, Center for Justice Winter Party, 35 W. Main, 5 to 7 p.m., 835-5211
- Dec 16-24** • **Las Posadas** in Mexico
- Dec 18** • **German American Christmas Service**, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E 24th Ave., 3 p.m.
- Dec 21** • **"Cocoa and Contemplation** for children, parents and grandparents, "How Saint Nicholas Became Santa Claus," Deacon Tom Heavey, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6810 S. Ben Burr Rd., 9 to 11 a.m., 448-1224, skrause@ihrc.net
- **NAACP Monthly Membership Meeting**, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 7 p.m., spkncpbr@gmail.com
- **Solstice**
- Dec 23** • **Joseph Smith's Birthday** - Mormon
- Dec 24-Jan 1** • **Hanukkah** - Jewish
- Dec 25** • **Christmas Day** - Christian
- Dec 26** • **American Guild of Organists**, Christmas Church Walk and Carol Sing, Manito Presbyterian, 401 E. 30th to Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington, to Central Lutheran, 512 S. Bernard, 2 to 4 p.m. 535-7145
- **Kwanzaa** - African-American/Canada-US
- **Fig Tree Mailing**, St. Mark's, 9 a.m.
- **Fig Tree Benefit, Board and Legislative Conference**, Emmanuel Family Life Center, noon, 1 and 3 p.m., 535-1813
- Jan 4**
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## GU professor invites crowd to act to promote 'welcome'

Pat McCormick, professor of religious studies at Gonzaga University, sent out 12 emails one Friday morning after the election, inviting people to gather in front of College Hall for a post-election vigil on "Welcome, Not Walls."

He reminded the 200 who

gathered that the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, welcomes the tired, poor, huddled masses, wretched refuse, homeless and tempest-tossed.

Participants sang, "Everyone is welcome," adding different groups—races, immigrants, faiths,

orientations, women—to the tune of "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Participants pledged to do something, speak out and promote "Welcome, Not Walls."

For information, call 313-6715 or email [mccormick@calvin.gonzaga.edu](mailto:mccormick@calvin.gonzaga.edu).

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# Two are among many from region challenging Dakota Access Pipeline

Suzi Hokonson and Eric Henningsen of Spokane spent more than three weeks this fall at the Oceti Sakowin Camp where the Standing Rock Sioux Water Protectors are staying to challenge the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) crossing north of their reservation and potentially contaminating their drinking water. The two were back in Spokane briefly before returning with supplies.

**They first drove six days** to North Dakota and planned to stay two nights, but stayed longer, participating in a "life-changing experience," seeing atrocities the water protectors faced and praying each day with elders.

They were at the Mandan Courthouse when journalist Amy Goodman went to turn herself in after her arrest on charges of "rioting" for covering what was happening. On their last day, more than 524 clergy of all faiths came to walk in prayer and peace.

They were involved with the small Cannon Ball district, the poorest of eight districts on the reservation. They opened their community center for people to shower. Eric replaced four showerheads, unplugged a urinal and the women's handicapped drain.

**Suzi helped sort clothing** donations at the senior center, taking extra coats and gloves to the school. Eric also put up more than 25 feet of clothing racks and installed wood stoves in military tents that hold 150 people.

"There are many clothing and food donations, but the real need is for money for legal expenses and building materials," Suzi said. They returned Wednesday, Nov. 16 in their 15-passenger van, bringing a refrigerated drinking fountain for the gym. They bought it online for \$80, less than the cost of a china drinking fountain (\$400). They also took wood strips with coat hooks for the shower rooms.

**Eric, who grew up** in Payette, Idaho, earned a degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Idaho in 1970. He worked with General Electric in Illinois and Florida, and then returned to the Northwest working three years with General Instruments in Post Falls, with Honeywell in Spokane and as facilities engineer at Sacred Heart for 18 years until he retired in 2011. He grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church, which later merged to become part of the United Church of Christ, and then was Lutheran.

**Suzi grew up Lutheran** in Enumclaw, Wash., and attended Lutheran Bible Institute for two years. She earned a degree in elementary education and childhood development in 1969 at Washington State University. She



Eric Henningsen and Suzi Hokonson visit Standing Rock Sioux.

married and went with her husband to seminary, returning to Spokane where he served two Lutheran churches. After they divorced, she was not involved in a church.

About six months after Hurricane Katrina, however, she went with a Lutheran-Episcopal cleanup team. She met a family who lost a child. She saw one house demolished and the next was fine. She went twice.

Locally, Suzi has served meals at Central United Methodist Church, volunteers with Planned Parenthood, serves on the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane Board, Sierra Club and the Lands Council.

**"I think everything led me** to go to the Oceti Camp," said Suzi, who was impressed how Johnny, an Indian from South Dakota, facilitated the camp.

There was a community meeting every morning. Whether there were 20 or 50 people, they went around the room and spoke. They operate based on consensus, rather than relying on one leader. Every meeting was open and closed by an elder praying in Lakota.

Since retiring five years ago, Eric has been helping people, addressing climate change and tribal rights.

"People in America's First Nations have been shoved aside," he said. "Many suffer from alcoholism and unemployment."

**"People come to the camp** to be in solidarity. About two-thirds are from around the world," she said. "At one time, there were 7,000 people in the camp. No alcohol, weapons or swearing are allowed at the camps. Everyone pitches in to prepare meals. Many solar panels are being set up on tandem axel trailers to provide power," Eric said

They made four trips to Bismarck, N.D., driving 50 miles out of the way because the main road was blocked.

The day Amy Goodman of Democracy Now! came to the Mandan Courthouse to turn herself in, protesters lined one side of the street. Across from them were 50 police in headgear and with billy clubs. She spoke and gave interviews on the lawn of First Presbyterian Church.

"We stayed there for six hours before we learned they had dropped the charges," she said.

President Barack Obama has proposed rerouting the pipeline. The route had been rerouted from north of Mandan to the current site, but citizens protested because it would threaten their drinking water.

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe had too short a notice to appeal.

**Fr. John Floberg** of Fort Yates Episcopal Church has been there 26 years. He sent a call for clergy to come. He had expected 100 to come to pray, but 524 came.

"We encourage people to go there," said Suzi. "They need presence more than money. On Nov. 22, six young people arrived from Wellpinit.

"Money is coming in. When 58 cars were impounded, someone wrote a check to cover the \$500 charge per car.

**"It's a prayerful, peaceful** place," she said. "The camps are practicing Indian faith. It's amazing the number of young people who hugged us because we are white elders who care."

The community center kitchen

needs to be modeled. It's more than Eric can do, so he suggests it's a good project for a church.

Since retiring, Eric has been reading about American history and learning about Native Americans' experiences.

**He admits mixed feelings** about opposing the pipeline, because it will reduce the number of trains from the Bakken fields, going through Spokane. Shipping the oil by train adds \$10 per barrel.

"Fracking contaminates drinking water, so in many areas people drink bottled water and need to recycle the plastic bottles," he added.

Eric said farmers and ranchers are also concerned. If they did not agree to a price for their land, it was taken by eminent domain.

Wells Fargo and Citibank are invested in the pipeline, so some are protesting at those banks, urging them to withdraw funds. Recently the Norwegian Bank BND announced it would sell its assets to the DAPL project.

If the pipeline is not connected by Jan. 1, contracts will need to be renegotiated, said Suzi.

For information, call 808-1255.



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