

37TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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

‘Music takes people within and beyond’

By Mary Stamp

For most of KPBX’s 40 years, Verne Windham has been there, sharing his love of music.

In 1980, KPBX came on the air in Spokane as a full-power station connected with National Public Radio (NPR), which nationally replaced the National Educational Radio Network in 1970.

“I listened to it,” said Verne, who came to Spokane in 1971 to play French horn with the Spokane Symphony.

Without realizing it, helping with pledge drives beginning in 1982 became his audition for a music program he had proposed.

“In May 1984, no one wanted to work during Bloomsday, so I did my first shift,” he said.

He started part time, substituting as the classical music announcer. That eventually became a full time job. From 1988 to 2018, his work included various jobs at the station—librarian, music director and program director in charge of all programming. In 2018, he shifted to part time as music director.

Verne left the symphony in 1988 when he began working full time at KPBX.

“I have always been comfort-



Verne Windham has hosted programs on KPBX public radio since 1984.

able talking about music, not just playing it. I love talking about it to make people fall in love with music,” he said. “I’m so crazy about music I want everyone to be crazy about it.”

While KPBX began with an emphasis on classical music, it now includes a broad range of music, Verne said.

“Our world of music expanded from the three pillars of classical, jazz and folk music, to include ethnic, world and popular music. Music does not have rigid barriers,” he said. “The artistic aspect of classical music is the core of our repertoire, but art changes, and there are brilliant composers also in jazz and pop music.”

Verne believes music is important because “we as humans need to look within and beyond ourselves for meaning and purpose that takes us away from the mundane and shows us an infinity of things beyond the day-to-day consciousness in which we live.

“Music reminds us there is so much more to life. After reminding us, it suggests pathways and answers,” he said, quoting Victor Hugo: “Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which

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Serving ‘the least’ shifts from dining with dignity to grab-and-go meals

Barbara Caviezel, a retired United Methodist pastor, sees Christ alive in the eyes of hungry people coming to Shalom Ministries’ Dining with Dignity meals.

With COVID-19, sit-down meals served on plates at tables in a warm basement social hall became grab-and-go meals served on paper plates to be eaten outside to comply with Spokane Regional Health District guidelines.

With cold weather, guests enter New Community Church at 518 W. Third Ave. through a corner door on Howard St., pick up a meal in the narthex and go

out a door on Third Ave.

Guests, cooks, servers and greeters all wear masks and use hand sanitizer. She said some, who can’t go inside to use the restrooms and wash, use hand sanitizer on their faces and hair, too.

“More and more hungry people are coming as the pandemic lingers,” said Barbara.

In September, they served 5,796 meals, the most ever, and in October, 5,376. They previously served an average of 4,000 to 4,800—fewer in the summer.

Many diners are regulars. Some have been homeless for

years. Many are women. Some bring their children. About 10 percent are in their 70s and 80s.

“This is God’s holy work, feeding homeless, marginalized people,” Barbara said. “While many are homeless and have no jobs, some are new. Some have low-paying jobs, but struggle to feed themselves and their families. They come dressed to go to work. Many tell their stories as they go through the line. They tell us when they find housing, start school or find a job, so we can celebrate with them.

Now diners sit on the sidewalk, huddling under their blankets, coming even in the frigid cold, rain or snow. Other meal programs have shut down, so they are hungry and grateful, she said. “Some voluntarily help clean up the sidewalks in appreciation for their only meal of the day. Many express fears we will be forced to shut down during this pandemic.”

A businessman walking by to work recently made note of how well kept the streets were and

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Legislative Conference is virtual on Jan. 30

The 2021 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference will be held on Zoom from 8:50 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30, to inform members of the faith and nonprofit community in the region of issues coming before the upcoming session of the Washington State Legislature and how they can be involved.

“Beyond Words: Doing Justice” is the theme for the annual conference.

Keynote speaker Walter Kendrick, pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church in Spokane, will share insights from his recent involvement with the Governor’s Task Force on Independent Investigations of Police Use of Force and the Governor’s Commission on African American Affairs.

Following his presentation, four panelists will offer discussion on the theme and his presentation, leading into break-out small group discussion. Gen Heywood, pastor of Veradale United Church of Christ and convenor of Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience, will moderate the panel discussion.

Panelists are Kiantha Duncan, president of the Spokane NAACP; Phil Misner, assistant to the Northwest Intermountain Synod bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Chalo Martinez, a Catholic deacon whose career was as a probation/parole officer, and Margo Hill, an attorney, leader in the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women movement and EWU associate professor in urban planning.

There will be two sessions of workshops, also on Zoom,

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WCC leader connects poverty, climate change

During COVID-19, faith communities are “well-placed to promote concrete solutions” for sustainability, said Isabel Apawo Phiri, World Council of Churches (WCC) deputy general secretary, in an international intergenerational dialogue on Nov. 19. She spoke on poverty in the context of COVID-19, and how it relates to sustainability, climate change and the use of natural resources.

“Rooted in an unjust, ecologically unsustainable economic model, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are wreaking havoc on people’s lives,” said Isabel. “The pandemic is both an offshoot of and catalyst to the current economic catastrophe.

“While unprecedented lockdowns and measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 have triggered a fall in greenhouse gas emissions, they have also led to soaring joblessness, poverty and hunger in the developed and developing world,” she said. “Amid suffering, the crises reveal several truths: that health is wealth, economy and ecology cannot be separated, we are interconnected as one Earth community, we need to invest in systems of care and resilience, and we have to reshape economic policies to nurture the wellbeing of people and planet.”

Many churches are raising awareness on the economic and environmental causes of the pandemic, she said, adding that faith communities are well placed to promote concrete solutions.

Children and young people interacted with senior religious leaders of different faiths and UN leaders in the Online Global Week of Faith in Action for Children Nov. 16 to 20.

Isobel added that, given that God protects, loves and cares for the most vulnerable among God’s creatures, churches and other organizations can provide concrete answers to the challenges of the climate crisis that impacts lives of children and youth.

Priest speaks of Palestinian persistence

The 53 years of occupation of Palestinian lands imposes injustices on daily life, said Jamil Khadir, a pastor of two Episcopal churches in Nablus in the Northern West Bank, at the Olive Harvest Initiative, a global effort in 2020 to highlight the spiritual, economic and cultural importance of the olive harvest for Palestinian communities. Despite their struggles, he said many Palestinians work on a daily basis to foster peace and justice. Doctors, teachers, students and engineers in his congregation contribute to the community and congregation.

“We seek to live our life peacefully, with each other and with our Muslim friends,” he said. “Together we work for justice, peace and reconciliation. Three words—hope, faith and love—are important for Christians. The greatest is love.

In the struggle against occupation, Jamil said, “love is our force. We can summarize Christianity by the word love. By our love we can change everything. By our actions, we can switch the heart of a stone or a rock into a heart of love and peace. The gospel tells us to be peacemakers. We are Christians by our words and our deeds, by our love and our actions.”

Churches offer services in Nicaragua, Honduras

After repeat hurricanes, churches offer vital services. Two weeks after Hurricane Eta struck, Nicaragua and Honduras were hit by Hurricane Iota. Eta killed at least 120 people in flash floods and mudslides. Before Iota’s landfall, 63,500 people were evacuated in northern Honduras, and 1,500 in Nicaragua were moved from low-lying areas. Carlos Rauda, a regional officer with ACT Alliance, said churches had a vital role helping meet needs for shelter, food and hygiene kits. Churches are giving their buildings as shelters, providing food and psychosocial and spiritual care.

They organize local campaigns to collect and give clothes, food and hygiene items in the shelters, coordinate with governments to channel aid to the people, and provide safe havens for families. Churches also advocate for governments to provide sufficient aid, with respect for the dignity of those affected.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Workshops, speaker, panel announced

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 which participants may choose to attend during the time or on recorded video later.

Those sessions are:

- Jessica Zimmerle of Earth Ministry/Interfaith Power and Light will lead a workshop on legislation on the environment.

- Paul Benz of the Faith Action Network (FAN) will discuss budget and revenue issues. The 2021 to 2023 biennial budget includes funding proposals.

- Kurtis Robinson, vice president of the Spokane NAACP, will coordinate a session on judicial reform.

- Bob Lutz, member of the

State Board of Health, will bring together leaders to discuss racism and the public health disparity.

- Ben Stuckart of Spokane Low-Income Housing Consortium is collaborating with Terri Anderson of the Washington Tenants Union and the Spokane Alliance to discuss housing issues.

- The St. Aloysius and St. Ann’s Immigration Committee will present immigration issues.

Between workshop sessions, there will be a “Legislative Briefing” on the status of legislation before the 2021 session. Leaders will be Paul of FAN, Jessica of Earth Ministry and Donna Christensen of the

Washington State Catholic Conference.

Paul noted that because of the pandemic, the Legislative Session will consider about half the usual number of bills.

Because the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference will be presented online, participants need to register in advance to receive the link.

The planners from The Fig Tree, Catholic Charities, Earth Ministry and FAN are coordinating the technology.

For information, call 535-1813, email event@thefigtree.org or find flier at thefigtree.org/2021LegConfFliers.pdf

Grants help The Fig Tree weather COVID

The Fig Tree recently received several grants.

In November, The Fig Tree received a \$5,000 grant from the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary U.S.-Ontario Province, carrying on the legacy of co-founder Sr. Bernadine Casey and the charism of SNJM founder Mother Marie Rose.

Those funds will be used to help compensate freelance writers, to train writers and editors

in our editorial approach of solutions/peace and justice journalism, to assist as a Resource Directory community partner and to help pay for the video for the Benefit events in March.

In addition, Forward – Live Stories granted \$5,000 from the City of Spokane CARES Act funding in October to make up for decreased income from newspaper, online and directory advertising and other funding

that did not come in because of COVID-19.

The Fig Tree received another Forward – Live Stories grant in early November of \$8,000 to assist with the technology for producing online benefit events in March 2021 and for expenses to continue the COVID-19 guide for resources online.

For information, call 535-1813 or email mary@thefigtree.org.

Climate Resiliency Academy planned

The Spokane Climate Resiliency Academy is a four-month, interactive learning environment for community members from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., every other Tuesday from Jan. 19 to April 27.

The goal of this academy offered by 350 Spokane and Gonzaga University is for participants to become leaders in sustainability issues and initiatives that

shape the city and region.

Sessions will address topics like environmental justice, water, energy and waste, so participants learn sustainability practices to share in their workplaces and among peers.

The experience will give community members tools to be sustainability change agents who serve the community, care for the

planet and advance commitment to social justice in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, said Madison Dougherty of Gonzaga.

For information, visit facebook.com/350Spokane or email doughertym@gonzaga.edu. The Resiliency Academy application link is https://gonzaga.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ehB-KhcafVp8g80R.

Fourth video is on justice for homeless

Rising River Media is developing its fourth documentary in the “My Road Leads Home” series of documentaries on homelessness in the Spokane: “And Justice for Some.”

It will focus on the intersection of homelessness and the justice system and examine how those experiencing homelessness are treated differently by

the justice system, said Maurice Smith, executive producer.

It includes interviews with people who have been cited for either sit-and-lie, illegal camp-

ing or second degree trespassing violations.

A rough cut of the short documentary is at <https://youtu.be/kqtHNxUnpOE>.

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Mid-City Concerns building repairs are done

Mid-City Concerns Meals on Wheels is "back home" at its downtown office, 1222 W. 2nd Ave., after completion of its building renovation project.

For several months, MOW worked out of the Southside Community Center on 27th and S. Ray. It has moved back and is looking forward to resuming hot meals for seniors in the Senior Center.

In mid-October 2019, Mid-City Concerns found a failed roof truss at its downtown location and construction began this July to build a new roof system with trusses supported by interior columns.

Improvements include a redesigned coffee bar, a large freezer for storage of frozen meals, more space behind the serving bar and staff office space. Mid-City Concerns raised \$100,000 for the work.

Currently its senior center is closed because of COVID-19.

Meals on Wheels is collecting Christmas gifts through the week before Christmas to deliver to clients. The seniors' wish lists are online at mowspokane.org/holidays. Gifts may be dropped off at the office.

"We invite people to create holiday cards and crafts, such as ornaments," said Beth Alcorn, director.

For information, call 747-3257.

Nez Perce named state MMIW coordinator

A former Nez Perce police chief and Native American policing expert has been named the Washington state coordinator for cases involving missing and murdered indigenous people.

David Rogers, a Nez Perce citizen, was appointed as the federal Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons program coordinator in Washington state, according to a news release from U.S. attorneys William Hyslop and Brian Moran, who oversee the Eastern and Western Washington districts respectively.

David will work with federal, tribal, state and local law enforcement agencies to develop procedures for responding to cases of missing and murdered indigenous people.

The position is part of the U.S. Justice Department's Missing and Murdered Indigenous People initiative that was launched this past year, hiring coordinators for 11 states.

David has run his own consulting firm, Tribal Public Safety Innovations LLC for four years. He was chief of the Nez Perce's police department from 2013 to 2016, and was tribal public safety manager at the National Criminal Justice Training Center's Criminal Justice Center for Innovation in Wisconsin from 2003 to 2013.

Virtual service celebrates martyred sisters

A Virtual Prayer Service, "Roses in December," will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the North American Women Martyrs in El Salvador from 7 to 7:45 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 2, live streamed from St. Aloysius Church.

The theme for the event comes from a quote of one of the martyrs, Jean Donovan, a lay missionary, who said, "El Salvador is such a beautiful country. Where else would you find roses in December?"

Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clark and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and Jean ministered in El Salvador during its 12-year war, in which more than 70,000 civilians were killed. For their works of mercy and compassion, they were martyred, said organizer Rita Waldref of St. Aloysius Parish.

For information, call 313-7003 or email rwaldref@dioceseofspokane.org. For the livestream, visit stalschurch.org and click "watch video" to join the service.

Rental assistance program has started

For people struggling to pay rent, Emmanuel Family Life Center, Jesus Is the Answer City Church, the Spokane Ministers Fellowship and the Carl Maxey Center are partnering with SNAP (Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners) and the City of Spokane to offer limited assistance with rent through the Eviction Rental Assistance Program.

A COVID assistance team at Emmanuel Family Life Center is

offering assistance for up to three months for one month past due, the current month and the next month's rent.

The grants through the Washington State Commerce Department will be distributed in Hillyard and North Spokane, East Central and South Hill Spokane, and West Central Spokane.

"The City of Spokane portion is designated for people of color under the age of 25 years. Spokane County is working with

SNAP to provide \$4 million to mitigate evictions for anyone," said Lonnie Mitchell, director of the Emmanuel Family Life Center, which is the fiduciary agent for the grants.

Four caseworkers who have offices at the center will receive calls and then go out to people to deliver the applications, which are submitted to either SNAP or Catholic Charities.

For information, call 443-4884.

Video sermons bring diversity

The Northwest Intermountain (NWIM) Synod is welcoming Lutheran leaders of color from around the United States to its digital pulpit as its congregations use online worship formats.

It's a chance to hear Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) pastors Northwest congregations may not otherwise hear and to provide preaching relief for local pastors.

The "Color Amazed Preaching Project" kicked off on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 25, "as the church celebrates God's renewing Spirit and takes seriously its need to be reformed in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world," said Bishop Kristen Kuempel.

"Our hope is that this project helps us begin to better live into the fullness of being the body of Christ," she said.

It continues with the preachers preaching once a month through April. Preachers include African Americans, an Oglala Sioux member, a second-generation Indian-American, a Latino and more.

For information, call 838-9871 or visit nwimsynod.org.

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Verne Windham is a familiar voice after 36 years with KPBX radio

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it is impossible to be silent.”

He said music speaks without words. It does not define pathways or answers, but “we just listen to music and are changed.”

Music was part of his family in Moscow, Idaho, where his father was a postal worker, who played the French horn and was choir director at what is now Emmanuel Lutheran Church. His mother played piano and was church pianist. Music was central to his family’s life.

He studied from 1964 to 1968 at Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y., and played in the U.S. Army Band in New York City from 1968 to 1971, when he came to Spokane to be the principal French horn player with the Spokane Symphony.

Verne also taught French horn at Gonzaga University, Washington State University in Pullman, the Music Center at the Holy Names Sisters’ Fort Wright College, and other local institutions.

In 1983, he met Susan, his second wife, among musicians gathered at a bar after a performance of the opera “La Traviata.” She came to Eastern Washington University to study piano and found her voice as a singer.

Since 1986, Verne has also been choir director at Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ. In high school, college and the army, he directed Lutheran church choirs.

“In the UCC and Lutheran churches, most church music is classical,” he said.

“My faith and faith community keep me grounded and engaged in growing spiritually, he said. “Music can fill that spiritual role for anyone.”

Verne still has a live morning program, including theatre interviews when they were possible, and has a hand in the station’s literature programs—The Bookshelf, airing at 6:30 p.m., and the daily Poetry Moment at the beginning of his program. He is impressed with the talent of Spokane’s poets and theater. Literary programs are now primarily produced by colleague Chris Maccini and classical music by Jim Tevenan.

Over the years, much has changed. The station now has 11 full-time and 10 part-time staff.

“We lost six paid positions over the last 10 years as people retired and we restructured without replacing them,” he said.

“We are now able to do more with less because of digital editing. It’s many times faster than cutting a magnetic tape with a razor blade and reconnecting it with plastic tape to remove an

‘um’,” Verne said.

Many who began in public radio in the 1970s and 1980s are now retiring, so Verne is pleased that there is a generation shift bringing in “brilliant young people who like the medium.”

During his career, the NPR system has also grown and offers many more national programs. When he started, KPBX broadcast just four hours of NPR shows. Now they need fewer local shows. Many NPR programs are purchased, but some are free—“labors of love, made from a sense of mission and desire to communicate,” he said.

What used to be one broadcast station, KPBX, now has three broadcast streams, KPBX, KSFC and KPBZ, all now part of Spokane Public Radio (SPR) and all part of the National Public Radio (NPR) network, though people often still refer to the parent company SPR as KPBX. Broadcasting locally at 91.1, the original station KPBX reaches farthest: north to the Canadian border, into parts of Eastern Oregon and Montana, and west into the Methow Valley in the Cascades.

KSFC 91.9—acquired 25 years ago from Spokane Community College—broadcasts news, public affairs and commentary locally and a bit north and into Coeur d’Alene.

About 15 years ago, SPR acquired Whitworth’s college station as well. Now designated KPBZ 90.3, it airs a random mix of programs, many from independent producers, assembled by the Public Radio Exchange (PRX), and is heard locally. The three stations broadcast 24 hours a day and are available by streaming on the Internet.

KPBX has had five station managers in its 40 years. Several of its news producers have gone on to work with NPR in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere.

Verne said the public radio

content expanded from two hours of NPR news along with the music in 1970, when it was considered specialized, elitist white upper middle class.

News coverage grew after the first Gulf War when it went to 24 hours. It began broadcasting BBC news and other news and entertainment programming, drawing more listeners.

“People craved more news, and overnight we provided it,” Verne said.

Originally, public radio did not carry sports, but now that it draws a greater breadth of listeners, many are interested in sports and popular music.

News coverage has grown to the point that NPR provides one of the largest news organizations in America, larger than AP, NBC and others, Verne said.

The privately and publicly funded nonprofit media outlet delivers breaking national and world news on business, politics, health, science, technology, music, arts and culture.

Its drive-time news broadcasts, Morning Edition and All Things Considered, are among the most popular radio programs, he said.

“As NPR has gained a larger, more general audience, it has held the same mentality of bring-

ing information to people and serving people,” Verne said, “as opposed to commercial media that deliver people’s ears to advertisers.

“**Half of our support is** from the public—listeners. So we need their trust and loyalty. Government support, originally 15 percent, is now only 11 percent

support. Federal grants initially helped build buildings and provide equipment,” he said. “Our underwriting is a mild form of advertising, providing 20 percent of support with grants.”


For information, call 328-5729 or email vwindham@kpbx.org or vsjjwindham@comcast.net.

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ECEAP is part of new mixed income apartments in Liberty Park area

By Marilyn Urness

The Liberty Park Community Development Center (LPCDC) broke ground in September at 1405 E. Hartson for a new Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) building to better serve the needs of children and their families, as well as provide more affordable housing units.

Scheduled for completion in April 2021, the two-classroom early learning center is part of a \$3.2 million Liberty Park Apartments/Early Learning Center campus. Initially, there will be 20 affordable housing units. When the campus is complete, there will be 49 new housing units.

The units will be for a combination of low-income tenants and tenants paying the market rate. Low-income and market-rate units will be mixed to blur lines between tenants.

The Presbytery of the Inland Northwest founded Proclaim Liberty, which owns the property where the new apartments and center will be located. It was formed in the 1970s to build Liberty Park Terrace Apartments at 1417 E. Hartson for low-income people who were displaced when their homes were demolished for the construction of I-90.

In 1993, the presbytery founded the Liberty Park Community Development Center as the Liberty Park Child Development Center, a nonprofit to provide day care, ECAP and other services.

The new building, designed in part by staff, will have features the current building lacks: a lobby, an attached playground, private meeting rooms, two classrooms, a full commercial kitchen, a teacher workroom/lounge and a conference room.

Proclaim Liberty asked state legislators for assistance. They granted \$1 million to start building. With a grant and loan from the city, they have \$2.2 million.

As part of LPCDC's goal to improve the neighborhood, the new building repurposes a vacant lot.

"We're trying to make a difference in our neighborhood and provide a communal place for everyone," said Ivy Chetverikov, director of the ECEAP program.

The center is a community building housing several programs that focus on children and the whole family, offering support for families in the neighborhood.



Construction is underway for new apartments and a new ECEAP center.

Along with ECEAP, the children's programs are Champion, Champ Camp and Youth Group.

Natalie Bragg, the center director, first came to lead the Champion after school drop-in program when it started in 2013.

It provides after-school activities for five to 12-year-old at-risk youth in the Liberty Park neighborhood. They come to play games, do homework or set personal goals.

Champ Camp is a free summer program that introduces children to Spokane and its natural wonders, as part of teaching them about God.

Recently LPCDC had to change their procedures for safety because of COVID-19.

Usually ECEAP has had 20 morning children, 20 afternoon children and 20 school day slots.

"This year, ECEAP is adapting by having smaller class sizes. Students are only in the building two or three days a week. Enrollment has been low. We still have 22 openings, which is unusual, but it's the same for programs across the state," said Ivy.

The ECEAP program also offers classes for parents in Circle of Security Parenting.

With schools closed to in-person learning, Natalie said the center saw a need for academic support for children.

So LPCDC now provides a safe space for children to access in-person support for their online school day. They offer real time online school support from 8 a.m. to noon, Mondays to Thursdays for kindergarten to sixth grade students.

"Children participating in our program are on alternating schedules," said Natalie. "The program is held in our conference room, complete with plexi-glass desk separators and hand sanitizing stations.

The center offers English as a Second Language (ESL) and other classes for parents in homeownership, budgeting, nutrition, self-care for parents and resume building.

ESL classes teach immigrants and refugees English. Each year, staff see improvements in speaking skills of ESL students.

Learning English gives parents more access to resources, such as medical care and better jobs. ESL classes are free, offered by volunteers from Whitworth, Gonzaga and Eastern Washington Universities, Spokane Community College and World Relief.

The Liberty Park Community Development Center is a neighborhood hub that connects people of all ages to opportunities for spiritual, educational and social growth as a mission of the Presbytery of the Inland Northwest.

Its programs seek to empower participants with knowledge, relationships and tools, while introducing them to Christ's love, said Natalie.

"We seek to be a living witness to the Spirit's work in Spokane," she said.

Ivy said the Liberty Park Child Development Center included both a paid day care center, which was too expensive for many residents of the Liberty Park neighborhood, and ECEAP

to provide free preschool mornings and afternoons.

Ivy shared a favorite memory from when she was ECEAP family service coordinator.

"I had worked with a family for a year and half, and realized the student had never gone to the dentist. Our program requires us to have a recent dental exam on file. I reminded the mother over and over," she said. "One day she shouted, 'He went to the dentist!' She was so excited that she had finally done it," Ivy said.

"We help each enrolled family with whatever they need. We referred one family to Spokane Public Schools for special education services. We made sure another family had enough money to do their laundry," she said.

"I feel the most spiritual when I'm working with the community and giving back," she said.

Ivy, who grew up in Spokane,

earned a bachelor's degree at George Fox University and finished a master's at Whitworth University, where she met Spencer Granger, who was then director of the center. He encouraged her to apply to be family service coordinator and later director. Despite her initial misgivings about being director, she enjoys being able to implement her ideas.

"I have also come to know the people and see how they grow and regain hope," she said.

Natalie feels closest to God when working in the community to give hope to people in need.

Originally from California, she moved to Spokane eight years ago to attend Moody Bible Institute, where she earned a bachelor's degree in biblical studies in 2017.

"One of my courses required volunteer hours, so I picked LPCDC," she said. "I chose it randomly off a list and I've been here ever since."

Three years ago, she became the center's director responsible for bringing the community together and providing resources for LPCDC residents to succeed in life.

"I am passionate about building community and furthering the education of our future leaders," said Natalie.

For information, call 534-0957 or email info@libertypark-kids.org.

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Family Promise adapts to COVID

Family Promise of Spokane took COVID seriously, modifying programming and setting up isolation procedures at the beginning of the pandemic. While those measures worked for eight months, Family Promise learned of its first confirmed COVID-19 case on Thursday, Nov. 5, said Joe Ader, executive director.

That day a guest staying at the Open Doors Emergency Shelter called from a doctor's office saying they had tested positive.

"We immediately arranged for that guest and their family to be transported from the doctor to an isolation facility and we contacted the Spokane Regional Health District to begin the contact tracing process," he said.

Since then, Family Promise has worked with the Spokane Regional Health District and CHAS (Community Health Association of Spokane) staff. After the initial diagnosis, contact tracing determined this family had been in close contact with two other guest families and three of the staff members. The two families were tested and isolated and the three staff were tested. Each family and one staff member were notified on Friday, Nov. 6, that they tested positive for COVID-19.

After CHAS tested all shelter guests and staff who had been at the shelter since Monday Nov. 2, they confirmed 17 positive cases between guests and staff, Joe said. The cases were currently asymptomatic or have just minor symptoms.

All guests at the Open Doors Emergency Family shelter were quarantined on site for at least a week. Family Promise is not taking any new guests or allowing anyone besides staff into the building on East Mission. The Hartson Ave. location was not affected.

Donations may be dropped off at the front door after ringing the doorbell, Joe said.

He also invites community members to write guests notes of encouragement to familypromiseofspokane.org/give.

For information, call 747-5483 or email ehughes@familypromiseofspokane.org.

Disability Center receives nonprofit service award

The Idaho Philanthropy Day organization recently presented the Disability Action Center Northwest (DACNW) with a 2020 Outstanding Nonprofit Award, along with 47 Idaho agencies.

The philanthropy organization is sponsored by Serve Idaho, under the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism, and the Idaho Nonprofit Center.

Mark Leeper, DACNW executive director, said his staff bring unique expertise to help participants lead fulfilling, independent lives.

Mark Havens, director of In-

terlink, which serves seniors and people with disabilities in the Lewis-Clark Valley nominated DACNW.

"I turn to DAC frequently as a partner to help those most in need," he said.

As a federally-designated center for independent living, DAC has been active helping people with disabilities affected by COVID-19.

DACNW, which has offices in Moscow, Lewiston, Post Falls, and now in Spokane, was founded in 1990.

"We are the go-to place for information about the latest

adaptive technology, and a resource related to the American's with Disabilities Act," said Mark of DACNW. "We also provide data to governmental units developing or updating their ADA Transition Plans.

"Recently we have been helping people with disabilities facing barriers to their independence from the pandemic—loss of work, inability to connect virtually or getting back on their feet after being sick," Mark said.

For information, call 208-883-0523, email vickie@dacnw.org or visit dacnw.org.

Salem Lutheran expresses care with actions

Salem Lutheran Church in West Central Spokane is reaching out to assist nurses, doctors, EMTs, patient caregivers, administrators, educators, day care workers, shelf-stockers, checkers and food service workers, anyone who works amid the fear and stress of the COVID-19.

"The people of Salem are here to support you. We are praying for you continually," said Liv

Larson Andrews, pastor.

Church members are offering to grocery shop or deliver food.

"We want to help," said Liv. "Thank you for keeping our community running and caring for others."

She challenges Christians to show concern "for the stretched-thin and burnt-out among us," commenting, "Freedom is a gift of God, not an array of privi-

leges. We Christians should be the first to mask up, isolate, limit activity and check on our neighbors, and the last to resume gatherings.

"We miss each other, but believe God is incarnate in the world and radically present in the suffering ones near to us," Liv said.

For information, call 328-6280 or email parson.larson@gmail.com.

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**KEEP STAYING
6 FEET APART.**



Shalom Ministries' meals are doing 'God's holy work'

Continued from page 1
thanked Shalom Ministries for what they do.

"We provide a safe, loving place for healing, renewal and belonging," said Barbara. "This is God's holy work providing food and letting homeless, marginalized, low-income people feel welcome."

A young mother with a baby thanked Barbara for the ministry that helped her through six years on the street doing drugs. Now she is off drugs.

"I see Christ alive in their tenacity and struggles every day, just to get up and come. One man came several days wearing no shoes. We found shoes that fit," she said.

Shalom Ministries' meals are served with no judgment.

"They are all children of God," said Barbara, who empathizes with their struggles because she grew up in a family that struggled with domestic violence, alcoholism, hunger and poverty.

Barbara volunteered with Shalom Ministries when it started in 1994 at the former Central United Methodist Church (UMC), as part of a nationwide urban ministry of the UMC. Former pastor Rich Lang introduced the ministry and formed a nonprofit bringing together religious, business, political and social service communities in Spokane to address poverty and homelessness by building relationships.

Barbara was pastor at Rocklyn Zion UMC for 10 years, including five years simultaneous with serving Harrington UMC. She served as associate at Mead UMC for two years, and then pastor at Moran UMC for 15 years.

Shalom Ministries was one of the outreach programs of Moran UMC, which built a gym—offering free use to the community—and started a preschool to serve families in the growing Moran Prairie community. Youth visited nearby nursing homes and grew gardens to give away their harvest. The church supported CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) and other community programs. It has also been active with global ministries.

"We served broken families, helping children realize God's purpose for them," she said. "God inspires and empowers, filling the broken pieces in families' lives."

The Moran UMC grew from about 25 at worship when she first came to a thriving church with about 150 attending Sundays. The church continued to grow because members were engaged in the community and world.

Barbara said she ignored her call to ministry for 13 years.



Barbara Caviezel greets a guest at Shalom Ministries.

The oldest of seven siblings, growing up in a Port Orchard family that experienced hunger and a lack of warm clothing and shoes, she accepted her mother's reassurance that God loved them and things would work out.

"I never felt sorry for myself. I always felt God's presence," said Barbara, who sometimes walked to a nearby United Methodist Church as a child. "Often our Christmas meals were from the generosity of the community. My involvement with Shalom is one small way to pay that back."

With a scholarship in 1969, she studied two years at Western Washington University, where she met the love of her life. They lived in Kirkland before moving to Spokane. Still wanting to be a teacher or social worker, she earned two associate degrees, one in social work, in 1989 at Spokane Falls Community College.

When she finally responded to her call to ministry, she worked part time with the school district while earning a bachelor's degree in general studies and psychology at Gonzaga University. In 1994, she began studies at Claremont School of Theology through its correspondence and summer program, graduating in 2000. She was then ordained as an associate member and deacon.

Accepting her call to ministry has been "an empowering, life-changing, humbling journey, helping people with life struggles find hope despite their losses, fears, hopelessness, anger or grief," she said.

Barbara became re-engaged with Shalom Ministries seven years ago. As vice president and operations director, she works with five core team members—two cooks, a dishwasher, a cleanup coordinator and a donations manager. Tim Swartout, director, and Deidre Jacobson, board president and Pathways coordinator, help people find housing, jobs, resources and medical/dental care improve their lives.

"They are witnesses of who

Christ is," she said.

Shalom Ministries, which rents space at New Community Church, serves breakfast from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m., Mondays to Thursdays, and dinner from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m., Mondays and Tuesdays. Since COVID-19, they no longer serve sack lunches or evening meals on Thursdays.

Shalom Ministries needs \$2,000 a month for paper plates and cups with lids, and \$4,000 a month for food, along with donations of coffee and oatmeal, jello or fruit cups, cookies, crackers, snacks, bread, peanut butter, cheese and bologna. Second Harvest supplies much of the food.

Faith partners donating food and funds for basic operations are Audubon Park, Covenant, Manito, and Moran United Methodist churches in Spokane; UMCs in Davenport-Edwall, Colfax, Greenbluff, Moscow and Pullman; the Inland District UMC; and the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John, Hamblen Park Presbyterian, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox, New Community, St. Mark's Lutheran, Shalom United Church of Christ, Spokane Baptist, Three Angels Seventh-day Adventist churches in Spokane, and the Sisters of

Providence.

Other supporters include Innovia Foundation, Kalispel Tribe, Rockwood Retirement Communities, Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund, Thrivent Financial Service, Viren and Associates, Inc., CHAS and Craven's Coffee.

"By the grace of God, donors still choose to make a difference for Spokane's marginalized by giving to keep Shalom Ministries' doors open," said Barbara. "Jesus fed the multitude outside. Thousands shared a meal together. We are dining with dignity in a different way."

Many diners express thanks for the food, offering a thumbs up or rubbing their stomachs in appreciation.

One said he chooses to eat at Shalom over a restaurant because "the food is so good."

For information, call 954-9292 or email caviezelb@yahoo.com.



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State commissions make recommendations on police reform, COVID

Even though Spokane's community of color is smaller and more diverse than communities of color in urban areas where he has lived, Pastor Walter Kendricks of Morningstar Baptist Church is encouraged by his work with people who want to make change in the community and state.

Serving in Spokane for seven years, after many years in Seattle, Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles and Denver, he is active in leadership with the Spokane Ministers Fellowship, the Spokane Coalition Against Racism, the NAACP Spokane, the Carl Maxey Center, The Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center and The Fig Tree.

He has been bringing insights from those involvements to help Washington Governor Jay Inslee write legislation for the upcoming session on issues of concern to the African-American community and other people of color in Spokane.

Since June, he has been one of two representatives from Spokane and 35 from around the state, plus advisors serving on the Governor's Task Force for Independent Investigations of Police Use of Force. He is one of two representatives from Eastern Washington serving a two-year term on the nine-member Governor's Commission on African-American Affairs.

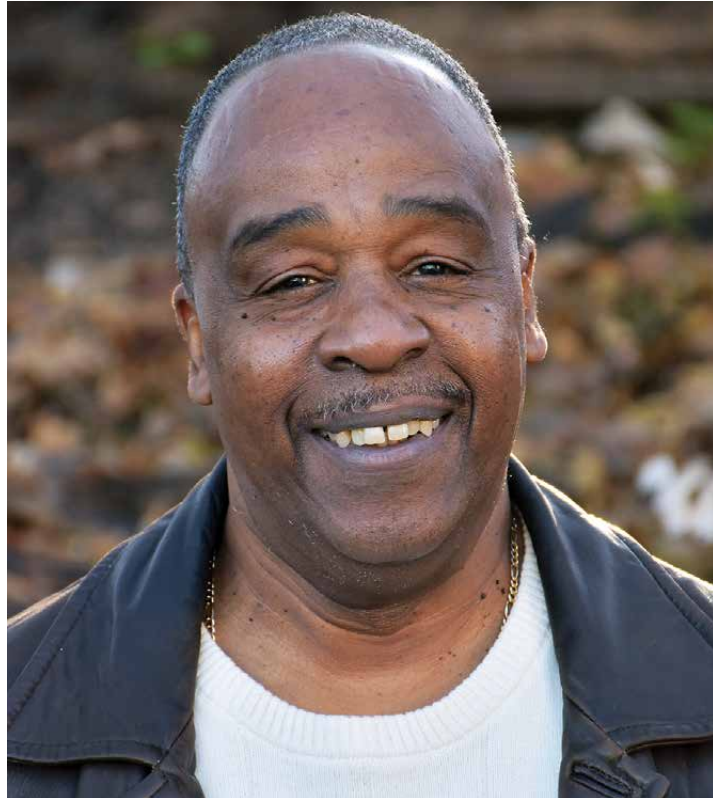
The Task Force on Independent Investigations was asked to give recommendations to craft a bill on independent investigations involving police use of force. They met 80 hours on Zoom from July through early November.

Walter served with people of color, local activists, women, Native American tribal leaders, police union representatives, community members and families who have lost loved ones, as well as police and prosecuting attorneys.

"To work together, we first had to address systemic racism on the task force, talking it out so people of color felt heard and addressing resistance to establishing an independent investigative body so police do not investigate themselves when there is use of force or other crimes by police," he said.

"We met differing points of view from prosecuting attorneys and county sheriffs," he said.

The Washington State Con-



Pastor Walter Kendricks brings local engagement to state efforts.

stitution allows for creating an independent investigative body, but the task force's recommendation is that it be one totally independent of the Washington State Patrol, county sheriffs and police departments, he said.

They recommend hiring someone who is not a current or former law enforcement official who will hire investigators for a state body that will look at police use of force.

They reviewed Initiative 940's requirement for law enforcement officers to have de-escalation, first aid and mental health crisis training. Voters passed the initiative in 2018 but most provisions have not yet been enacted, said Walter.

The task force looked at models in Canada, England, and New York and San Francisco.

"After 20 years, the Canadian body began outreach to victims' families," he said. "There's an urgency to start something. There will be challenges, because those with power do not want to give it up."

Their recommendations are being used to draft a bill for the 2021 session.

"I can't speak to what a police officer thinks or feels when discharging a weapon the state authorizes him/her to use, but it's heart wrenching to hear of the encounters with people of color and people with mental illness who have been killed by police,"

Walter said. "It shakes my soul to look at the magnitude of police use of force and the depth of despair when there is racism. Police have hidden behind a blue wall and official antipathy."

Walter calls on the community to stay vigilant, on guard and active on boards and commissions, because "freedom is not free."

"We need to be active in community affairs," he said. "Nothing causes government bodies to respond more than knowing the community is watching. Some need to see the light and some need to feel the heat, so people in office care and act."

The Commission on African American Affairs similarly gathers blacks to advocate on behalf of the African American community, said Walter, whose first term ends in May 2021, when he may be reappointed.

That commission is also looking at police reform and at the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on communities of color.

"We advocate on issues affecting black people. The legislature has no black representatives from Eastern Washington in its black caucus," he said.

The local agencies he engages with are involved in advocacy for communities of color, giving voice to those who do not have a voice or are not heard.

"That's also my mission as a pastor," he said.

"We have to continue to fight

in the grand scheme that has gone on 401 years since 1619 when black people were brought against their will to the shores of this land," he said. "We can't give up. I owe it to those who came before me and will come after me to advocate on behalf of those who feel the brunt of racism. It's why I do what I do."

"The message of the Gospel for salvation and eternal life being available to all includes the social Gospel of God coming in flesh, of Jesus of Nazareth interacting with people to stand up for what is right, to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly," he said.

Walter challenges some evangelical friends who espouse white supremacy.

"I confront them at every opportunity. I preach the Gospel of liberation and freedom found in God," he said. "I continue to

challenge friends. It's a slow process, piece by piece to dismantle ideas of the God they define as blond haired, blue eyed. I preach that God is a Spirit."

Through his encounters, he addresses the division of the nation and community.

"I keep talking, cajoling. If I see wrong, I speak. We need to be a bridge. It is tough to keep lines of communication open," said Walter, who draws strength from his involvements with others. "It's not just me sounding my horn, but many others."

Despite the small size, diversity and isolation of the communities of color in Spokane, Walter is encouraged by working with other people who want to make change.

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South Korean missionary is a clinical therapist and a pastoral counselor

Ki Eun Jeon brings a global perspective and a caring for people who are suffering to her pastoral counseling with Samaritan Center, a Puget Sound-based counseling service, that opened an office in Spokane Valley in May.

As a missionary with University of the Nations, the South Korean woman moved to Kona, Hawaii, in 2011 and then came to Spokane in 2013 to study English at Gonzaga University.

She has lived in an apartment provided by the Ministry Institute since then. She and her husband, Derek Chignell, a retired professor in biochemistry at Wheaton College in Chicago, were married in 2014, when he moved to Spokane.

Although her initial goal in coming was to improve her skills in conversation, reading and writing, when she learned that Gonzaga had a master's degree in clinical mental health, she began that program, graduating in 2016. She then taught pastoral counseling from 2017 to 2019 with the University of the Nations, which she said has "a whole-person approach."

Ki Eun studied to be a missionary with University of the Nations in 1998 in Lausanne, Switzerland, in a six-month non-denominational/ecumenical program of discipleship training with diverse students from African, South American and European countries. During that time, Ki Eun, who is Presbyterian, realized her call was to work in pastoral care.

In May, she began doing counseling by Zoom, because it's hard under COVID-19 to meet face-to-face.

"In this profession, I apply listening skills," she said. "People struggle with unpleasant emotions and need to learn stress management. Some are struggling with life transitions, moving to different places or with children leaving home."

"The struggles of people here are the same as those of people around the world—mothers struggle with children, wives struggle with husbands and children struggle with studies," Ki Eun said. "An African mother struggles to provide enough food. Americans struggle to provide children with education and opportunities. While an African wife may struggle with polygamy, an American wife may struggle with marital relationships. With COVID, many are experiencing financial struggles."

Ki Eun speaks of Africans



Ki Eun Jeon starts counseling online.

because she has done several two-month internship trainings in Ghana, Togo, Egypt and Uganda. She also went to Argentina, Chile, the Faroe Islands, European countries, Australia and Indonesia.

For those stays, the University of the Nations gave her minimum payment, but she has had to raise funds to support her work, housing, insurance and airfare.

Ki Eun grew up in Gaemun, a small town in southeast South Korea. Her father was a mining engineer and her mother worked for the same company. Ki Eun left at 15 to go to high school in the city of Taegu and stayed through college, studying public health.

After graduating in two years in 1987, she moved to Seoul to work in interior design and manage human resources with a Christian company, informally doing counseling.

She attended a small Presbyterian church in Seoul.

When Ki Eun was 17, her father left home to open a restaurant and live with another woman. He went bankrupt, losing his savings and pension.

"We did not know where he was until he came home," Ki Eun said. "Living without my father affected my life financially, emotionally and educationally. My family was poor. I couldn't go to college right away. It was shameful to be in a dysfunctional family. My 20s were hard."

"I thought I was a faithful Christian, but my family situation was horrible," she said, adding that during three years of

struggle, her Christian faith and the church became critical to her. "It helped me find a reason to live life. At first, no one helped. I learned that even Christians struggle, suffer and experience painful lives."

For 10 years, she sought to learn how to serve God. In the 1998 training in Switzerland, she questioned and asked God to let her know what she was to do. Ki Eun found her calling.

"I found God could use my broken heart for service. It was clear my mission was to use the tool of counseling," she said.

Now she has the training she needed.

"I can do clinical mental health counseling through both my professional practice and the mission agency," she said.

Samaritan Center, which has 12 centers in Seattle, opened a center at Opportunity Presbyterian Church in Spokane Valley with Gary Steeves, a Samaritan Center counselor who needed someone to work with him.

Ki Eun said a pastor at First Presbyterian Church, which she attends, and a friend at the Ministry Institute recommended her.

She does both pastoral counseling and clinical mental health counseling at Opportunity Presbyterian Church.

"The clinical mental health approach is a pathological approach, knowing a person's divinity but not mentioning the spiritual much," she said. "It's more social science and psychology."

"Pastoral counseling uses biblical principles and belief in

God. It's an easy approach with the same values and understandings about life, and using prayer ministry, emphasizing spirituality with psychology," she said.

Both Ki Eun and her husband Derek, a widower with four children who was born in England, continue to work with the University of the Nations.

He chairs the science college and leads the Water for Life program, which goes by invitation to do water projects in Kosovo, Indonesia, Nepal, Cambodia and Rwanda.

Ki Eun and Derek, who met in 2011 in Hawaii, join the Ministry Institute's Tuesday community meeting and attend the Thursday virtual Taizé prayer services.

Both are Presbyterians, but have learned about the Catholic Church at Gonzaga, and sometimes attend St. Aloysius on campus.

In Spokane, there are four active Korean churches. At Spokane Full Gospel Korean Church, she works with the youth, who speak English and are more American than Korean, which is hard for Korean-speaking parents.

"The youth know English better than their parents, creating a gap in the parent-child relationship. The group of five in the 125-member church provides the community they need," she said.

The youth meet twice a week. Sundays they meet in person in a big room, socially distanced to talk about issues and read a book on the purpose of life. Tuesdays

they have a Zoom meeting to read the Bible.

"I love Spokane, because the nature, mountains and winter are like Korea, but summer is hot and dry while Korea is hot and humid," she said.

The University of Nations' missionaries serve in 190 countries with 96 languages, about 15,000 full time and about 50,000 part time.

The agency's mission areas are education, counseling, science and technology, art and sports, Bible study, humanities, applied linguistics and Christian ministries.

"I love how God leads my life. I'm open to God's plan for me," said Ki Eun, who has previously worked in areas with more diversity. "Now I am learning about American culture."

Sometimes, counseling in English, which is not her first language, she feels isolated from that diversity, but Ki Eun said she "has a heart to serve people in this community."

Beyond counseling, she is also looking for ways to share her culture through cooking Korean food.

In her travels to six continents, she has found cooking to be therapeutic.

"Food is the core relational language, opening people's hearts and helping bring healing," Ki Eun said. "Having a meal together empowers people."

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Food Security Coalition, a church's outreach are examples of ways to act

While hunger, housing and health issues intertwine to put many people on the edge during the pandemic, they also set many caring people into action.

Family members line up in their cars to pick up food, and the food is there as organizations receive donations of both food and funds. Meanwhile, people call the city to shelter homeless and build homes as some stimulus programs end Dec. 31.

This is the season for giving and many are giving to programs that provide cheer and meals in this season, as well as to programs that serve people all year.

Many nonprofits raise much of the funding for their year-round efforts to feed, house, clothe, educate, care for, open opportunities to and comfort people, along with advocating for racial, gender, economic and social justice.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, some have formed coalitions to assist.

For example, the Spokane County Food Security Coalition formed in March with

45 nonprofit organizations, health workers, educators, direct-service providers and citizens who collaborating as an inclusive network to assure affordable access to healthy food in Spokane and rural areas, said Natalie Tauzin of the Spokane Regional Health District.

"We believe with coordination and compassion, we can feed everyone," she said. "As an integrated, multi-sector effort, we envision increased food security and improved health outcomes for the people in our community in need of food assistance."

The coalition seeks to bridge food access gaps for food-insecure people; coordinate distribution to the homeless, home-bound elderly, individuals and families with children; draw funding; collect data on gaps; inform the community of food distribution sites and delivery options; provide language translation and identify the cultural-appropriateness of food offered; uplift stories of people fac-

ing food insecurity; foster equitable food distribution, and reduce stigma around those who need food assistance.

For those interested in helping, the Spokane County Food Security Coalition meets virtually from 1 to 2:30 p.m., second Thursdays. For information, call 324-1659 or email ntauzin@srhd.org.

In addition, congregations like First Christian (Disciples of Christ) in Clarkston are serving meals. The church serves 100 meals a day—1,500 meals a month—to homeless and poor Lewis and Clark Valley residents through its ministry, the Red Door Kitchen.

"Our community experiences significant endemic poverty and chronic homelessness," said David Carringer, pastor.

With COVID-19, food insecurity is rising in Asotin County, he said, estimating that school 200 children experienced some form of homelessness this year.

"This number is expected to increase when the eviction moratorium lifts. In

addition, about 100 adults are consistently homeless," David said. "These circumstances negatively impact their food security."

"The pandemic reduced the number of volunteers and donations, but homeless people still look to us for food as other food sources of cease to be available," he added.

Volunteers have been serving well-rounded, carry-out meals daily since March 25, reducing anxiety about food insecurity and improving guests' health, he said.

For health and food security, the church raises funds and seeks grants to buy food so they can provide both lunch and supper free. The funds also offset operating costs. For information, call 509-758-2943.

"We are serving God and living out Matthew 25:40-45—feeding Christ by feeding the hungry," said David.

These efforts of gratitude and generosity are replicated many times over throughout the region and world.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Thursdays in Black statement calls for end of gender-based violence

Sixteen days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence has been held since 1991. It began on Nov. 25, the International Day against Violence against Women, and ends on Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day.

Recognized by the World Council of Churches as part of its commitment to justice and peace, 16 Days offers a collective call to declare that violence against women is a violation of human rights.

In a recent statement, the Thursdays in Black Ambassadors for the WCC invite all persons of goodwill to join in educating others about and seeking the end of Gender-Based Violence:

Together, we must protect those who are vulnerable and abused. We can create safe spaces for all people who are targets of this violence, especially women and girls in our societies.

We should promote transformative masculinities and femininities based on respect.

We can honor resistance and resil-

ience to violence—and dream of a world without fear of sexual and gender-based harassment, abuse and violence.

Gender-based violence is not only physical, it is emotional, mental and even structural. We know that violence against women and girls occurs virtually and literally in every strata of society: in households, at school, in religious spaces and in the workplace.

With ongoing physical restrictions due to the spread of the coronavirus, violence against women and girls has intensified. The resolve to end gender-based violence must remain strong.

As Thursdays in Black ambassadors, we have, in our various spaces, worked to effect change in policies and practices in our churches, workplaces and communities. Together with the WCC we are actively involved in preparing liturgies and Bible studies, which challenge attitudes and norms that foster gender-based violence.

Physical distancing demands that our

houses of residence and of worship are not opened to the public as they might otherwise have been. Therefore we must increase our awareness to recognize signs of abuse and identify ways to offer support through other physical and virtual safe spaces for those who feel unsafe in their homes.

As people of faith and of goodwill, we appeal to individuals and community agencies to stop the spread of gender-based violence by:

- Participating in the 16 Days of Activism by learning more, speaking out, inviting others to take a stand against violence.
- Finding and sharing with others information about local crisis services.
- Posting photos that show local efforts to end gender-based violence on social media using #16Days and #Thursday-sinBlack.

We all must get involved. Everybody. Every day. Not just for 16 days. Not just for Thursdays. We will make a difference when we work together.

We invite people to join the global Thursdays in Black movement to work and witness towards a world without rape and violence.

Thursdays in Black's campaign is simple but profound: to wear black on Thursdays or wear a pin to declare participation in the global movement to resist attitudes that permit rape and violence.

Signing the statement were Agnes Abuom, moderator of World Council of Churches Central Committee, and representatives from the United Church of Canada, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Swedish Bible Society, Rozaria Memorial Trust, Finn Church Aid, World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women, Mbereshi Mission Hospital in Zambia, Ecumenical Youth Council in Korea, Global Ministries of U.S. United Church of Christ, the Bishops' Conference of the Church of Norway, the World Methodist Council and Evangelical Lutheran Church(es) in America, Canada and Finland.

Commentaries

Sounding Board

Letters to the editor

Faith leaders support guidelines, call for leadership and for aid

On Nov. 16, Washington Governor Jay Inslee issued new guidelines for behaviors to slow the spread of COVID, which is spreading more quickly than it did even in the early days of the pandemic.

For faith communities, he set guidelines for religious services, weddings and funerals. Religious services are limited to 25 percent of indoor capacity or 200 people, whichever is less. Choirs, bands or ensembles are not to perform. Wedding and funeral ceremonies are limited to 30. Indoor receptions of any size are prohibited. In-home faith-based services or counseling are limited to five people.

Idaho Governor Brad Little announced Nov 13 that Idaho goes back to a modified Stage 2, exempting religious gatherings.

As we stated in our spring 2020 communications, we expect faith communities to follow all guidelines and expectations of the government, and that congregations and faith organizations utilize best practices outlined by their local health district, state departments of health, the CDC and the WHO. These guidelines prohibit singing in religious services—no singing the liturgy, hymns, choirs or worship ensembles.

COVID has divided our country in many ways. Our calling as Christians,

bestowed by Jesus Christ himself, is to "love God, and love our neighbors as we love ourselves."

This means that we wear masks, because masks protect those around us. It means we wash our hands frequently, so we do not inadvertently spread germs to others. It means we put up with discomfort or inconvenience so that those around us do not die.

With these restrictions in place for four weeks, I urge you to make peace with Advent/Christmas seasons that will look different from what we want them to. Please hold our congregational leaders in prayer as they continue to lead in these incredibly trying times.

As the 2020 pandemic has swept around the globe, we may feel we need healing now more than ever. The incarnation has no geographic limits either. How do various world cultures understand and receive the Christ child as their own? How does music and visual art reflect and celebrate these understandings?

In this pandemic year, we can watch the National Lutheran choir's signature Christmas Festival of music, scripture, poetry and faith. Filmed in the Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis and drawing on five years of live-streamed programs plus multi-media videography, the pro-

gram celebrates a global nativity: Christ incarnate; being born in each of us, in every time and place. The concert is 6 p.m. (PST) Friday, Dec. 11, @ [NLCA.com](https://www.nlca.com).

Bishop Kristen Kuempel - Northwest Intermountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I know how incredibly challenging this season has been for all of us. That being said, I believe the best course of action at this point would be to make decisions to keep everyone safe and not push for in-person gatherings in the short term. I have been greatly encouraged by our congregations' continued hope in the face of COVID-19. Even if we aren't gathering groups in person, I want to encourage you to please continue to creatively devise the best ways to connect with one another and your communities.

Everyone is doing the best they can, and I implore you to be graceful with one another. We'll get through this together. Remember we serve a God that will never leave us or forget about us!

**The Rev. Gregg Sealey
Inland Missional District UMC**

As people of faith, we must speak up with moral voices in support Governor Jay Inslee's statewide COVID-19

restrictions.

Economic science shows that the U.S. must get the virus under control for our economy to thrive. Doing what is right for public health is what is right for economic growth.

As citizens, we and those who govern must take this virus seriously and battle it like the invader it is. As citizens, we must reject partisanship and take science seriously. Yes, scientific advice changes as new information is revealed. That is how science works. It must look for the best answers with the measurable information we have at this moment.

As the infections rise, our hospitals fill, and our health care providers are stretched beyond endurance, please, write or call your local and national leaders. Point out when partisanship is put over citizenship. Call out those who sow divisiveness. Especially, demand that our national leaders work at the federal level to create financial relief for small business and those out of work.

Every opportunity for unity and healing must be taken to overcome the "win at all costs" attitude that has fueled divisions. We must hold our elected leadership to this task — no more divisiveness.

**Rev. Gen Heywood, Veradale
United Church of Christ**

Calendar of Events

- Dec 1-10** • **United Nations' 16 Days of Activism** against Gender-Based Violence continues. Theme for International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women is "Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect." unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/end-violence-against-women
- Dec 1-13** • **Tree of Sharing**, continues online and at Riverpark Square, Northtown and Valley malls, 808-4919
- Dec 1-24** • **Salvation Army's Christmas Red Kettle Campaign** outside businesses
- Dec 1-30** • **25th Annual Spokane Fall Folk Festival** continues on radio and online, with pre-recorded entertainers, spokanefolkfest.org and at facebook.com/Fall-Folk-Festival-Spokane
- Dec 1-Jan 2** • **Winterfest: Lighted Holiday**, Winter Wonderland continues with Christmas trees hand painted by local artists to represent various cultures, Mirabeau Park Hotel and Convention Center, northwestwinterfest.com
- Dec 1** • **"From Mexican to Mexican-American: A Family Immigration Story,"** Humanities Washington, Carlos Gil, emeritus professor of history at Washington State University for 30 years, 12:30 p.m., online in English and Spanish, humanities.org/event/from-mexican-to-mexican-american-a-family-immigration-story-25/
- Dec 1-Feb 16** • **The Color of Compromise**, 12-week book study led by Pastor Andre Dove of Restoration Church Spokane and civil rights compliance coordinator for Pride Schools, Tuesdays, 6 to 7 p.m., offered with Spokane Friends Church, on Zoom. Email LaVerne Biel at spokanefriends@gmail.com or call 327-7852
- Dec 1, 22** • **"Heating Up: The Ethics of Climate Change,"** Humanities Washington, Brian Henning of Gonzaga's philosophy and environmental studies department, speaks on global warming as a symptom of people's relationship to the natural world, online at 5:30 p.m. on 12/1 and 10 a.m. on 12/22, register at humanities.org/events/
- Dec 2** • **Virtual Around the Table Gala**, World Relief, 7 p.m., worldreliefspokane.org/aroundthetable2020
- Dec 2, 5, 8, 10** • **"Washington's Undiscovered Feminists,"** Humanities Washington, writer-curator Mayumi Tsutakawa presents five women warriors in arts and journalism: photographer Imogen Cunningham, Black American jazz musician Ruby Bishop, Chinese American artist Priscilla Chong Jue, leftist journalist Anna Louise Strong, and Native American linguist Vi Hilbert, online 7 p.m. on 12/2, 11 a.m. on 12/5, 1 p.m. on 12/8 and 6 p.m. on 12/10, humanities.org/events2020-12/
- Dec 3** • **Peace & Justice Action Committee**, Zoom, 5:30 p.m., slichty@pjals.org
- **Digital Art Build**, 350 Spokane and Sunrise, demonstration in using tools to create art, banners and infographics and then share creations, 7 to 8:30 p.m., https://www.mobilize.us/350spokane/event/360393/?followup_modal_context=newsletter
- Dec 3, 10, 17, 24, 31** • **Taizé Prayer**, Zoom, 4:15 p.m., bartletts@gonzaga.edu
- Dec 5, 12, 19** • **Festival of Fair Trade**, check with Kizuri if cancelled, noon to 5:30 p.m., 35 W. Main, or purchase fair trade online at shopkizuri.com/collections/festival-of-fair-trade
- Dec 6** • **St. John's Music Series**, Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols with the Cathedral choirs, virtual concert on Facebook, 4 p.m.
- Dec 7** • **"Let It Not Happen Again: Lessons of the Japanese American Exclusion,"** Humanities Washington, Clarence Moriwaki of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community, 11 a.m., online at humanities.org/events/2020-12
- Dec 8** • **"Candles on a Winter Night,"** Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience Truthful Tuesday Vigil, 5 to 5:50 p.m., 408-593-9556
- **"Sometimes Heroes: America's Changing Relationship with its Veterans,"** Humanities Washington, Jeb Wyman, faculty member at Seattle Central College, 6:30 p.m. online at humanities.org/events/2020-12
- Dec 9** • **"Set in Stone: What Should We Do with Controversial Monuments?"** Humanities Washington, Reiko Hillyer, history professor at Lewis and Clark College, and Jasmine Mahmoud, arts leadership professor at Seattle University, moderated by Marc Carpenter, history candidate at University of Oregon, online 6 p.m., humanities.org/events/2020-12/
- **Hispanic Business/Professional Association**, online 6 p.m., info at www.hbpaspokane.net
- **PJALS Winter Party**, 7 p.m., register at <http://pjals.org/webinar-wednesdays/>
- **United Nations Human Rights Day** to commemorate adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Dec 10** • **Showing Up for Racial Justice**, "How to Be an Antiracist," Zoom, 5:30 p.m., slichty@pjals.org
- Dec 17** • **"You look good for your age."** "You're too young to understand," Humanities Washington, Dori Gilliam, researcher and speaker on agism, online at 1 p.m., humanities.org/events/2020-12/
- Dec 21** • **NAACP General Membership Meeting**, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 7 to 8:30 p.m., spokanenaacp@gmail.com or facebook.com/spokane.naacp/
- Dec 26-Jan 1** • **Kwanzaa Celebration**, Wilburn & Associates, live on Facebook, noon
- Jan 2** • **The Fig Tree mailing** and distribution, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 10 a.m., 535-1813
- Jan 3** • **The Fig Tree Benefit and Board** meetings on Zoom, Benefit at noon, Board at 1 p.m., 535-1813
- Jan 7** • **Peace & Justice Action Committee**, Zoom, 5:30 p.m., slichty@pjals.org

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Program helps North Idaho children step into the world with confidence

By Kaye Hult

Mountain States Early Head Start (MSEHS) is a home-based, innovative program, helping preschool children, especially in low-income families, step out into the world with confidence.

"It is a school readiness program for children," said Kristin Moody, the parent family community engagement specialist.

Staff work with children and their families—whatever family means to them.

Because staff take pride in being hands-on, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a challenge to their approach.

The four centers in Coeur d'Alene, Rathdrum, Sandpoint and Kellogg have been closed since the onset last spring. Staff stepped up in creative ways to make sure the children and families receive the services they need and deserve, she said.

"Normally, a family consultant is assigned to each participating child and family," said Kristin. "Consultants visit families' homes 90 minutes a week. They share information on child development.

"Being virtual, the meeting time is flexible," she said. "They may do 30-minute video calls. Some do phone calls rather than connecting on the computer."

Relationships are center stage. Good relationships with parents, grandparents, foster parents, step-parents or roommates, whoever holds a parental role in the family, provide the support necessary for children to gain confidence.

"When children's social and emotional development is strong, they have secure attachment to a caregiver who is there for them. They can operate outside the care, knowing they return to the security of the caregiver," she said.

"We support everyone in a family. We aim to meet each family where they are and walk alongside them," she added.

In part, MSEHS is like a resource manual, said Kristin, who helps find resources.

If a family is low on money, needs diapers or has other needs, family consultants help them figure what resources are available.

"One of my roles is interacting with community partners to promote our program and learn about resources and opportunities we can share with families," she said.

Because of social distancing restrictions, staff cannot do home visits, but the children and their families still receive services MSEHS provides.

Mountain States Early Head Start seeks to live their motto, "Parents are the best first teachers," Kristin said, rethinking how to work with families means empowering parents.

Karlie Paschall, child development/disabilities coordinator, works with family consultants to ensure that the curriculum supports parents' role as the child's



Kristin Moody

first and best teachers, and is effective and supported virtually.

Family consultants help families set goals for their children.

Karlie adapts the curriculum to help families meet their goals. In lieu of in-person family visits, she has created curriculum kits for families. They include activities and materials to do them. She tailors them for different age groups.

She includes instructions about why each activity is important. An activity helping develop a child's brain or motor skills will assist in a child's overall development.

Because the program now op-

erates remotely, rather than family consultants observing children and their activities, parents observe and report, Kristin said.

MSEHS also has Zoom play groups. Karlie works with playgroup coordinators in Bonner, Kootenai and Shoshone counties to develop a plan for each playgroup session. There are play groups three times each month in each county.

With her support, coordinators put together developmentally appropriate materials for play groups. These materials are the same for each site to ensure continuity. For example, each child receives the same book and corresponding materials used in play groups in a packet, which is delivered to a family before play group sessions.

Packet contents pertain to the activity, circle time and reading time in the playgroup session. For example, a recent packet contained a shape sorter, scarf, a book called LEAVES, crayons, paper and laminated leaves.

MSEHS reaches into the community too. The play group coordinator, Catie Kotmel, leads virtual play groups Wednesdays on Facebook for anyone. A fam-

ily does not have to be enrolled to join. Participants can watch online videos any time.

"We normally have parent meetings," said Kristin. "Coffee Connections is a time for parents to meet and learn from each other. They can give feedback, so they have a voice about what they want from us. Because we can't meet in person, we do Zoom Coffee Connections to provide a time for parents to network."

Mari Noonan, staff culinarian and Lakeland Center assistant, created a Facebook cooking class to teach how to create nourishing meals. To teach how to make mac and cheese, and Italian style broccoli, she set up a program like a cooking network show, complete with drawings for a spice rack and large pans of the dishes.

Staff creativity has resulted in greater communication than in-person meetings. People text more. Emails share about resources. Bi-weekly packets provide mental health, community and food resources.

Kristin coordinates everything, connecting to the community to know what is available. She interacts with many different

organizations.

She stresses the program's inclusivity. Income eligibility is one aspect. They also consider stresses when deciding what families need the most support.

"We primarily enroll low-income families," she said. "We want to hear everyone's story when enrolling them."

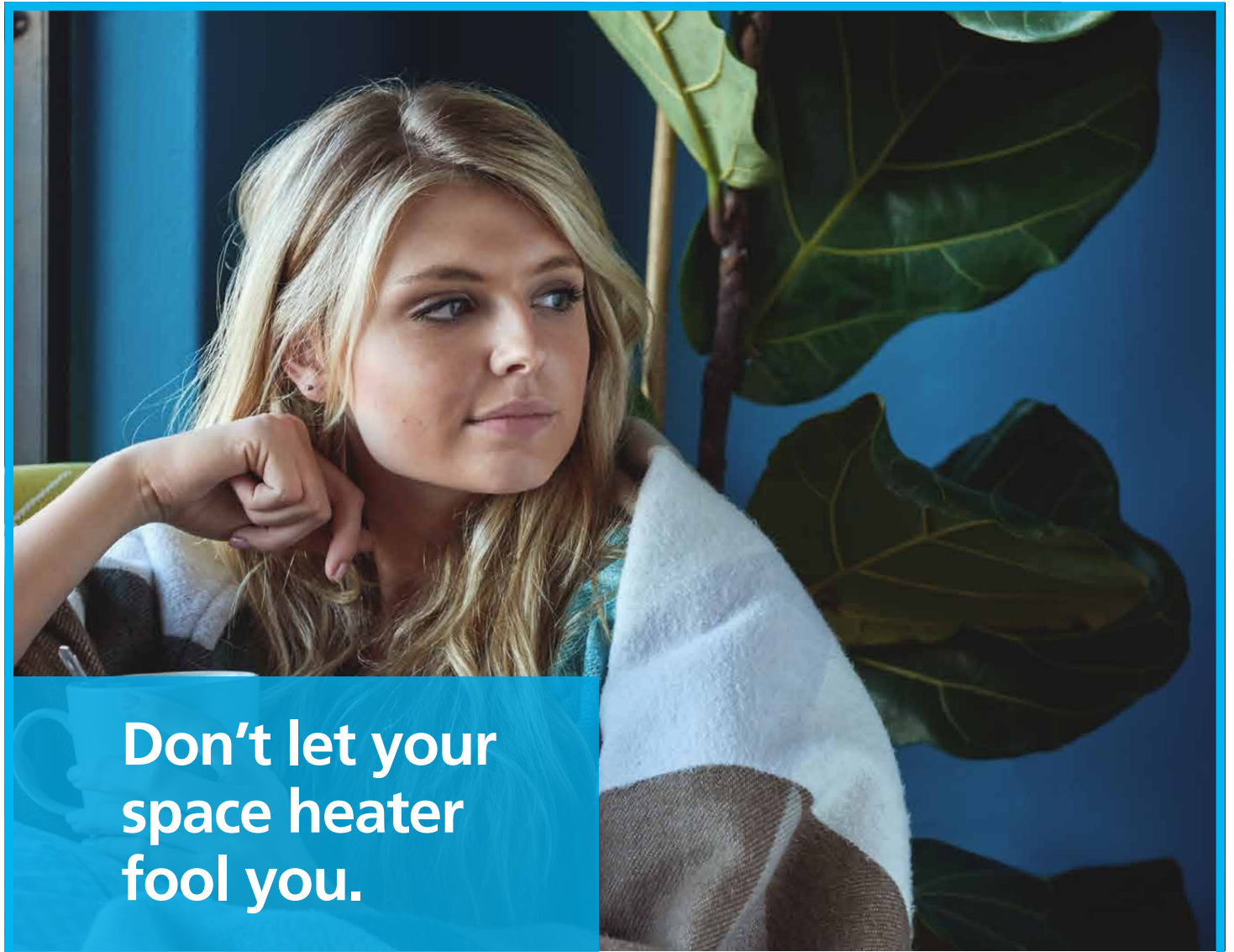
Kristin's drive to work in a caring profession came from growing up in Post Falls in a caring family, who cared for her grandparents and a great aunt.

After graduating from East Valley High School in Spokane Valley, she earned a bachelor's degree in social work at Lewis-Clark State College in Coeur d'Alene in 2017.

Kristin said she did not know what she wanted to do with her degree until she saw a job posting for MSEHS for a community engagement position. It involved involvement with families, staff and community.

"We're here to walk alongside families," she said. "We're not judging or looking into their lives. We meet them where they are."

For information, call 208-765-6955, ext. 271 or email kmooody@jannus.org.



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