

35TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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FEATURES 50+ EVENTS



Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest  
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# Refugees' stories are compelling

By Mary Stamp

With the power of his story as a refugee from South Sudan and the voices of children in the Neema Refugee Children's Choir, Jackson Lino builds awareness about experiences of refugees in his role as churches and community relations coordinator with World Relief in Spokane.

"Our duty is to be an example and advocate for those who do not speak English well so we cultivate unity and respect among people in the community," he said of his work telling his story and encouraging refugees to share their stories.

World Relief, which has been resettling refugees in the Inland Northwest for 25 years, resettled its 10,000th refugee last fall. The flow of new refugees has now slowed to about 200 a year, rather than 600.

Refugees who come have passed through security and medical checks after years in refugee camps, said Jackson.

He knows. He experienced years of waiting as a teen.

Refugees are people who have experienced persecution based on race, gender, religion, political affiliation or identity, Jackson said.

They may be in refugee camps



Jackson Lino was overwhelmed seeing 1 million refugees in world's largest refugee camp.

18 months, three years or all their lives. When they flee their country and go to a refugee camp in another country, they must learn the language there.

World Relief, which has 25 resettlement offices, is one of nine U.S. agencies that resettle refugees approved by the State Department.

When refugees arrive in Spokane, World Relief volunteers holding banners welcome them at the airport. The volunteers take the refugees to apartments and teach them to use the refrigerator, microwave, stove and other appliances.

Over the next 90 days, World Relief enters the children in schools, and helps adults find training and jobs, and apply for medical services, health insurance and a green card—the path to citizenship in five years.

"Having been a refugee, I understand what many have gone through," said Jackson, who shares his stories at congregations and community groups.

"When I was two years old, living with my family in Sudan, my parents died. My sister and I were orphans," he said.

"I was kidnapped and lived a difficult life until I was seven years

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## Musicfest Northwest 2017 inspires effort to instill love for playing organ

With only five organists performing among 700 musicians participating in Musicfest Northwest 2017, Raney Close was concerned that Musicfest would have to discontinue the organ division and her daughter might lose the opportunity to compete on the organ at future Musicfests.

In August, Raney contacted the Spokane Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) and proposed the Winter Organ Academy, a short-term, low-priced series of organ lessons for young piano students to instill a love of the organ and prepare them to

enter Musicfest 2018.

Eight junior high and high school students signed up. The first gathering was on Feb. 10 at First Presbyterian Church, where they learned about the organ and tried playing it.

For the Winter Organ Academy, the AGO recruited teachers from among its members, found locations for teaching and arranged for Saturday group practice sessions during March and April in Spokane, Spokane Valley, Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene churches.

As a result, 14 organists—including six of the eight Organ

Academy students—signed up for Musicfest Northwest, which will be held May 13 to 18 on the campus of Gonzaga University.

The Musicfest organ performances are on Tuesday, May 15, at the Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave.

Musicfest Northwest, which is in its 73rd year, brings together first grade through graduate school students for more than 1,000 performances.

The divisions are voice, piano, string, reed, brass, organ, flute and ballet.

"Musicfest brings in top adjudicators to evaluate and encourage music and ballet performers, award medals and choose the division winners for the Young Artist Concert with the Spokane Symphony at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 16, at the Fox," said Raney, a Musicfest board member. She has been involved in the program for the three years that her daughter, Katie, has competed on piano and organ.

As a member at First Presbyterian Church, Raney appreciates

*Continued on page 9*

## PJALS and faith leaders collaborate to end poverty

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) held the first local mass meeting for Spokane Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival on April 28 at Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ to launch local action that will continue the original Poor People's Campaign begun 50 years ago by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

"This is a movement to shock life back into the moral heart of our country," said Liz Moore, director of PJALS.

• Fitz Fitzpatrick, a Spokane poet, is gathering choirs and singers so they can learn and sing songs people around the nation are learning.

• "The spiritual core is supported by the Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience," said the Rev. Gen Heywood, who coordinates people from diverse faiths and no faiths to build resources for keeping centered in difficult times.

• The Rev. Susie Weller, a certified life and spiritual coach with a master's in pastoral ministry working with the Unity Spiritual Center of North Idaho, has assembled a daily study guide for faith communities based on weekly themes. For Week 1, May 13 to 19, the focus is "From Poverty to Enough Resources for Everyone." Each day has a theme, reading and questions for reflection and discussion based on "The Souls of Poor Folks" audit 50 years after the Poor People's Campaign.

• Devon Wilson, chair of the NAACP Spokane Criminal Justice Committee, member of the Center for Justice Board and project manager of Better Health Together in Spokane, brings expertise in grassroots organizing and understanding systemic racism.

PJALS members started Eastern Washington efforts when

*Continued on page 3*

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### Pontifical Council, WCC develop joint text

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) of the Vatican and the Office of Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) met April 16 to 18 in Geneva to develop a document titled "Education for Peace in a Multi-Religious World."

The PCID delegation also met with Olav Fykse Tveit, WCC general secretary, who is preparing for the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to the WCC on the occasion of WCC's 70th anniversary. Olav said that visit would be a testimony of hope and an opportunity for further ecumenical collaboration in serving humanity.

Both delegations agreed to continue their collaboration in fostering interreligious dialogue ecumenically.

### WCC calls for immediate ceasefire in Syria

In an April 16 statement, the World Council of Churches (WCC) urged the international community to find a way to break the cycle of violence in Syria. "A just and sustainable peace for all Syrians can only be brought about through a political solution," the statement reads. "It is intolerable that atrocities are still being perpetrated against civilians. The UN Security Council has repeatedly failed to adopt sufficiently strong and consistent measures to put an end to these atrocities, implement a ceasefire, ensure respect for international law and accountability for war crimes."

"WCC member churches in Syria and the region have an important role to play in healing wounded memories and bringing all Syrians together in a common narrative, to preserve Syria's diversity and restore social cohesion," the statement concluded. "The ecumenical family will accompany Syria's churches and people in working for a just peace and for human dignity."

### Unifying faiths through dialogue

By Claus Grue - WCC communication consultant  
History is full of conflicts and wars fought in the name of religion. In recent years, religious fundamentalism and political extremism have gained ground in the Middle East and the Western World. Religion itself may not be the problem, but may be part of the solution. In a recent plenary on "Light and Truth in Pluralistic Asia" at the Asia Ecumenical Youth Assembly in Manado, Indonesia, religious leaders from different faiths agreed that continuous interfaith dialogue is key to better mutual understanding, tolerance, respect and long-term peace and stability.

"When people isolate themselves in their religion, tension arises. If you don't understand other religions, you don't understand your own, said Zhang Chongfu, professor at the Institute for Daoism and Religious Culture Studies at China's Sichuan University.

**Peacefulness is a common denominator** of all major religions. "No religion has terrorism or violence in its dictionary," said Mathews George Chunnakara, general secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia. He said no religion has monopoly on truth: "I respect your truth, so please respect my truth."

**The Muslim panelist**, Media Zainul Bahri, head of religious studies at the State Islamic University of Jakarta, pointed to today's societies with diverse religions and traditions, and conflicting interests among religious leaders of the same faith. Concerned that poverty, intolerance and marginalization are breeding grounds for terrorism, he said, "Religious leaders must communicate on social issues, not only theological issues."

**Buddhist monk** Phramaha Boonchuay Doojai, from Chiang Mai Buddhist University in Thailand, advocated mutual understanding among people of different faiths: "We need to interact and talk more to each other to understand each other and co-exist. Interfaith dialogue is not only about talking, but also about working together. The aim is the dignity of all human beings, he said.

**The fifth participant**, Hindu Swami Navananma Jnana Tapaswi, Shanthi Giri Ashram, said interfaith dialogue was about unifying faiths to thoughtfulness: "Different faiths will merge in truths and the ultimate truth will emerge, which will make us

## REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

### Resource Directory progress continues

More than 87 percent of the advertising for the 2018-19 Resource Directory: Guide to Congregations and Community Resources is committed. Calls continue to secure the rest.

Emails, letters and personal contacts are being made to confirm community partners to raise the goal of \$14,000 to help underwrite publishing 16,000 copies.

"We continue to reach out to new entities to join in supporting printing enough copies to meet the

needs," said Malcolm Haworth, directory editor. "We have fewer than 25 copies of the directory this year."

Updates to listings continue to come in.

"I encourage those who have not yet sent in updates to their information to contact us so that we can make the changes," he said.

Agencies and businesses who were community partners for the last edition are also renewing.

"We are asking agencies and

businesses to let us know how many copies they want in advance so we print enough," he said. "As we connect with people we continue to hear enthusiasm about how valuable the directory is to helping people in crises and beyond.

"We need volunteers to help with editing, mailing and deliveries," Malcolm said.

For information, call 535-1813, 216-6090 or email resourcedirectory@thefigtree.org.

### FAN Summits set in Yakima and Spokane

The Faith Action Network (FAN) begins its season of outreach and regional summits in Eastern Washington with a gathering Sunday, May 6, in the Yakima Valley and Sunday, June 3, in Spokane.

With Vancouver and the Puget Sound area, four regional summits build on the momentum of the year and offer advocates a way to join with others to help form FAN's priorities and strategies.

Areas of discussion will include economic justice, immigration, criminal justice, healthcare, the environment and more.

"We look forward to this time of year when we can regroup with advocates across our state and hear what's on their minds, strategize on issues affecting their communities, and learn how they would like to be involved," said Elise DeGooyer, co-director of FAN. "These spring gatherings always breathe new life into our interfaith movement.

"Building on our unprecedented policy wins in the state legislative session this year, we want to continue the momentum for social justice as we turn to issues in Congress like the Farm Bill, interim

visits with our elected officials and raising our moral voices during mid-term elections," said Paul Benz, co-director.

FAN asks those who can come to a nearby regional Spring Summit to call or email.

In the Yakima Valley, the summit is from 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday, May 6, at the Toppenish/New Harvest Fellowship United Methodist Church.

In Spokane, the gathering is from 3 to 5 p.m., Sunday, June 3, at All Saints Lutheran Church.

For information, call 206-625-9790 or visit fanwa.org.

### Power of 5 teams raise funds to educate girls

For the second year, supporters of the Spokane-based Conscious Connections Foundation (CCF) formed teams to raise funds for the Power of 5 program to educate girls in Nepal. Teams compete to raise pledges for CCF's "Run for Her Life" in conjunction with Spokane's Bloomsday Run on Sunday, May 6.

Each year the foundation's Power of 5 program, which was started in 2012 and became a CCF program in 2014, raises \$25,000 to provide educational stipends to help more than 100 children in

Nepal stay in school.

"To date, our nonprofit has provided the support that has kept a total of 653 children in school," said Austin Zimmerman, a founding member of CCF. "I challenge supporters to reduce by one the 31 million girls (UNESCO) of primary school age around the world who are unable to attend school.

"It only takes \$10 to keep a girl in Nepal in school for a month. Even small donations mean a life of opportunity," she said.

The CCF grew from more than 30 years of relationships Ganesh

Himal Trading, a local fair trade import company, has had in Nepal.

"Our partner in Nepal that administers the funds understands our focus is on girls but has opened the program to boys in need, too, feeling no child should ever want for an education. So while we emphasize girls, funds raised go to children in need" said Denise Attwood, Ganesh Himal co-owner and CCF co-founder.

For information, visit consciousconnectionsfoundation.org/get-involved-2/.

### Alliance partners with medical school on gaps

The Spokane Alliance has launched a partnership with the Washington State University (WSU) medical school to identify gaps in regional health care.

The alliance, which represents 20,000 people from Spokane churches, unions and nonprofits, will conduct meetings within its member organizations to help

WSU decide how the Elson Floyd School of Medicine should use its new Mobile Medicine program to address some of the gaps.

The medical school was founded in 2015. Its leaders and current medical students serving on the Spokane Alliance's healthcare

research team, joined alliance members in a call to action.

The alliance's feasibility study will be completed this summer, with action to follow from WSU.

For information, call 360-477-2438 or email kahenne@gmail.com.

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## FAITH ACTION NETWORK



### Interfaith Advocates!

Join a FAN regional Summit to connect & strategize about working for social change.

**Yakima Valley Summit**  
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All Saints Lutheran Church, Spokane  
Sunday, June 3, 3-5pm

RSVP for Summits (free!) and sign up for FAN e-news at:

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**Daybreak plans gala fundraising event**

Daybreak Youth Services, a nonprofit provider of adolescent addiction and mental health treatment services in Washington state, will hold its annual fund-raising gala for Eastern Washington at 6 p.m., Friday, May 4, at the Northern Quest Resort and Casino, 100 N. Hayford Rd. in Airway Heights.

Proceeds from the 1970s-themed "Disco for Daybreak" will support Daybreak's work offering hope and recovery solutions to youth and their families struggling with addiction and mental health issues.

Daybreak was founded in 1978 to provide adolescent addiction and mental health treatment in Washington. It has inpatient facilities in Spokane (teen girls only) and Vancouver, serving 12- to 18-year-olds who engage in recovery while continuing in school and recreation.

For information, call 444-7033 ext. 2001 or email [sspier@daybreakyouthservices.org](mailto:sspier@daybreakyouthservices.org).

**Center for Justice Breakfast will be on May 16**

The Center for Justice Breakfast Fundraiser, "Rise for Justice," will be held from 7:30 to 8:50 a.m., on Wednesday, May 16, at the Hemmingson Center at Gonzaga.

Keynote speaker Noah Purcell, solicitor general for the State of Washington, will discuss pressing justice issues on the local, state and national levels. His expertise includes constitutional issues, antitrust claims, environmental law, pre-emption, campaign finance and administrative law.

Noah, Attorney General Bob Ferguson, Judge James Robart and Governor Jay Inslee have played roles in litigating the President's executive order that restricted travel to the United States from seven Muslim majority countries.

A graduate of the University of Washington and Harvard Law School, he was law clerk to former U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter and U.S. Court of Appeals Judge David Tatel of the D.C. Circuit.

For information, call 835-5211 or email [latisha@cfjjustice.org](mailto:latisha@cfjjustice.org).

**Whitworth gift benefits spiritual life staffing**

Whitworth University has received an anonymous pledge of \$3 million to establish an endowed dean of spiritual life position. It will support Whitworth's students, their spiritual formation and the expansion of Whitworth's campus ministry programs.

"Whitworth values the opportunities its students have to grow in their faith," said Whitworth President Beck Taylor.

When fully funded, the gift will make possible the expansion of Whitworth's campus ministry programs and will allow the university to increase its chapel staff.

Attendance at campus ministry programs like community chapel, AWAKE and Hosanna remains at or near all-time highs, and students are benefiting from the service opportunities and student leadership roles offered through Whitworth's campus ministry programs, said Forrest Buckner, Whitworth's dean of spiritual life since 2015.

For information, call 777-4388 or email [ssmith@whitworth.edu](mailto:ssmith@whitworth.edu).

**Symphony announces plans for the coming season**

Starting in September, the Spokane Symphony's 73rd season, music director Eckart Preu's farewell season, will include classical and modern works. Some of the symphony's frequent guest artists will perform, including violinist Elizabeth Pitcairn, on Oct. 6 and 7; pianist Alon Goldstein on Oct. 20 and 21; the Silver-Garburg Piano Duo on Nov. 3 and 4, and percussionist Nebojša Jovan Živković on May 4 and 5.

Five finalists for the music director job will each come to Spokane for a week to rehearse and conduct the orchestra, meet people and tour the city. The new music director will be announced in May 2019. Finalists will conduct classics concerts numbers 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9, and Eckart will conduct the other five classics concerts.

The symphony series will include Chamber Soirées at The Historic Davenport Hotel, Baroque music in local churches, and The M Show: Music, Mayhem and Mystery hosted by Concertmaster Mateusz Wolski.

For information, call 624-1200 or visit [www.spokanesymphony.org](http://www.spokanesymphony.org) for details on the coming season's performances.

**40-day campaign is just the beginning**

*Continued from page 1*  
they voted to make the Poor People's Campaign a priority.

Liz is one of three chairs of the State Coordinating Committee.

The mass meeting in April introduced the campaign's 40 days of action, including people sharing personal stories of the impact of systemic poverty, racism, the war economy, ecological devastation, human rights abuse and the need for a new sense of morality.

**The campaign challenges** people to see poverty as a structural, not personal problem; a result of the concentration of wealth; women and children as the poorest; being poor is not a crime; ways to eliminate poverty, and to the need to reprioritize the national budget.

One resource, "The Souls of Poor Folks" is the Institute for Policy Studies' audit of poverty 50 years after the 1968 Poor People's Campaign. It is available at [ipsdc.org/souls-of-poor-folks](http://ipsdc.org/souls-of-poor-folks).

"Facts, figures and faces" in the report counter myths about poverty, including that it's the fault of the poor and that there is not enough for everyone to survive.

"Souls of Poor Folks" makes it clear that the richest nation in the world has enough resources to protect the environment and ensure dignified lives for all people.

It calls for "shifting the narrative about morality from a narrow focus on only school prayer, abortion and gun rights to a focus "on how our society treats the poor, those on the margins, the least of these, LGBTQ folks, workers, immigrants, the disabled and the sick. It calls for equal representation and for peace, love and harmony among nations.

A summary of the audit follows:

- It bases moral analysis on religious and constitutional values that demand justice for all, because every major religion challenges oppression and injustice.
- It says the "only remedy for our moral crisis is a transformed national heart" based on compassion and the common good.
- It addresses racism in voter suppression, policing practices, housing segregation, mass incarceration and immigration policies.
- It attributes poverty to the low-wage economy, gains going to few, 43.5 percent of the population being low-income, scaling back anti-poverty programs, and the rising costs of housing, higher education and health care.
- It reviews the toll of the perpetual, profit-driven war economy on civilians, troops deployed in 149 nations, and the moral costs.
- It says ecological devastation multiplies injustices and contributes to 9 million premature deaths from volatile weather, unsafe

water, air and water pollution, oil pipeline and transport spills, and superfund sites.

**The report asserts** that transformative action on these issues is as urgent today as it was in 1968.

For six weeks, the Poor People's Campaign will focus on problems and create leadership in U.S. communities.

The weekly themes are: From racism to equality and respect for week two; from militarism to a peace-based economy for week three; from ecological devastation to earth stewardship for week four; from isolation to solidarity in human rights for week five, and from a narrow morality to a broad "moral fusion" for week six.

**From May 13 to June 23, 2018**, the campaign will enter into a season of moral resistance, coordinated across at least 25 states and Washington, D.C. More than 100 national religious, labor, civil rights and nonprofit organizations support the campaign.

A season of 40 days has a history in many spiritual traditions as a timeline for creating a favorable environment for transformation.

**On "Moral Mondays,"** people will gather at 30 state capitols for non-violent actions, demanding that leaders address the injustices and begin a moral revival. The demands are published at [www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/index.php/demands/](http://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/index.php/demands/)

[www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/index.php/demands/](http://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/index.php/demands/)

PJALS is organizing delegations to go to Moral Mondays actions in Olympia, and send-offs.

"We hope to create power the powerbrokers don't expect so they change how they operate," Liz said.

The Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience resources include videos sharing people's stories.

"This is only the beginning. The demands will take years to fulfill," said Gen Heywood, pastor of the Veredale United Church of Christ.

**"As Faith Leaders** and Leaders of Conscience, we seek to build relationships that will heal divisions and move us toward the beloved community envisioned by Martin Luther King Jr."

PJALS is holding Nonviolent Moral Fusion Direct Action Training from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturdays, May 5 and 19. Liz said that is in the spirit and tradition of ordinary people of conscience engaging in nonviolent direct action to expose and engage in moral witness against injustice.

For information from PJALS, call 838-7870 or visit [pjals.org](http://pjals.org). For information on the FLLC, call 408-593-9556 or [genheywood@att.net](mailto:genheywood@att.net). Information is also at [pjals.org/ppc](http://pjals.org/ppc) or [facebook.com/SpokanePPC/](https://www.facebook.com/SpokanePPC/).



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**Taizé summer schedule at The Ministry Institute**

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**For details of summer schedule, contact Shonna Bartlett at 313-5765 or [bartletts@gonzaga.edu](mailto:bartletts@gonzaga.edu).**



# Refugee from Sudan now serves in solidarity with other refugees

*Continued from page 1*

old, before an incident began to restore meaning to my life," he said. "I entered a hut, where I saw a father, mother and two children.

"The man walked to me, looked me in the eye and said, 'Son, this is not what you are called to do.'

"No one had called me 'son' or looked at me," Jackson said. "He held me, shielded me from being shot and gave up his life for me.

"I had no idea there were people like that," said Jackson. "Never before had I felt the compassion and love this man bestowed on me."

**Jackson escaped and ran** for days. He did not know where he was. He kept running and crossed a river. There were children playing soccer inside a fence, and two guards were at a gate. A woman was cooking. He went in. He was told to go away, but came back.

"A girl inside the fence kept pointing at me. It was my sister. We had been separated for years, but she recognized me. It was a miracle. They let me in the camp," Jackson said.

The refugee camp in Uganda had thousands of people. He thought he had no family, but his sister was with an aunt and uncle, who also took him in as family. Four years later, after that camp burned, they went to a camp in Sudan and began the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) screening process.

"I believed there was something for me to do. God was in my life," said Jackson, whose years of trauma, fear and worry now help him identify with other refugees.

After another four years, he was accepted to go to the United States with his extended family.

The day he was given a ticket, he was so excited he ran in the rain. As a truck drove them to the airport, he heard guns firing.

"To this day, I see news of refugees forced out of their homes, fearful for their lives and families, and I remember," Jackson said.

"It was another miracle when I boarded the plane," he said.

"I was afraid of planes, because they bombed and hurt people," he said, adding that his plane took him to New York City, where he first stepped foot on American soil.

"I saw lights and people. I heard noise and cars," he said. "It was foreign. There were so many lights that I could not see the stars but the hospitality was awesome."

**From there, they flew** to Boise, where "life started."

"People came to the airport with banners to welcome us, even though they did not know who we were," Jackson said. "A pastor came to talk. I could not understand." The translator said the pastor said, "We have been praying for you."

"I felt the same emotion I felt when the man gave his life for me. I fell to my knees. The pastor picked me up and hugged me," said Jackson, who now he tells people how privileged and blessed he is, and tells them they, too, are privileged and blessed.

"Don't take life for granted," he said. "Care for your families. Speak up. Share your stories. You can make a difference."

**World Relief resettles** families and guides them as they place them in apartments and help them adapt to their new lives.

Jackson had a room with a bed, but slept on the hard floor. He

took a glass and fresh clean water out of the refrigerator and realized he didn't have to walk 13 miles to get dirty water.

"I was given shoes and clothes. People around me shared love," he said. "Refugees need presence, time and energy from volunteers.

When he first arrived, he knew no English, but students, teachers, pastors and others helped him learn it. School was hard. He did not understand the language or culture. Another student helped him through the first day.

**"The love I was shown** allowed me to step forward and progress. I struggled with school, but people came around," Jackson said.

For the first 10 years, his family lived in Boise where he finished high school, studied health and physical education at Boise State University, and started a Neema Choir. Then he lived two years in Fargo, N.D., where he started another choir. His family is still there.

**He has started a Neema Choir** in Spokane since coming four years to work with World Relief.

More than 20 youth, ages 10 to 18, are in the choir, through which he offers guidance and raises funds for them to go to college. The children are among 2,300 Congolese, Ugandan, Sudanese and Kenyan refugees and immigrants in the Spokane area.

They share their stories to open the minds of people who think refugees are terrorists or steal jobs.

"Some fear or hate people if they disagree or are different," he said, inviting people to open their hearts to those who hurt and need love.

"I want refugees to feel welcome," said Jackson, who com-

pleted college while working with World Relief.

**"Countless refugees** around the world seek the same justice and freedom I have, but are unable to come here," said Jackson.

He also knows that from recent experience. He traveled in March with Mark Finney, director of World Relief in Spokane, to Bangladesh, to visit the Kutapulung camp, the world's largest refugee camp with more than 1 million Rohingya refugees.

"The first day, I heard the sounds of children playing, but then I walked through the camp and saw the trauma and severity of the lives of people on their faces," he said, overwhelmed walking through the camp where a million people live. Another 650,000 live in two nearby camps.

"I was horrified by the conditions. I saw the orphans and connected, but I shut my emotions off, but a few days ago, I became angry, realizing that countless children and adults are in the camps waiting, having no education. It's surreal, hard to comprehend the magnitude of suffering that is going on around the world," said Jackson, who attends the Living Sacrifice Christian Church and River City Church.

**Now he redoubles** his commitment to have the Neema Choir

visit different churches each week to share their stories and invite people to advocate for refugees.

"We sing in Swahili, English, French and Arabic," he said. "We seek to bring awareness and unity, build understanding that differences are a good thing and bring peace that bridges differences."

The children and youth share many of their stories in music, but some also tell of their lives.

**"Our theme song is 'I Am Not Forgotten,'** because many when they were in refugee camps felt they were forgotten," Jackson said.

As they came to the U.S. and learned about God, he said they realized they were never forgotten by God: "No matter what our situation, God is there," he said.

They will sing May 7 at the Children's Justice Conference at the Convention Center.

**The Neema Youth Choir** will perform, "Not Forgotten," a benefit concert for refugees at 5:30 p.m., Friday, May 11, at the Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave.

The concert features multicultural music with the Neema Youth choir, St. John's Junior and Adult Choirs, Pilgrim Slavic Church's Orchestra and other performers. There will also be a silent auction.

For information, call 484-9829 or email [jlino@wr.org](mailto:jlino@wr.org), or visit [worldreliefspokane.org](http://worldreliefspokane.org).

## Honduran attorney speaks on human rights

Honduran human rights lawyer Dunia Aracely Perez will visit Spokane from May 12 to 15 as part of a national tour and action to give visibility to the struggle of Honduran people and Honduran Jesuit Ismael Moreno Cano, popularly known as Padre Melo, reporters of the Jesuit Radio Progreso and staff of the human rights research center ERIC.

Their involvement in the struggle of Honduran people and their relationship with Berta Cáceres, a Honduran environmental activist, has led to threats and attacks against Fr. Melo and staff, said David Brookbank of Spokane.

Fr. Melo is responsible for the radio station and ERIC on behalf of the people of Honduras.

Berta, co-founder of the Coun-

cil of Popular and Indigenous Organizations in Honduras, won the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2015 for pressuring the world's largest dam builder to pull out of the Agua Zarca Dam. She was assassinated in 2016.

David, who visited Honduras for three weeks in January to accompany the reporters and human rights workers, is arranging two public meetings during Dunia's visit in Spokane, as well as informal gatherings.

Dunia works with people in northern Honduras to represent them and document victims of military and police repression, false arrests, voting irregularities and protests.

When David was in Honduras, a delegation of 50 U.S. religious

leaders was there to learn about the human rights situation and to be in solidarity with Radio Progreso and ERIC. Kathleen McTigue, the daughter of the late Patty and Bill Houff, pastor at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane, participated as an observer from the national Unitarian Universalist Church.

Dunia, Fr. Melo and other human rights workers are visiting in 12 locations around the U.S. to do public education before going to Washington, D.C., on May 16 to meet with members of Congress and challenge the U.S. policies that affect conditions in Honduras, David said.

For information, call 879-7169 or email [arroyoribera@gmail.com](mailto:arroyoribera@gmail.com).



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## Classes, tours, workshops and events help integrate refugees into community

After 90 days in Spokane, most refugees are housed, in school and have jobs, but many still need to be oriented to and integrated into the community and culture.

Then Refugee Connections Spokane steps in to guide refugees for long-term needs, identifying what they still need to participate more fully in life here.

With relationship-building key, it recruits volunteers to connect with refugees and immigrants.

“Our goals are 1) to teach English so they feel comfortable to interact with people day-to-day; 2) to provide resources so they thrive in their new country, not just survive, and 3) to help them be independent in transportation, shopping, resources and awareness,” said Marijke Fakasiieiki, who began as executive director last August.

**Refugee Connections seeks** to improve access to resources, train refugees for leadership, organize community activities, advocate for refugees, educate service providers, translate health records, teach refugees about laws, raise community awareness and offer opportunities to connect refugees with the community.

Its programs include Refugee Elder Outreach, English classes, Refugee Kids Connection, Informational Workshops, an American Law and Justice Workshop, Patient Passports and a Harvest Project.

Marijke, who grew up in Spokane but has studied, lived and worked abroad, brings a passion for global understanding.

**Global connections were** part of her childhood in Fresno, Tekoa and Spokane. She also studied in Germany and Switzerland, and attended assemblies of the World Council of Churches in 1983 in Vancouver, B.C., 1991 in Canberra, Australia, and 1998 in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Her global ties led to her relating with the Tongan community for 20 years in the San Francisco area, including meeting her husband, Ikani. They moved to Spokane after he earned a doctoral degree from the Graduate Theological Union in 2015.

With Refugee Connections, Marijke helps refugees, especially elders, adapt to life in Spokane through cross-cultural experiences, elder services, community tours and workshops.

When refugees make friends, there are more people to advocate for policies to improve their lives, she said.

“Every wave of immigrants and refugees over the more than 200-year U.S. history has stirred discrimination,” Marijke said.

With the recent upsurge in hate,



Marijke Fakasiieiki introduces refugees to resources.

Marijke listened to concerns when a group of refugees was coming to a gathering at the Community Building and a woman yelled at them and told them to go home. Marijke encouraged them to share their experience so they would feel safe coming for events.

Refugee Connections welcomes them and wants them to feel at home.

“Refugees came here because they were persecuted in their homelands based on race, religion or politics, or they helped U.S. troops in war,” said Marijke. “It’s important to respect their dignity and challenge backlash.”

Especially for elders who may have had limited or no formal education, “it’s important for those who interact with them to learn to say, ‘hello,’ and other simple basic words in their languages, along with teaching English,” she said.

“**With the elders**, we are like a senior center, immersing them in our culture,” said Marijke, who interacts with refugees as she drives them in a STA-donated van for English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, workshops and field trips.

There are four English classes a month, two with the Karen, Nepali and Arabic speakers and two with the Slavic speakers. There are

12 students in each class—the number the van holds.

**The English classes include** cultural and civic content, which is planned three months ahead so they can use the vocabulary they are learning for workshops and field trips.

“In classes, students are encouraged to talk about their home cultures and life experiences,” Marijke said.

She explained that most of the elders here are 60 years or younger, because older people did not survive fleeing or the refugee camps, and because of shorter life expectancy in their homelands.”

Many are 50-year-old grandparents taking care of grandchildren. Grants, however, are often based on the U.S. life span and are for those 60 or older.

**Workshops are held** at the Community Building—35 W. Main—where Refugee Connections Spokane has an office.

Four cross-cultural interpreters translate for workshops and tours. Refugee Connections Spokane partners with Gonzaga University and Spokane International Translation to offer a Medical Translator/Interpreter Course to certify volunteers through the Department of Social and Health Services so refugees can better

communicate their needs to service providers.

**Marijke described some** recent workshops and field trips:

In October, SNAP told them about energy assistance and conservation to prepare for winter. Visiting Manito Park, they learned about the importance of parks here.

“In the rose garden, one woman became sad as gardeners gave her and others flowers they were clipping at the end of the season,” Marijke said. “In Iraq, she had had a rose garden. It touched her pain of losing her garden, but gave her hope with the realization that we have roses and gardens here.”

In November, Frontier Behavioral Health discussed dressing warmly, shoveling sidewalks and seasonal depression. The Spokane Salish School told about language preservation.

In a tour of St. John’s Cathedral, a Slavic Baptist woman asked many questions about the worship services. Arab speakers were impressed by the stained glass and art. The cathedral guide decided to volunteer with Refugee Connections, Marijke said.

In December, they had a potluck, bringing food from their cultures. They also had a workshop led by Mid-City Concerns Meals on Wheels, and visited the Davenport Hotel Christmas tree decorations and an art exhibit. Frontier Behavioral Health introduced them to Family Caregiver Support and Care Cars.

**In January and February**, they had weekly workshops on life’s journey, aging with dignity and end of life care. On a field trip to the Spokane Public Library, each received a library card.

In February, they received copies of the Patient Passport, in which they can record their medical histories, insurance plan and medications—in such languages as English, Arabic, French, Russian, Swahili, Tigrinya and Spanish.

They visited the Spokane Fire Department to learn about fire safety, and Project Joy musicians introduced them to American folk music.

In March, they learned about shopping for groceries and clothes at Fred Meyer, and visited the

Spokane Transit Authority (STA) where they picked up senior bus cards.

In April, there was one workshop with the Spokane Police Department, and another with Catholic Charities on senior food vouchers.

“Many refugees distrust legal authorities based on experiences in their homelands,” Marijke said. “The workshop helps them understand their rights and liberties.”

Last fall, a Legal Foundation of Washington grant underwrote four legal clinics where immigrants and refugees could learn about five areas of law—family, housing, immigration, naturalization and employment.

In the fall, the Harvest Project connected refugees with farms and gardens where they could harvest—glean—fruits and vegetables to share with low-income neighbors.

**Workshops and programs** also introduce refugees/immigrants to opportunities for them to volunteer.

In July, Amber Johnsen, who works at an after-school program at Fairchild Air Force Base, started Refugee Kids Connect as a summer then after-school program.

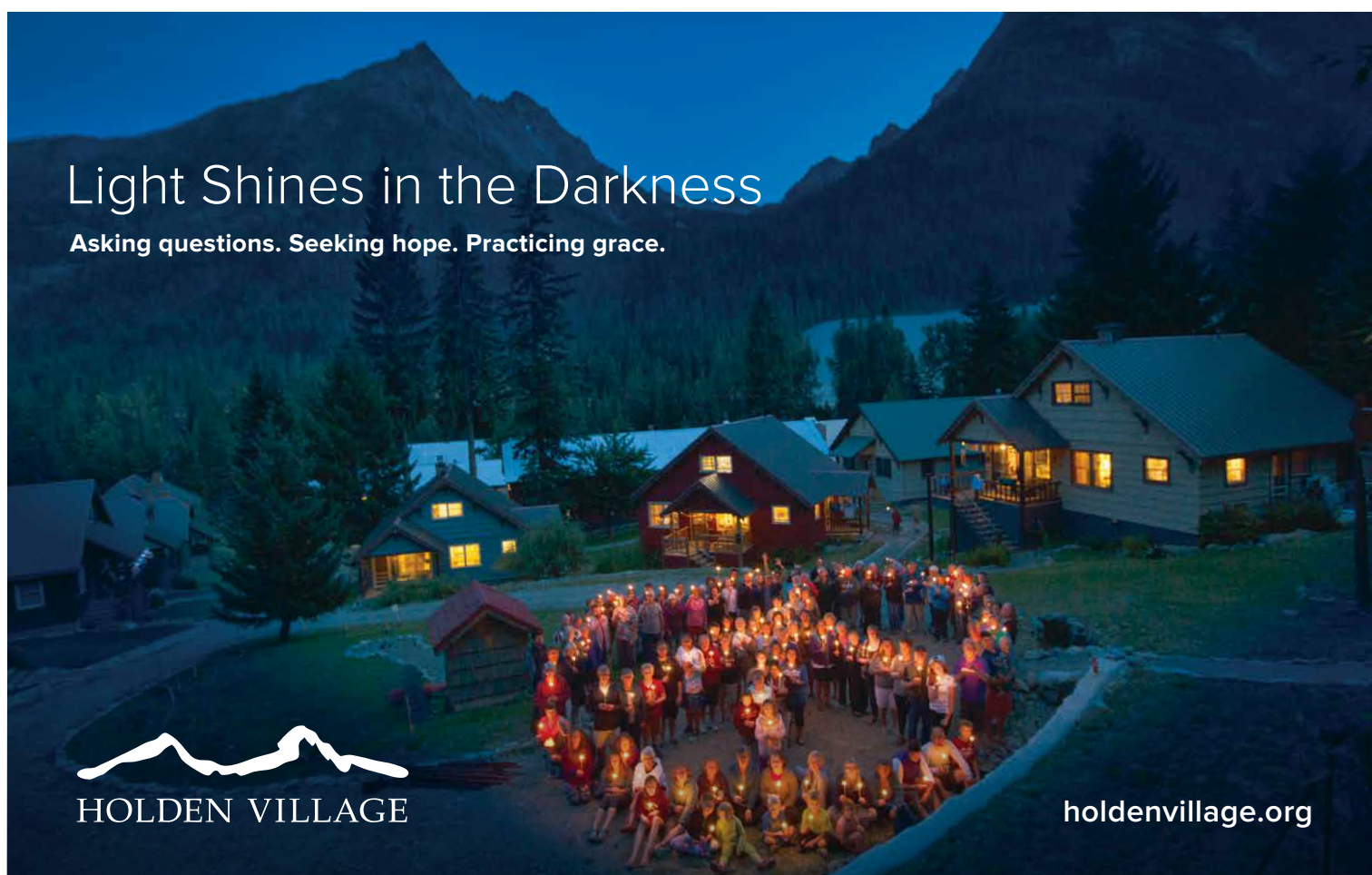
Twenty to 30 children met at Ruth Park near the Atlantic Apartments at 4 p.m., Tuesdays. After school started, they met at an apartment to do homework and activities.

Refugee Connections encourages refugees and community members to interact with and learn about the many cultures here, such as Unity in the Community in the summer, and cultural programs, such as the Hmong New Year and a Vietnamese Festival.

Another opportunity is from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, June 16, when Refugee Connections, World Relief and dozens of others partners will sponsor World Refugee Day at Nevada Park at 800 E. Joseph.

About 500 come for a naturalization ceremony, children’s activities, performances, a cultural marketplace and community agency booths.

For information, call 209-2384 or visit [refugeeconnectionsspokane.org](http://refugeeconnectionsspokane.org).



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# Organ Guild introduces musically-minded students to playing organ

*Continued from page 1*

what organ music adds to worship. "I want organ playing to flourish," said Raney, who played piano as a child and sings.

AGO member Janet Ahrend helped Raney organize the Organ Academy, recruiting teachers and the students—five boys and three girls. Most are 16. They are from Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls and Spokane.

Nationally, the AGO has a one-week organ camp, but Janet and Raney decided the students needed more than one week.

**In the academy, the students** had eight lessons for \$75 total and an anonymous donor gave \$50 more to each teacher. With the lessons spread out, the students had time to practice between lessons.

The five organists who taught the students were Byrl Cinnamon, who is the carillonneur at St. John's and dean of the Spokane AGO; Rose Dempsey, organist at Trinity Lutheran in Coeur d'Alene; David Matney of Colbert; Helen Byrne, the organist at Manito Presbyterian, and Janet, who was organist for 17 years at St. John's and continues teaching organ at Gonzaga University, Whitworth University and Eastern Washington University.

The students are Protestant, Catholic and from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

**"The goal was to enter** them as a beginner class at Musicfest Northwest where they would meet each other as colleagues playing the organ," said Raney, who sent a promotional poster to piano teachers, churches, music groups, homeschool groups and more.

In the Saturday group lessons at different churches, they had the opportunity to try different organs, ask the organists questions, practice their performance pieces and, in some cases, tour the organ pipes. They also built relationships with each other.

On March 3, they met Helen, organist at Manito Presbyterian. They met with Ed Hurd March



**Katie Close performs on the organ at First Presbyterian Church while the students watch.**

10 at Opportunity Presbyterian and March 17 at New Community Church. On March 24, they were with Bryce La Motte at First Presbyterian; April 7, with Debby McConnell at Whitworth Presbyterian; April 21, with John Terris at St. Thomas Catholic in Coeur d'Alene, and April 28, with Byrl Cinnamon at St. John's Cathedral.

"One student's great-grandmother was my Sunday school teacher at Manito Presbyterian," noted Janet, who grew up in Spokane.

**Her first organ teacher** was Barbara Top Rockwood at Manito Presbyterian. Janet played piano, violin and organ at Musicfest in high school.

Her first job as organist was in the summer at Westview United Church of Christ. Janet played organ at the Methodist Church in Moscow during her junior and senior years in college. She also was organist at St. Aloysius, Heritage Congregational and a substitute in many churches. Janet earned a doctoral degree in music at the University of Washington in Seattle.

"Today, there are fewer organists, and fewer churches use or-

gans. Many have gone to drums and guitars, but I believe the organ is still a viable instrument for worship," Janet said. "Churches can use both."

Raney said that First Presbyterian has two services. One is exclusively organ, and the other is contemporary.

"You can't go to the phone book and look up organ teachers, as you can find piano teachers," she said. "Most piano students could not pay the full price for organ lessons on top of piano lessons."

The Organ Academy made lessons affordable.

"All the students are musical," Raney said. "Organ is a third instrument for many, along with piano, and flute or violin."

**"I hope many will continue** with private lessons," said Janet. "I'm excited to see the young students playing. We encouraged them to learn to play hymns, which is harder than other pieces."

Now they know who the teachers are, how organs work, where the organs are and churches that are open to having them practice.

Raney said that they are receiving inquiries about next year, so

the AGO will discuss offering the Organ Academy next year.

"We will add more teachers,"

she said.

The academy students were preparing not only for the Musicfest but also for an Organ Academy Recital at 2 p.m., Saturday, May 12, at St. John's Cathedral, 127 E. 12th Ave. John Bodinger, organist at St. John, will also play a piece.

**"I want young people** to know that playing the organ is an exciting way to serve the Lord, and that organists can find jobs, because they are in great demand," Raney said.

"To serve the Lord by playing organ is a great life," said Janet. "I know, I did it."

For her, another plus to playing organ is that people can continue to play it as they grow older.

"Organists don't really retire," said Janet, speaking from experience.

For information, call 624-2980, email [williamclose@comcast.net](mailto:williamclose@comcast.net) or [frostbeige2@gmail.com](mailto:frostbeige2@gmail.com), or visit [spokaneago.org](http://spokaneago.org).

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## Crisis Nursery plans to build larger building

The Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery will be able to serve three times the number of children and families it now serves when it moves into its new home at 2230 E. Sprague, across the street from the new facility for Frontier Behavioral Health.

Its goal is to break ground in the fall and to open by 2020. The current building on the new site was torn down in March.

Vanessa Behan invites the community to share in owning and

funding the new facility, where staff and volunteers provide love.

For information, call 535-3155 or visit [vanessabehan.org](http://vanessabehan.org).

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# Open Doors 24/7 emergency shelter for families fills a growing need

As director of Open Doors, Spokane's 24/7 emergency shelter for families, Joe Ader puts into practice the principles he has been teaching through Understanding Poverty presentations he has given nationally since 2008. June 5 is the one-year anniversary of Open Doors becoming a 24/7 shelter.

Joe, who created a homeless shelter in Denton, Texas, moved to Spokane to be part of the Pinnacle Church in August 2016. In September, he learned through Spokane's Homeless Coalition that Family Promise needed a director for a new homeless shelter. He was hired in October and the Open Doors day shelter opened in December 2016 under Family Promise at Emmanuel Family Life Center. The overnight family shelter was at the Salvation Army.

**"I have studied poverty** since I was 13, when I signed up to go to a Saddleback Church camp. Instead of going to the wilderness, we arrived at an inner city Los Angeles hotel with prostitutes and their children," Joe said.

One night, he was scared when someone tried to break into the room he shared with another teen. The next morning, he told the children living there. Their reaction was, "So?" It was every-day for them. It was eye-opening for him, living a protected middle-class life in Orange County, California.

Joe earned bachelor's degrees in religion and political science in 1999 at Baylor University in Waco. In 1998, he started an internet company in California and ran it until the internet crash in 2000.

**"You learn more** on the way down than on the way up," said Joe, who realized then that he wanted to make things better for people. "I wanted to see people's lives change for the better."

With the high cost of housing in Orange County, he and his wife moved to Texas, where his internet company merged with another company. While in Texas, Joe served six years as mission pastor of the Village Church in Denton.

**To help nonprofits work** together on poverty and to prepare mission teams he sent to South Dallas or Guatemala, Joe created Understanding Poverty in 2008. He wanted team members to understand the culture of neighborhoods where they were going.

Joe gave presentations to other congregations, nonprofits and businesses. Frito Lay Pepsi consulted with him when they started their Food for Good summer feeding program in historic poverty areas of South Dallas. PayPal hired him to "democratize" financial services—bringing bank services to people at their corner stores,



Joe Ader brings Understanding Poverty ideas to Open Doors.

using their cell phones.

Along with being director of Open Doors and chair of the Spokane Homeless Coalition, he is developing an online training program at [understandingpoverty.com](http://understandingpoverty.com)—to be ready this summer.

**"When Open Doors opened** as a day shelter, we thought we would serve three to four families a day based on the number coming to warming shelters," Joe said.

Within two hours of opening, the first family came. In the first two days, 30 people came.

Last spring, the Salvation Army night shelter could take in only 30 people, so they turned the family night shelter over to Family Promise's Open Doors Shelter, which rents Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. It has capacity to shelter 65 people, sleeping on mats on the floor.

"We host an average of 52 people a night, but since Easter, we have been at maximum capacity and had to turn some families away," Joe said. "There's a normal bump after Easter, after Christmas and before school, after people stayed with their families," he said.

The Salvation Army now offers long-term shelter for families.

**"Our goal is to keep** families together. At an emergency shelter, families can just walk in. We consider a family to be anyone caring for a child or someone who is pregnant," Joe said. "We are unique in that we keep the whole family together."

Other shelters separate men and women, and rarely accept teen boys or single fathers with

daughters.

**For 21 years** before Open Doors, Family Promise ran the Bridges program—previously the Interfaith Hospitality Network.

Joe described it as a "traveling shelter," with three families at a time staying overnight for a week at one of 13 churches, and moving to another church each week. Members of supporting churches serve evening meals. In the morning, families go to the day center at 904 E. Hartson, to work intensively with a case manager.

**"An emergency shelter is** a step before that. It's a place where a family can walk in the day they become homeless," said Joe.

The Open Doors day shelter is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Emmanuel Family Life Center behind Bethel AME, where they stay in the night shelter from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Joe said the average family leaves Open Doors after 34 days, with 69 percent moving to permanent or transitional housing, such as with Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, the Salvation Army, Union Gospel Mission or Transitions.

**At Open Doors,** parents meet weekly with a caseworker. Staff supervisors—on site day and night—work four six-hour shifts.

Supervisors run the facility and meet with people as needed. Supervisors often work four days, they have three days off because of the stress of dealing with the families' traumas.

"Each family has a unique situation," said Joe. "It's not just that

they lack housing, but they are also dealing with abuse, divorce, medical care and more. Those abusing drugs or alcohol are not admitted until they are in treatment," Joe said.

**"We want the children** to have a safe space," Joe said, "so we planned the shelter around the need of a nine-year-old child to have a place that feels like a living room.

Families cook breakfast and lunch for themselves because parents know best what their children will eat. It also empowers them. In addition, congregations or organizations prepare the evening meals or the families will choose someone to cook for everyone.

**Volunteer groups bring** services. Nursing students come Tuesdays to offer health care and education. Parenting classes are on Saturdays. The Neighborhood Networks after-school and summer programs do children's activities.

The Family Promise/Bridges program alone helped 60 people a year. In 2017, Open Doors and Bridges together helped 1,271 people, including 800 children. More than 30 percent of Spokane's homeless are children.

**Joe shared insights** from Understanding Poverty and nonprofits who work together on solutions:

- With many types of homelessness, there is no one-size-fits-all solution.
- The lack of transportation makes it hard to access services. Co-locating services would mean people can access more services.
- The lack of affordable child care, especially outside the 8 to 5 hours, makes it hard for homeless parents to find jobs.
- When a family member comes out of the hospital or has a sick child, there is need for respite care with nursing help and child care, like singles have. There is respite for single homeless men at House of Charity and single women at Hope House, but not for families.

At Open Doors, about 70 percent of families are intact units with a mother and father trying to stay together.

**"Program staff and volunteers** are not to judge guests, nor are guests to judge each other," Joe said. "We speak of 'guests,' not 'clients,' setting a tone about serving. We encourage people to look for good characteristics in other people. Children and families need to feel safe and loved.

"Four former guests are now on staff, because they have been there and know what our guests are going through," he said.

**Joe said Understanding Poverty** also teaches that people experiencing poverty lack resources, and homelessness is not just about housing, but also about losing identity papers, child care, transportation, jobs and relationships.

With a 0.5 to 1 percent vacancy rate in Spokane, it's hard for everyone to find housing, he said.

"Solutions require more than moving people through creative programs. People are not widgets," Joe said. "They need relationships with caring people with time, patience and endurance."

**The main dynamic** of homelessness is that people lose relationships and community, so the main way out is to build community.

"Congregations, volunteers and mentors offer built-in relationships and community," said Joe, so Open Doors partners with congregations and community groups to provide relationships.

"We tell people in the shelter to build one new relationship with someone in the community, a youth group, an after-school program, a recovery program and other places they go," he said.

"We invite church members who serve meals to sit with the people and build relationships," said Joe, who attends Pinnacle Church-Dishman Hills, a church plant from Arkansas started five years ago by the Southern Baptist Convention.

Currently volunteers from several churches help each week.

"We could use more," he said.

For information, call 723-4663 or visit [familypromiseofspokane.org](http://familypromiseofspokane.org).

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# Retired professor writes, teaches, volunteers, travels and observes

Between writing, teaching, volunteering and traveling, Gordon Jackson has kept busy since his retirement in 2015, after 32 years of teaching journalism at Whitworth University.

During 2017, he focused on completing and publishing two books, *Be Thou My Vision: Light, Sight and the Christian Faith* in February and a novel, *The Church That Used to Be St. Elmos* in June.

In 2016, Gordon taught a January Term class, taking students to his homeland, South Africa, and he teaches a professional writing class for the adult education programs through Whitworth.

He and his wife, Sue, frequently travel to South Africa to visit their friends and family. Of four trips in the last five years, two have been to take students for study programs there.

Gordon finds that it's valuable to take students to South Africa, because among other things they learn the politics there lend insights into the U.S. political scene.

Much of Gordon's time recently was spent writing the two books that were published last year.

**The first was a book** on light and sight, inspired because he has had glaucoma for about 20 years.

"Thanks to good medical care my vision remains stable, but it has heightened my sensitivity to sight," said Gordon.

That led him to write, *Be Thou My Vision*. An essay by a biology professor 10 years ago started him thinking about vision and how people can see because of physical and chemical processes in their brains.

"I began thinking about what the image of God means, looking through both a theological and a biological lens," he said. "How are we seen by God and how do we see God?"

**Gordon explores 32 topics** related to light and sight, darkness and light, good and bad implications of blindness, the complexity and miracle of vision, and the physical and spiritual implications of mirrors, rainbows and shadows.

"Often when we are driving, we miss seeing many things. We need to look purposely, or we miss seeing things. Like the need to stop and smell the roses, we need to stop and see what is around us," he said.

**In contrast** with the nonfiction essays and reflections, Gordon has now also written a novel, *The Church That Used to Be St. Elmos*.

With "considerable humor," he said he explores the concept of grace in a story about a fictitious church given \$87 million on the condition that the church change its "geeky" name, be united in accepting the gift and keep the donor's identity anonymous.

**Gordon depicts many** typical fictitious church members and common types of responses and interactions in churches.

"The people become hyper in



Gordon Jackson has published two books.

excitement about what they might do with the money. Many vendors approach them to promote their products, like church buses. The denominational executive wants a cut. The mayor wants to know how the church will support the community. Media try to dig out information on the donor. The pastor finds life increasingly complicated," Gordon summed up.

"Ultimately, the book looks at how people respond to unprecedented grace," he said.

**Gordon had written a draft** of the book in 2005, but had put it aside. He later realized he had not followed two principles he taught his students: "remember the reader" and "don't fall in love with what you write."

In the fall of 2016, he was volunteering as interim principal at a K-12 English language school serving 54 U.S., Canadian and some Mexican students in Puebla, Mexico. He had time on his hands after school and pulled out the draft.

Gordon cut large sections, added new sections and immediately found a publisher. He spent a month polishing it on the publisher's recommendation.

The cover is a drawing of the church as the face on a dollar bill.

**The church setting is generic**, Gordon said, and of an unspecified denomination.

"It's meant to be generic so people of a wide range of traditions relate with it," Gordon said. "It's a study on people and dynamics in churches. Every church has ordinary, saintly but flawed people."

The fiction flows from his own experiences, but the people are compilations of traits of people, not specific people, he said.

**Gordon taught journalism**, not fiction, but said principles of good writing are true for all writing. They also include respect and

consideration for the reader, and writing with conciseness, clarity and correctness, including spelling and grammar.

"By being considerate, I mean helping readers understand what a chemist, civil engineer or other specialist may be saying by interpreting their big words," he said.

**Gordon left South Africa** in 1979 to complete a doctoral degree in 1983 at Indiana University. In 1980, he married Sue, who had worked with the South Africa Council of Churches and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. She completed a master's in ethnomusicology also at Indiana University and came to Whitworth, where she later worked with programs sending students abroad and receiving international students. Sue retired in 2017.

Gordon was born in 1949, a year after apartheid started as the official government system of separating South Africa's racial groups, although it had been the unofficial system before then.

**After completing his studies** in Indiana and unable to find work in South Africa, he accepted teaching at Whitworth, thinking they would be there five years.

Now, while he and Sue are U.S. citizens, they consider themselves bi-cultural. Their children are American, but also feel ties to South Africa.

For many years, Gordon gave informational talks, mainly through the Humanities Washington Organization to help people in the state understand South Africa.

**While he had been hopeful** about the potential for South Africa when the African National Congress brought black rule, he has been disappointed that the President Jacob Zuma administration "systematically and ruthlessly curbed that potential because of the rampant corruption

that afflicted the country."

Zuma resigned the day in February that the Jacksons arrived for their most recent visit.

They hope the new President, Cyril Ramaphosa, will bring in new policies.

"**We can learn lessons** from South Africa's leadership spiraling down when a popular, but corrupt leader ruled. I blame the government for tolerating him so long and for so many selling their souls for power and greed," he said.

On the current political situation in the United States, Gordon believes that "the independent media, independent courts and freedom of expression of the United States are its best hope for surviving the Trump era."

**To that end, he compiled** an anthology of quotations he published as an e-book just before the President's inauguration last year. It's titled, "Assuring Alexis: 306 Quotes of Encouragement and Hope for Withstanding the Trump Era." The number 306 refers to how many electoral votes he won, Gordon said.

Stressing the importance of a free press in a democracy, he cites French philosopher Albert Camus who said: "A free press can be either good or bad, but without freedom it can't be anything but bad."

Gordon added that "the U.S. can have good government or bad, but without free expression it can be nothing but bad."

"**Many people today grumble**, gripe and express disdain for mainstream media, but what do they propose as an alternative? Do they want the government to step in and control the media? Which government? The govern-

ment of their own party, or that of the opposite political party?" Gordon asked.

In South Africa, he said there was much opposition to Zuma, but it was stifled because ownership of the press was concentrated in the ruling party.

"**There is much work to do** everywhere," Gordon said.

One way he and Sue address concerns for people and the society, as well as connect internationally, is by volunteering.

They are now active in ministries at Covenant United Methodist Church, which they have attended for three years.

Twelve years ago, they began volunteering Monday evenings at the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery—playing with children or just holding babies. They can share in providing safety and unconditional love for children, while supporting families' efforts to strengthen their homes to build a healthier community.

Now he also volunteers with Partnering for Progress, a Spokane nonprofit that helps ensure access to health care, education, nutrition, sanitation, clean water and economic development for people living in a developing region in Kenya.

For information, email gjackson@whitworth.edu.

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# Realtor finds ways to invite people to learn about domestic violence

By Kaye Hult

As a Coeur d'Alene realtor with a passion for eradicating domestic abuse, Diane DuBos may unobtrusively leave a Safe Passage Violence Prevention Center pen on the table of a house she is showing.

It simply has the center's name and a phone number.

The center is a place an abuse victim can go for help.

**Diane's focus is to connect** people to resources that show them how to help without making things worse.

"Abuse happens. If we're not paying attention, we allow it to continue," she said.

"In 1998, a friend showed up on my front porch battered and abused. Her two children were with her," she recalled. "I didn't know what to do. I wasn't helpful. If I had known more, I would have been a much better resource to help her get to a better place."

**Diane looks for opportunities** to make a difference. Since she moved to Coeur d'Alene in 2007, she has been involved in several projects.

She believes the public needs to be educated about family violence. In 2013, she coordinated a forum at Christ the King Lutheran Church, called Stop the Violence. She showed a video documentary, "Sin by Silence," to the 20 attendees.

The video is about women in a California prison who had killed their husbands. They wrote to the California legislature and received support from the state government to create a program in the prison to help women recover from the abuse they experienced. The women also created a program in the school system to help young girls avoid falling into abusive situations.

At the end of the video, speakers from Safe Passage, the Post Falls Victim Services Unit and ARMS (Abuse Recovery Ministry and Services) in Spokane each spoke for 15 minutes about resources the agencies offered and then answered questions.

**Last summer, Diane set up** two forums at Christ the King Church. At each, a different agency made a presentation. She designed the forums for people who have not experienced abuse, and do not understand family violence or why victims may stay with their abusers. Few attended.

"We tend to focus on the victim rather than the perpetrator," she said. "I believe education can prevent heartache."

"In 2004, my daughter was in an abusive relationship," she continued.

Diane brought her home. That didn't help. She went back. Diane sought resources to help someone in those circumstances.

After three months, her daughter was ready to leave for good.



Diane DuBos helps her church learn about abuse.

"I came to better understand the process," she said. "I had tried to control her, which made me no better than her abuser."

**"Victims need to be the ones** to make the decisions. Otherwise, it doesn't work. When they make their own decisions, they begin to trust their decisions," Diane explained.

Ever since, she has kept her eyes and ears open to see what opportunities there might be to raise awareness.

Christ the King Church partners with her on community-positive events.

**"The point of my faith is to go** out and live it," she said. "That's what we're taught. Christ the King partners with many in the congregation who identify and meet needs in our community."

"Because of my girlfriend and my daughter, I think domestic violence awareness is important," she said. "When I see an opportunity to bring awareness, I try to do what I can. I want to try to prevent abuse for the next generation."

"If you saw someone fall in a hole, you'd help them out," she said. "Wouldn't you then try to protect others from falling in?"

If someone came to her wanting to set up a domestic violence education program, she would help.

**Diane grew up** in Eureka, Calif., which she described as a redwood forest that ends at the ocean, beautiful aesthetically, but with many problems. Drug cartels and the occult have become strong there. She experienced it as a dark place.

After graduating from high school in 1977, she began college, but then married the wrong man, had a daughter and divorced.

In 1984, she moved to the Sacramento area where she worked in a medical lab. From there, she went to Ukiah, Calif.

to work in the highway patrol office. She lived and worked in different places in California for the highway patrol, the forestry department and the transportation department.

Twenty-nine years ago, Diane married Tom who, when he proposed, included adopting her daughter.

Since she received her realtor's license in 1994, she has worked in and out of real estate in California, Washington and Idaho.

**After Diane moved to** Vancouver, Wash., in 2001, she volunteered in a soup kitchen. Twenty people in a church in a working-class neighborhood started it in February 2002. She was a host in the dining room.

"It changed my life," she said. They began with Friday night dinners. Those who came received a full meal prepared by a professional chef.

A program with a speaker followed. Rotating over a six-week period, speakers were pastors and people giving personal testimonies or telling of community resources, medical care or other needs.

Diane talked about music. She took songs people know—primarily popular songs or classic rock—and used the lyrics to explain faith in a language that was easily understood.

"There's much theology in music," she said. "It was a good connection point."

Clients were people hungry for both food and the Gospel. Some had mental health, or drug and alcohol issues.

When she left in 2007, the soup kitchen fed more than 300 people. They would not usually attend church on Sunday mornings, but if asked, they identified that church as their church home.

The program grew to provide other services, including a food bank, and lunches five days a

week in partnership with the Veterans Administration.

**"When you come into faith** and understand you've been so loved, you can't help but want to share that with other people," she said. "There's a ton of hope here to offer to hurting people. I never know what that help will be until I get into the middle of it."

She came across author John Fischer telling of someone going to AA meetings. When he was late, they always stopped the meeting and greeted him, knowing he almost didn't make it, but when he came late to church, people scowled.

Diane had left church during high school. Later while living in Ukiah as a single mother with a child, she walked into a

church for the first time in more than a decade, and found the congregation unwelcoming.

"So I greet people when they come to church, especially if they are running late," she said.

**"We're all broken** in many different ways. We're just trying to do the best we can with what we have. We're a collection of broken hearts and shattered pieces. When the parts are put together, it makes a beautiful mosaic," Diane said.

"We're confronted with situations every day where we can choose to help or harm," she reflected. "I don't always get it right, but I try to choose to help."

For information, call 208-449-2224 or email dianedubos@gmail.com.

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## Earth Day commitment, actions needed every day now more than ever

What happened to the family-friendly, resource-sharing, community celebration of Earth Day in Spokane? It went diffuse with river cleanup events, two tree plantings, a neighborhood gathering, a documentary on animal agriculture, a music festival, a grocery-store tree give-away, petition signing at Gonzaga and some other events but no big educational event downtown or in Riverfront Park.

What happened is important, because in these times the earth-friendly, earth-protecting, clean-air, alternative-energy, clean-water, climate-change voices, advocates and efforts and awareness are vital. People committed shared ideas to protect the earth and focused on the need for Earth Day to be every day.

National parks, national monuments, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Climate Change Accord are being undermined. It feels like a time of struggle for the environmental movement, but Amanda

Parrish, watershed program director at The Lands Council, said that in times of political despair like now it's important to remember progress has been made decade after decade. While we are still dealing with poor water quality in the Spokane River and forest practices can improve, there has been progress.

"We have come a long way. I'm hopeful," she said. "The Spokane River is cleaner, and has fewer metals and pollutants. National forests no longer allow clear cutting."

Also a sign of hope for her is The Lands Council's work in partnership with high school students, taking groups on field trips and for summer hikes, involving people in planting trees.

In the past The Lands Council has been the hub of planning a big educational fair with a committee of volunteers. Now instead of partnering with Spokane Riverkeeper, the Spokane River Forum, Inland Northwest Lands Conservancy, the Sierra Club and others, much work and partnering

continues year round.

Mike Petersen, executive director of The Lands Council, had a broken leg so he sat at a table by Lake Arthur at Gonzaga University with folks from 350.org, offering two petitions: 1) to have the City of Spokane's electricity come from 100 percent renewable resources and 2) for Avista to phase out their share of the Colstrip coal-fired plant in Montana.

Mike is optimistic that Avista being bought by Hydro One in Canada will speed the closing of that plant and the move to more renewable energy. In fact, he expects that Spokane residents can have 100 percent of their electricity from renewable sources in 15 to 20 years. He said Hydro One has a record for using renewable energy, and he applauded Avista establishing the largest solar array in the state near Lind.

He also pointed to the City of Spokane establishing swales or storm water gardens where polluted storm water can flow. It can be filtered, trapping lead and zinc, not

treating it. Hydrocarbons sitting in the soil may be broken down by microorganisms. Mike also told of students at North Central High School's lab studying forest fungi, which break down wood in forests, being used to break down hydrocarbons and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). Their testing continues.

Chris Bachman, wildlife program director, reported on work to not only recover the wolf population but also to encourage ranchers in Northeast Washington to modify grazing practices on public lands so their cattle have fewer encounters with wolves. He has started the Inland Northwest Wildlife and Agricultural Cooperative to support rural communities in reducing conflict of predators with farm animals.

These are but a few ways Earth Day is every day. We need to protect our air, land and water. We need to recycle, conserve energy, and plant gardens and trees. We need to be stewards of earth.

Mary Stamp - editor

## Sisters stand with the youth in the streets to challenge gun violence

Adults nationwide have wrung our hands, mourned and offered prayers and condolences as community after community has been stunned by gun violence on our streets, in public gathering places and even in our schools. Now, in the wake of the Feb. 14 shooting deaths of 14 students and three staff members at Marjory Stoneman High School in Parkland, Florida, the children are demanding that we do more to keep them safe.

Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, whose mission is to serve people who are poor and vulnerable, hear their cry, are listening, and stand with them. Sisters of Saint Dominic of Tacoma, whose mission is social justice and care of creation,

are doing the same.

We are members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), which has noted that this is a critical issue not just in Parkland, but in Orlando, Las Vegas, San Bernardino, Charleston, Newtown, Columbine, Sutherland Springs and countless other cities and towns across the nation.

The proliferation of guns and the pervasive culture of violence must finally be addressed by our elected officials. Guns are linked to roughly 33,000 deaths in the United States per year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; about two-thirds of them are suicides.

We concur with the admonition from the

Leadership Conference of Women Religious: "There is much to mourn, but mourning is not enough. Prayers and condolences are not enough. The killing must stop. It is well past time that we enacted sensible gun violence prevention legislation. This is not about protecting the Second Amendment. It is about protecting the most precious resource we have, the gift of life."

We are calling for an open and respectful dialogue in our communities, our states and in Congress about effective gun control legislation that promotes the common good and public safety, and that promotes respect for life. The time is now to enact common-sense legislation that:

- Requires universal background checks

and mandatory waiting periods for all gun purchases;

- Bans civilian ownership of high-capacity weapons and magazines, and
- Makes gun trafficking a federal crime.

LCWR members were among those standing beside the children in the "March for Our Lives" on March 24 in Washington, D.C., and in simultaneous marches in local communities.

We will walk with you as together we seek to put an end to violence and follow the path of peace.

Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Tacoma  
Guest editorial



## Candles remind of genocides, ethical journalists honored, leadership needs

The candle-lighting ceremony during the recent Yom HaShoah observance commemorating the Holocaust for the first time recognized the prolonged genocide against the language, land, lives and culture of the Native Americans across the United States and in this region.

LaRae Wiley, director of the Salish School of Spokane, lit the candle on behalf of all victims and survivors of that genocide. The Salish School was recognized as working to reverse the damage done and to preserve the language through immersion in the Salish language.

"As with all genocides that continue in the world today," said Hershel Zellman, who is on the planning committee, "Never Again! seems to be a dream."

Others lighting candles were survivors Carla Peperzak and Cora der Koorkanian; second generation, Mary Noble in memory of destroyed communities; third generation, Neal Schindler in memory of murdered children; Second Lieutenant Antony Vorobyov of Fairchild Air Force Base in memory of ghetto fighters and Jewish members of the armed forces; Jackson Lino of World Relief Spokane representing the righteous among the nations, and 10 members of the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project who recently visited Israel.

Each year, Yom HaShoah in Spokane is the occasion for the Eva Lassman Memorial Creative Writing Contest and an Art Contest. Both are for middle school and high school students to encourage their creating art or writing about the theme for the year. This year, the theme was "Hate Speech: Prelude to Genocide."

The contest is a means to encourage edu-

cation and learning about the Holocaust as the number of survivors who can tell their experiences first hand diminishes. The contest is named for Holocaust survivor Eva Lassman who spent many years educating students by sharing her story. Essays and art of contest winners—pictured above—are available at spokesman.com.

Under the theme, "Honoring Ethical Journalism," the 2018 Winter Waters honored three retired journalists—environmental writer Julie Titone, outdoor writer Rich Landers and investigative journalist Karen Dorn Steele—who contributed to our understanding of the environmental issues in the Inland Northwest.

In the process they honored fact-based journalism as essential to protecting waters, forests, wildlife habitats and cleaning up pollution in the Upper Columbia River Basin.

Julie covered threats to the region's waters and opportunities to engage in decisions to sustain and protect rivers and forests. She gave voice to the voiceless, including wildlife, rivers and tribes struggling with a legacy of mining and smelting pollution. In a time of historic transition and the consequent conflict over water and forests, her reporting for the Columbia River Basin can best be described as "healing journalism": respectful written dialogue allowing people to better understand issues and each other that empowered the regional community to recognize the finite limits of water and forests.

Rich brought stories of the rivers, special places and outdoor pursuits of the Columbia Basin. Conservation was a thread wo-

ven through his articles and photos. He was instrumental in the Upper Columbia River region in helping bring together hunters, anglers, outdoor recreation enthusiasts and environmentalists to recognize their common interest in protecting clean, flowing rivers and habitat for fish and wildlife.

Karen opened our eyes to the threats of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, one of the world's most polluted places and also a place of historic importance. Radioactive discharges into the air and groundwater have profound consequences, threatening the Columbia River region.

Her reporting connected us with the lives of our neighbors terribly impacted by deliberate decisions to pollute the air, land and water. More broadly, her reporting helped us better recognize the importance of justice and stewardship in decisions about our region.

In our region starting in the 1980s, we have been undergoing a series of historic transitions with the closing of frontiers—timber, mining and now water—brought on by exploitation and limits of the natural world. Critical reporting on the environment is essential to sustaining and restoring the rivers and economies that depend on them in the Columbia River Basin.

In the face of widespread corporate and foreign national meddling in our political discourse via social media and the proliferation of "fake news," it is vital that the honorable work of journalists dedicated to truth and the common good be recognized and applauded.

Today, as in every age, but particularly confronted as we are with the speed and quantity of what passes as news, we need

reporters who not only are able to write a winsome phrase and paint a convincing verbal picture of our wildlife and landscapes, but who also love the earth and seek to support and honor its intricate web of life.

The work of these three journalists has contributed to a just and intelligent public expectation of what is acceptable in a human-nature ethic. They have held public and private officials to higher standards and perhaps most importantly, these journalists are a continuing example for others in the face of attacks on journalism and the environment.

Interviews of the journalists are at <http://www.celp.org/programs/voices-for-water/>.

John Osborn of the Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Upper Columbia River Group of the Sierra Club

One definition of leadership suggests that "leadership is the interface between people and program. As a computer buff, I like the word "interface." That's the part of a computer system, both in software and hardware, that gets things communicating and working. In the church, the leadership interface is experienced in the movement of the Holy Spirit leading us through times of change. It is experienced in leaders who have the ability to sense where people are being led to grow. Leaders are people who know where the energy is building up, who can visualize and verbalize who and what we can be as God's people, here in this place at this time, and they see what steps we can take to reach these goals.

The Rev. Dale Cockrum, Audubon Park United Methodist



# Calendar of Events

- To May 19** • **Life and Limb:** The Toll of the Civil War Exhibit, North Spokane Library, 44 E. Hawthorne, 895-8350, email [stewart@sclcd.org](mailto:stewart@sclcd.org)
- To May 20** • **"Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition,"** Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, 2316 W. First, 456-3931, [northwestmuseum.org](http://northwestmuseum.org)
- To May 25** • **"See Me Spokane,"** Spokane Women Together Exhibit- 95 images with words of 26 Spokane and refugee women, photos by Rick Singer and Hilary Hart, Spokane Public Library, 906 W. Main, 3rd Floor, [spokanelibrary.org](http://spokanelibrary.org)
- May 1** • **May Day March** for Immigration Reform, Riverfront Park, 4 to 6 p.m., 838-7870
- May 2** • **"Everyday People: Building Beyond the Moment,"** Spokane Valley Event Center, 10514 E. Sprague, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 838-7870, [pjals@pjals.org](mailto:pjals@pjals.org)
- **"What Price Culture? Destruction and Cultural Preservation in Afghanistan since 2001,"** Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, 2316 W. First Ave., [northwestmuseum.org](http://northwestmuseum.org)
- May 3** • **Hispanic/Latino Graduate** and Young Scholar Recognition, The Lair, Spokane Community College, 1810 N. Greene St., 5 to 8:30 p.m., 979-8590, [hbpaspokane.net](http://hbpaspokane.net)
- **Café Affogato Community Day** Benefitting PJALS, 19 W. Main, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- May 3, 17** • **Spokane Dances of Universal Peace**, Unity Spiritual Center Spokane, 2900 S. Bernard, 7 to 9 p.m., 534-4650, [bkfergin@msn.com](mailto:bkfergin@msn.com)
- May 4** • **2018 Auction "Under the Big Top,"** dinner and fundraiser for Valleyfest, CenterPlace Regional Event Center, 2426 N Discovery Pl., 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., 922-3299, [info@valleyfest.org](mailto:info@valleyfest.org)
- May 5** • **Golden Eagle's Dollar Auction**, Salish School of Spokane Fundraiser, The Philanthropy Center, 1020 W. Riverside, noon to 3 p.m., 325-2018, [info@salishschoolspokane.org](mailto:info@salishschoolspokane.org)
- **"Spirituality, Serpents and Social Media,"** Julia Duin, journalist, Spokane FAVS, Hemmingson Center, Room 314, Gonzaga, 2 p.m., 313-6942, [tracysimmons@spokanefav.com](mailto:tracysimmons@spokanefav.com)
- **Family Fun Fair** Coeur d'Alene, Silver Lake Mall, noon to 4 p.m.
- May 5, 19** • **Nonviolent Moral Fusion** Direct Action Training, [pjals.org/ppc](http://pjals.org/ppc)
- May 6** • **Lilac Bloomsday Run**, downtown Spokane, 9 a.m., [bloomsdayrun.org](http://bloomsdayrun.org)
- **"Run for Her Life,"** Conscious Connection Foundations teams raise funds for the Power of 5 to educate Nepali girls, [consciousconnectionsfoundation.org](http://consciousconnectionsfoundation.org)
- **Yakima Valley Summit**, Faith Action Network at New Harvest Fellowship United Methodist, Toppenish, 2 to 4 p.m., [fan@fanwa.org](mailto:fan@fanwa.org)
- May 7-9** • **Children's Justice Conference**, "Shining the Light on Children," Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 866-363-4276, [jason@mwcevents.com](mailto:jason@mwcevents.com)
- May 8** • **Unity in the Community** Committee, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 5:30 p.m., [nwunity.org](http://nwunity.org)
- **Unaccompanied Refugee Minor** Informational Night, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, 210 W. Sprague Ave., 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., 343-5018, [lcsnw.org](http://lcsnw.org)
- **Spokane Falls Community College** International Film Festival, "Youth," (2017 from China, in Mandarin), The Garland Theater, 924 W. Garland Ave., 7:15 p.m.
- May 9** • **Pride Parade & Rainbow Festival** meeting, [outspokane.org](http://outspokane.org)
- May 10** • **Silent Marian Day of Prayer**, "Mary, A Woman for Our Times," Fr. Max Oliva SJ, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 448-1224 ext. 100, [kparker@ihrc.net](mailto:kparker@ihrc.net)
- **Coeur d'Alene Dances of Universal Peace**, The Harding Center, 15th & Wallace, Coeur d'Alene, 7 to 9 p.m., 534-4650, [bkfergin@msn.com](mailto:bkfergin@msn.com)
- May 11** • **"Not Forgotten" Benefit Concert** for World Relief, St. John's Cathedral, 127 e. 12th Ave, 7 p.m., 484-9829
- **"Glow for Hunger,"** Northwest Harvest and Negative Split 1 mile kid's glow run, Joe Albi Stadium, 4918 W. Everett, 7 p.m., [nsplit.com/glowforhunger-2/](http://nsplit.com/glowforhunger-2/)
- May 12** • **Spokane Farmers' Market** opens, Fifth & Browne
- **Junior Lilac Parade**, Downtown Spokane, 10 a.m., [spokaneilacfestival.org](http://spokaneilacfestival.org)
- **Family Fun Fair Expo**, River Park Square and Red Wagon at Riverfront Park, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 928-9664, [thefamilyguide.org](http://thefamilyguide.org)
- **Family Fun Fair Spokane**, Riverfront Park and River Park Square Mall, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- May 13** • **Mother's Day Champagne Brunch**, Benefit for Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 448-1224, [ihrc.net](http://ihrc.net)
- **Poor People's Campaign:** 40 Days of Action begin, 838-7870, [pjals.org](http://pjals.org)
- May 13-18** • **Musicfest Northwest**, Gonzaga University, 624-2980, [spokaneago.org](http://spokaneago.org)
- May 14, 21, 28** • **Poor People's Campaign** - Monday Action in Olympia, 838-7870
- May 15** • **Police Ombudsman Commission Meeting**, City Council Chambers 5:30 p.m.
- **"Esteban,"** SFCC Film Festival, Garland Theater, 924 W. Garland, 7:15 p.m.
- May 16** • **"Rise for Justice,"** Center for Justice Fundraiser Breakfast, Gonzaga's Hemmingson Center, 7:30 to 8:50 a.m., 835-5211, [latisha@cfjustice.org](mailto:latisha@cfjustice.org)
- May 17** • **Peace and Justice Action Committee**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- **Meals on Wheels Spokane Benefit**, Barrister Winery, 1213 Railway Ave., 6:30 to 10 p.m.
- **Baha'i Fireside Discussions**, Spokane Valley Library, 12004 E. Main, 7 p.m., [sclcd.org](http://sclcd.org)
- May 18** • **Catholic Charities Gala**, Davenport Grand, 5:30 p.m., [cceasternwa.org](http://cceasternwa.org)
- May 18-19** • **Spirit of the Eagle Pow Wow**, 50th Anniversary of the American Indian Studies Program, Reese Court Pavillion, Eastern Washington University, Cheney, grand entry 7 p.m. Friday, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m., Saturday, [aliciafinch95@gmail.com](mailto:aliciafinch95@gmail.com)
- May 19** • **80th Spokane Lilac and Armed Forces Torchlight Parade**, downtown Spokane, 7:45 p.m., [spokaneilacfestival.org](http://spokaneilacfestival.org)
- May 18-20** • **"A Woman's Call to Spirituality: Emerging Faith in Our Daily Walk,"** Spirit Center, Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, Idaho, 208-962-2000
- May 21** • **NAACP Spokane** General Membership Meeting, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 7 p.m., [spokanenaacp@gmail.com](mailto:spokanenaacp@gmail.com)
- May 22** • **Women Helping Women Fund** Benefit Luncheon, Tererai Trent of Zimbabwe, author of Awakened Woman, Spokane Convention Center, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., [shsfspokane.org](http://shsfspokane.org)
- May 24** • **KHQ/Worksource Job Fair**, Spokane Convention Center, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- May 26** • **Spokane Tribal History and Science Series**, Mobius Science Center, 332 N. Post St., 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 321-7173, [mobiusspokane.org](http://mobiusspokane.org), 4th Saturdays to July 28
- May 27-29** • **Memorial Day Celebrations**, Hennessey, 328-2600
- May 31** • **Nonviolent De-escalation Training**, specifics for Pride Parade and Rainbow Festival, 25 W. Main 3rd floor, 838-7870
- June 1-3** • **ArtFest**, Coeur d'Alene Park in Brown's Addition, MAC, 456-3931, [northwestmuseum.org](http://northwestmuseum.org)
- **Weekend Serenity Retreat**, "Spiritual Awakening: Spending a Weekend with the Steps," Fr. Philip Garcia, OFM, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6910 S. Ben Blurr Rd, 448-1224 ext. 100, [kparker@ihrc.net](mailto:kparker@ihrc.net)
- June 3** • **Faith Action Network** Spring Summit, All Saints Lutheran, 314 S. Spruce, 3 to 5 p.m., 206-625-9790, [fanwa.org](http://fanwa.org)
- June 6** • **Fig Tree Mailing & Distribution**, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th Ave., 9 a.m., 535-1813
- June 7** • **Fig Tree Annual Meeting**, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., noon lunch, 1-3 Board, 535-1813

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**May 18-20 ~ A Woman's Call to Spirituality: Emerging Faith in Our Daily Walk** with Dr. Jeanette von Herrmann, OSB

at Spirit Center at the Monastery of St. Gertrude

**June 4-6 ~ Zentangle: Creating Art and Wellbeing** with Sara Zientek

**July 27-29 ~ Accentuate the Positive: A Mixed Media Art Retreat** with Keli Sim DeRitis

*Spirit Center*

Spirit Center retreats at the Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, ID 208-962-2000, [www.Spirit-Center.org](http://www.Spirit-Center.org)

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# Volunteers keep Sunday Lunch program going at St. Ann's Parish

By Mark Kinney  
Fig Tree Writer

Preparing Sunday lunch for more than 100 guests is a challenge in its own right but, for Spike Cunningham, Wes Johnson and other volunteers of the St. Ann's Neighborhood Sunday Lunch Program, the challenge is compounded by creating the meal from whatever donated ingredients are available from local sources.

The Sunday Lunch program started in 1982 as a cooperative Lenten season venture between St. Ann's Catholic Church, Grace Lutheran Church and Pacific Alliance Church.

It is held in the St. Ann's Catholic Church Parish Hall, one of Spokane's oldest Catholic churches, and serves an average of 100 weekly guests, according to Spike who coordinates the program with Wes, a charter program volunteer. Spike has helped since 1983.

"It was intended to end after Easter dinner," Spike said, "but those that were involved enjoyed it and saw the benefit of continuing the program, so by its own energy, it carried on."

The program was funded initially by cooperating churches but now receives support from Second Harvest, which provides some of the food.

It also receives support from The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), a USDA program, which distributes excess food commodities to feeding programs like the Sunday Lunch.

Spike said he and Wes are able to request support from TEFAP on a quarterly basis, which provides some staple items that would otherwise be scarce.

Eight groups rotate hosting the Sunday Lunch.

"We have had great stability over the years," he said.

Several groups have been serving since the program's inception, and the newest group, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, has been serving for about eight years.

Other currently serving groups include St. Ann's, Spokane Valley United Methodist Church, Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, Moran Prairie Methodist, Providence Associates, St. Peter Catholic Church



Wes Johnson and Spike Cunningham coordinate the lunches.

and families living on Altamont Circle.

Spike said the program strives to provide a safe and welcoming environment for its guests. Guests may enter the parish hall immediately after St. Ann's service to enjoy coffee and donuts which the church provides.

"People are certainly there for the food," he said, "but they are also there for the socialization and a sense of community."

One of the hallmarks of the program and reasons for its longevity has been its simplicity and a constant focus on serving the needs of the guests, he added.

Program coordinators meet periodically to discuss finances, coordinate schedules and plan special holiday meals.

"Other than that, everything usually takes care of itself. There is an absolute minimum of bureaucracy," he said.

Spike said a complete meal usually consists of salad, bread, a protein-based entrée, vegetables, fruit and dessert items along with coffee and other beverages when available. He said the program pays a service fee to belong to Second Harvest, but the average cost of the food for each meal is less than \$30 beyond the donated food.

Wes, who leads the Westminster UCC group, said he always prepares enough food so guests can take a portion home.

"I try to never run short of food," he said. "They appreci-

ate the chance to take something home to others who could not come or possibly for their next meal."

The group prepares holiday meals with menus that include roast turkey for Thanksgiving, roast beef at Christmas and ham at Easter.

"We try to provide a meal like they might have at a nice restaurant," Spike said. The program is a separate non-profit from the church and operates on a \$6,000-a-year budget for program expenses beyond food. It receives support from various civic groups, churches and businesses.

St. Ann's Parish hall kitchen was renovated by the church in 2015 and meets state commercial kitchen requirements, including having a commercial dishwasher. The program recently purchased a new commercial refrigerator and is currently seeking funds to buy a new commercial freezer to store donated food items.

Wes, a retired social worker,

deacon at Westminster and active in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America administration over the years, said guests often express their gratitude for the meal by assisting with cleanup afterward.

"They want to show their appreciation by helping," he said. "Most of us learned that as youngsters, and it stays with us, regardless of our situation."

Spike, former social services coordinator for subsidized housing for the elderly at Catholic Charities, has served 30 years on the board for Centerpoint, which provides social recreational activities for group home residents. He was executive director of Centerpoint for six years.

He also volunteers at the Monastery of St. Gertrude's Spirit Center and Catholic Charities Furniture Bank.

Although the program is currently stable, Spike sees a need bring others into leadership roles in preparation for a transition. "The need will not go away," he said, "so the challenge will be to pass it on to new leadership."

Wes countered by saying that he will likely be carried out of the kitchen feet first.

"It's important for me to be active, I don't want to sit around and vegetate. I want to be around people and this allows me to do that," he said. Spike and Wes enjoy working together while serving others. "We value each other's contribution," Spike said, "and serving others helps us to better appreciate the blessings we have."

For information, call 838-3363 or email janspike@msn.com.

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