

35TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest
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‘Every child needs dreams, opportunities’

By Catherine Ferguson, SNJM

Amber Waldref became the director of the Zone Project to empower Northeast Spokane children, youth and families in December 2017. In so doing, her life’s journey brought her full circle back to her roots.

Amber grew up in the 99207 postal zone, a neighborhood of working class families.

From her early days, she saw herself on a journey to reach her full potential.

“It meant even if a working class or poor child had dreams, the tight community helped him or her see and dream,” she said.

Amber believes every child needs dreams and opportunities to reach his/her full potential.

The Zone Project vision is for all children to be safe and nurtured, residents to be engaged, and families to have what they need to thrive, she said.

It seeks to empower children, youth and families to reach their potential by building on assets, sharing resources, and collaborating across multiple organizations and with residents in a “collective impact” model.

The Project focuses efforts on Northeast neighborhoods and schools that feed to Shaw and Garry



Amber Waldref returns to serve her neighborhood. Photo by Catherine Ferguson SNJM

Middle Schools.

“Northeast Spokane is a diverse neighborhood with many assets, but also many challenges, where 39 percent of children and youth—5,000 of them—live in poverty, where 53 percent of incoming kindergarteners are not fully prepared for school, and where 26 percent of elementary school students are at risk of dropping out by sixth grade,” Amber said.

The Zone Project works holistically to improve housing, education, safety, health and economic stability, she said. It supports children and families in a multi-generational approach to health, safety, jobs and education in partnership with organizations, such as Spokane Public Schools, Gonzaga University, the Housing Authority and Spokane Regional Health District.

“The community’s vision is to support children, youth and adults ‘cradle to career,’ which cannot be carried out by any one organization or person but requires the whole community working together,” Amber said.

Her life journey demonstrates the power of a supportive family and community who affirmed her dreams as a child and empowered

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Pastors uplift appreciation for life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.

As host for the celebration service on Martin Luther King Jr.’s 90th birthday, the Rev. Ezra Kinlow of Holy Temple Church of God in Christ said the gathering celebrated what “we are able to appreciate in our lives as a result of King.”

The Rev. Walter Kendricks, pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church and president of the Spokane Ministers Fellowship, said King “was a great statesman, an eloquent leader and a civil rights leader.

“He gave his life so we could do something simple: sit on whatever

seat we want on a bus, sit at lunch counters, and earn an honest wage for an honest day’s work. He did not mind giving his life for the pursuit of justice—not preferential treatment, but justice,” said Walter, frustrated that in 2019, people have not figured out how to live together in harmony.

He read from Micah 6:8, “What does the Lord require of you?” and the answer “to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.”

Walter reminded that King said, “Injustice anywhere—in Mexico, Haiti, Africa, Canada

or the U.S.—is a threat to justice everywhere.”

The Rev. James Watkins of New Hope Baptist introduced the speaker, The Rev. Joe Wittwer, pastor of Life Center Foursquare Church, Spokane’s largest church. Two years ago, he heard Joe speak about “gracism” and knew he was reaching across racial lines to be friends with black pastors.

“Forty-five years ago, he was a hippie, but in 1978, he moved to Spokane and became pastor of the small Life Center Church, which has now grown to 5,000 members and has planted churches throughout Spokane,” said James, noting that the “elephant in the room” is that Joe is the first Caucasian brother to speak for the celebration service in 35 years.

Preaching on “Keep Moving!” Joe said the Gospel message is about reconciliation.

“God created everyone in God’s image, no matter their color, ethnicity, nationality, or language. Black lives matter. White lives matter. Syrian lives matter. El Salvadoran lives matter. God’s

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The Fig Tree celebrates 35th year at benefits

The Fig Tree will celebrate 35 years of publishing the monthly newspaper covering “faith in action” and “stories of people who make a difference” at its 2019 Benefit Lunch and Benefit Breakfast.

“35 Years of Informing, Inspiring, Involving” is the theme speakers will address during the event and in a video, which will be prepared by Nathan Slabaugh of Slabaugh Media. Speakers are people selected from among those interviewed during 2018 and 2019.

There are 27 hosts committed so far to fill tables for the Benefit Lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Friday, March 8, at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University. In addition, there are 30 hosts committed to invite people to tables for the Benefit Breakfast from 7 to 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 13, also at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga.

“Our goal remains to add up to five more hosts for each event,” said Mary Stamp, The Fig Tree co-founder and editor. “We will take time to celebrate the many people over the years whose work, sponsorship, advertising and volunteering have made this unique publication possible.”

The Fig Tree was co-founded by Mary and Holy Names Sister Bernadine Casey in 1984 through what was then the Spokane Christian Coalition to cover religion news in the region. In 2001, it became an independent nonprofit. Since 2006, it has also published the now 46-year-old Resource Directory to connect people with congregations and services.

For information or to RSVP, call 535-1813, email event@thefigtree.org, or visit thefigtree.org/donate.html.

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Pontifical Council, WCC update document

The annual meeting of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) and the World Council of Churches (WCC) was held in Rome from Jan. 10 to 11. At the meeting they updated the document titled "Education for Peace in a Multi-Religious World," the latest joint project between the two offices. Participants brainstormed and mapped out a plan for a future joint project.

The offices have been in collaborative engagement since 1977, and have completed some common interreligious projects, including "Interreligious Prayer" (1994); "Reflection on Interreligious Marriage" (1997), and "Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct" (2011).

Pleased with increasing mutual collaboration between the two offices over the years, both delegations reiterated their desire to continue their common engagement ecumenically, in the service of interreligious dialogue.

Forum on Modern Slavery held in Istanbul

At a Forum on Modern Slavery in Istanbul on Jan. 7, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew spoke on "Awareness, Action and Impact."

"After centuries of progress and advancement, we still live in a world where injustice and slavery continue to thrive, and where human dignity is exchanged for the sole purpose of greed, gain and profit," he said. "The Ecumenical Patriarchate is committed to learn, act and witness to eliminate this global abomination that traps millions of people in lives of suffering, injustice and humiliation."

The Jan. 5 to 8 forum convened experts and policy makers from international, governmental and non-governmental organizations, to consult with representatives of Orthodox Christian ministries of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It is the third such international gathering. Topics included human rights, legal framework, forced migration, human trafficking and grassroots action.

"Human trafficking is an issue driven by power and privilege. We must challenge the current power systems in our societies," said Perry Halkitis, dean of Rutgers School of Public Health.

"The declaration of the rights of the child is denied to so many children on the move because of their migration status," said V. Digidiki Lucero of Harvard School of Public Health.

"The end of violence requires the end of impunity. The end of impunity requires functioning public systems," said Abraham George, global director, Church Partnerships, International Justice Mission.

"Until you are in the human trafficking reality, you have no idea what life you are saving. The only question is: Not what others can do, but what can I do?" asked Savelia Curmiski, of NASHI, Canada.

Ultimately, silence and passive acceptance of the present situation is no longer possible or acceptable, Bartholomew concluded.

"Our love is not to be only for those whom we know, but also for the nameless, the unknown, those who suffer, especially those trapped in the web of slavery," he said. "We are called to fulfill an act of natural justice, as we liberate them from tyranny and exploitation."

Words are not enough, Bartholomew said. "Action is required," he urged. "Together with the sensitization of consciences, we must participate in concrete initiatives and actions."

WCC Assembly theme is 'Christ's love moves...'

The WCC Central Committee has decided on the theme for its 11th Assembly, to be held in Karlsruhe, Germany in 2021. "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity" will be the theme used in development of programs and other preparations.

The WCC Assembly Planning Committee recently met in Cyprus to develop building blocks for the assembly, which is held every eight years to review programs, set policies and elect leaders.

"The theme will help focus on the ecumenical movement as a movement of love, seeking to follow Christ and witness to Christ's love, expressed in the search for justice and peace, and unity based on that," commented WCC general secretary the Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, "The one human family needs love and needs to love to face our future together."

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Gonzaga hosts conference on hate studies

"Building Peace through Dialogue, Kindness and Forgiveness" is the theme for the fifth International Conference on Hate Studies, which will be held April 2 to 4, at Gonzaga University.

Sponsored by the Gonzaga Institute for Hate Studies, Kootenai County Task Force for Human Relations, Spokane County Human Rights Task Force and the Gonzaga Student Chapter of the Southern Poverty Law Center, the conference is an interdisciplinary academic forum on hate, related social problems, and ways to create just, inclusive communities.

The event gathers academics from around the world, journal-

ists, law enforcement, educators, representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, human rights experts, community organizers, activists and others to discuss hatred and ways to bring justice.

"We anticipate richly interdisciplinary, cross-sector participation from international, national and regional audiences," said Kristine Hoover, director of the institute.

"Lessons learned and plans that emerge will help educators, researchers, advocates and others analyze and combat many manifestations of hatred to lead to communities committed to peace, human rights and justice," she said.

Kristine said those in hate studies believe if hate is better understood, approaches to combat it can be testable theories, analyzed and improved to have real-world impact, creating models for changes in society, government, culture, and individual and communal lives.

The pre-conference is from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday, April 2. Opening sessions are from 6 to 8:30 p.m. The plenary and breakout sessions are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 3, and from 8:45 a.m. to 3 p.m., Thursday, April 4. There will be a banquet at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday.

For information, call 313-3665 or email hoover@gonzaga.edu.

Spokane FāVS plans interfaith discussion

SpokaneFāVS will hold a discussion on "The Future of Interfaith" at its first 2019 Coffee Talk at 10 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 2 at the organization's newly-gifted building on 5115 S. Freya.

Panelists will discuss the importance of inter-religious, spiritual and secular work in Spokane, what it looks like today and what it could be like in the future.

"With the division and rhetoric plaguing discourse in our nation, we want people to know how interfaith work can be a springboard to neighborly relations between people of various faiths,

opinions and cultures," said Cassandra Benefield, FāVS writer and volunteer.

Panelists are Scott Kinder-Pyle, pastor of Origin Church and FāVS columnist; Elizabeth Schindler, guest columnist and volunteer; Naghmana Ahmed-Sherazi, Ask-a-Muslim writer, and Gen Heywood, pastor of Veradale United Church of Christ and convener of Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience.

This gathering is at the soon-to-be home of Spokane's new Interfaith Community Center.

Origin Church donated their building and three-acre property

to SpokaneFāVS in January. Scott said they decided to give it to SpokaneFāVS because of the interfaith dialogue the website has established between Christians and non-Christians in the community. He wanted to provide a comfortable place for them to invite people of Jewish, Christian, Atheist, Agnostic, Humanist, Hindu, Muslim and other faith traditions to engage in dialogue.

The space will be for retreats, classes, weddings, worship services, coffee talks and other events.

For information, call 240-1830 or visit SpokaneFāVS.com.

Winter Waters will honor Kalispel Tribe

The 11th annual Winter Waters celebration of rivers, lakes and drinking water aquifers, and those who struggle to protect them will honor the Kalispel Tribe of Indians from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., Friday, March 1, at the Patsy Clark Mansion, 2208 W. 2nd Ave.

The tribe are being honored for stewardship of their ancestral homelands and waters.

The Kalispel homeland extended across 3.5 million acres from

what is now Plains, Mont., down the Clark Fork River, Priest and Pend Oreille Lakes, and down the Pend Oreille River into Canada.

The Kalispel Tribe has taken responsibility to speak for the waters and lands, protecting habitats for fish and wildlife. They have worked with Seattle City Power and Light in licensing Boundary Dam to protect and restore fisheries in the Pend Oreille watershed.

The event is hosted jointly by

the Upper Columbia River Group of the Sierra Club and the Center for Environmental Law and Policy, which recognize and honor individuals, tribes and organizations that contribute significantly to protecting and restoring the waters of the Upper Columbia River.

For information, call 270-6995, 954-5653 or 939-1290 or email waltsoe@gmail.com, john@johnroskelley.com or john@waterplanet.ws

Peace & Justice Action Conference is Feb. 23

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane's 10th Annual Peace and Justice Action Conference is from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 23, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Ft. Wright Dr.

Keynote Sami Alloy, lead researcher and organizer for the Western States Center, will address the theme, "Building Beyond the Moment: A Culture of Love and

Belonging." The center promotes progressive policy change and supports multi-issue coalitions.

The event opens with a reception and performances from 6 to 8:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 22.

Three sessions include workshops on what's fueling the rise of white nationalism, the impact of mass incarceration, the costs of war, immigration rights, fostering intersectionality in organizations,

single-payer health care, transforming peace and justice, faith over fear of Muslim neighbors, housing justice challenges, the story of an Afghan vet, families against bigotry, understanding gender, Smart Justice Spokane, building community, stopping a silicon smelter and challenging oppressive statements.

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

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Women's March in Spokane draws 3,000, speakers offer insights at rally

Before more than 3,000 joined in the 2019 Women's March from the Convention Center through Riverfront Park, speakers offered insights for those gathered.

Power 2 The Poetry poets **Bethany Montgomery** and Sabby Votino opened with the words: "Feminism isn't about women being better than men, it is supported on the base that women are just as good as them." read Bethany.

"Everyone deserves to be treated equal no matter what gender. The stereotypes are teaching girls



that they are less than and not equal to men..."

"I will accomplish my goals and be living proof that women can follow their dreams and do anything we put our minds to."

Naghmana Ahmed-Sherazi, an educator and scientist born in Karachi, Pakistan, came to Spokane in 2012 as a single mother and saw no one of her heritage at first. Now she finds community through involvement with the Spokane Islamic Center, Spokane Sisterhood, Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience, the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane and Spokane Faith



and Values.

She meets for potlucks with the Spokane Sisterhood—Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish and Christian women of different ethnicities.

"We connect around food," she said, "sharing our values and stories, educating each other so we stand up for each other's rights."

"When I became a citizen, I promised to respect the laws and to contribute," said Naghmana, commenting that the judge who swore her in among 36 people from 26 countries said: "Go and make the community better, be involved, run for office, become legislators."

She worked in 2018 to block Proposition 1, a proposal that would have allowed any city employee to ask anyone for their documents, and helped start the No Discrimination Spokane Campaign with the Hispanic Business and Professional Association, which along with the Asian Pacific Islanders and the NAACP, have adopted her, she said.

"Their issues are my issues. We stand together," she said.

Rachelle Strawther, director of leadership training and development at Gonzaga University, said

that as she accompanies women leaders on their journey at Gonzaga, she finds a common theme for many: self-doubt.

"Even women who are highly regarded have an internal monologue that they are not good, pretty or educated enough. Many



studies say that women have lower confidence than men," she said.

"Lack of confidence can make women feel they are not qualified to run for office. Imagine if we had more confidence. Self-doubt conditions us to say, 'You can't do that.' Research shows that while women may underestimate our abilities, men may overestimate their abilities," she said.

Rachelle suggested some ways women can build confidence:

- "When the internal monologue says 'I can't do it' or 'I'm not good enough,' refute it with counter evidence from your life, she said.

- When the monologue emerges, women can push through the self-doubt by focusing on the impact they want to have.

- Citing studies by a Harvard researcher, she suggested assuming the "strong powerful stance" with arms in the air or the "wonder woman stance" with a hand on the

hip to reduce stress just before a difficult task.

For information, email womenlead@gonzaga.edu.

Norma Heredia of NARAL, a feminist advocate of social and political rights, said five months ago her parents received their permanent legal resident cards.

Growing up, she felt her family was at risk, so she did not share about their status. She is also upset at how media portray people like



them as "illegal aliens," when her parents got up at 4 a.m. to pick apples, cherries and pears.

Today when she sees those fruits, she knows their hard work, sweat and tears to make an honorable living.

If they had been deported, Norma as the oldest would have had to care for her younger sisters.

Another taboo was talking to

her mother about sex. All her mother would say is "Don't do it." Her sex education came through her teen peers.

"It's important to work for reproductive rights. If we want fewer unwanted pregnancies, we need to teach sex education," said Norma, who does sex education in the Mexican community.

Danetta "DG" Garcia, an Air Force vet and civil rights advocate from California, now living at Liberty Lake, said, "We have talked about being vulnerable, women's rights, being raped outside the door, and men not caring about women, but men do stand up for women."



She called men in the room forward to say to the women there: "We've got your back!"

For information, check Women's March Spokane on Facebook.



February lectures at Whitworth look at racial justice, theology, science

Whitworth University's African American Heritage Month Lecture will be given by Austin Channing Brown, author and voice on racial justice, 7 to 9 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 5, at Weyerhaeuser Hall at Whitworth.

Austin is a new voice on racial justice and author of *I'm Still*

Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness.

She explores intersections of racial justice, faith and black womanhood. Her workshops include justice, pop culture, humor and truth-telling, celebrating blackness.

For information, call 777-3583 or email jroyal@whitworth.edu.

Jill Gill, history professor at Boise State University, will speak on "Idaho's Role in American Racism, Past and Present" at 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 21, at Eric Johnston Science Center at Whitworth.

In a 7 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 19

Whitworth lecture, Thomas Jay Oord, theologian, scholar and multidisciplinary studies scholar, will discuss "Ten Reasons Why the Science and Theology Dialogue Matters."

For information, call 777-1000.

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VOLUNTEER TO HOST A TABLE

Amber Waldref credits family with giving her tools to succeed

Continued from page 1
her to take advantage of opportunities that came her way.

Amber credits her family with giving her tools she needed to succeed. They imbued her with a sense of the importance of education.

While her family sometimes struggled economically, education helped her go beyond the reality of growing up in a poor neighborhood, where she attended elementary school. She then went to Gonzaga Prep, which provided both “a fine education” and a gateway to opportunities to live out the dreams her family and neighborhood fostered.

As valedictorian of a Jesuit high school, she received a full scholarship to Georgetown University with diverse students. Skills she gained at Gonzaga Prep helped her navigate in this world.

She worked hard to spend a year abroad in Madrid, Spain, through Georgetown’s program.

“This experience was a new window on the world. I experienced life as a foreigner. I learned to navigate the world in another language. This helped me relate to the non-native experience and live a piece of it,” Amber reflected.

After graduation, she continued her education through her work and began to fulfill part of her dream, which was “to give back.”

Peace Action, a small nonprofit in Washington, D.C., hired her as campus youth coordinator. This required her to travel around the United States, “giving back” as a speaker advising campus chapters, teaching members how to write press releases and recruiting students for meetings. She organized youth around issues they cared about.

Missing the Northwest, she moved to Seattle as field director on Hanford cleanup for the Heart of America Northwest. Amber went from organizing youth to organiz-

ing adults on cleanup, which was the largest outside of Chernobyl.

“I learned about the complex issues related to the Clean Water Act, nuclear site cleanup and the care of the Columbia River,” she said.

Seeking to learn more, she earned a master’s degree in environment and community at Antioch University in Seattle.

Then her journey came full circle back to Spokane.

Amber held several positions at The Lands Council, including Water Watch coordinator. She learned that the Spokane River contains pollutants from years of mining upstream. Eating its fish could cause serious illnesses.

“I identified people in the community and trained them to teach the safe way to cook fish before eating it, because many people native to Spokane and immigrants regularly eat fish,” Amber said.

To prepare fish more safely, she taught health workers that people need to filet the fish and remove the fat where PCBs and other toxins settle.

“One fun thing I did there was work with the Russian and Ukrainian community,” she said. “I filmed a video at Comcast. My words were translated into Russian.”

About this time, Amber married. She and her husband, Tom Flanagan, chose to live in the Logan neighborhood, in the 99207 zip code. She had her first child, Karolina.

Through a close friend, she became involved in organizing to make the neighborhood a safe place. One day she talked with her friend about whom to tap to run for Spokane City Council from their neighborhood.

“It was a perfect time. There was an open seat, so a candidate wouldn’t run against an incumbent. We raised names but none could run,” she said. “I thought – I guess

I could run.”

Her friend, who was on the planning commission and knew what was required, jumped on the idea, offering to support her. As Amber tested the water in the next months, she found her parents, friends and a whole village would support her.

“When I do something I am in it to win,” she said.

Win she did and, at the time, was the youngest woman to be elected to the City Council. When she had her second daughter, Nora, she became the first woman to have a baby while serving on City Council. Because of her experience and that of other women leaders, City Hall now has a room for breastfeeding.

“Through City Council, I met professionals and developed new skills. I brought my baby to meetings. One day, at a Finance Committee meeting in City Hall, the chair said the meeting was the calmest ever,” she said.

During two terms, Amber worked to create thriving neighborhoods and for better public transportation and pedestrian safety.

Rather than waiting for complaints, which meant she would hear only from the most persistent, she went out in the neighborhoods to learn the needs.

Based on what she learned, she chose items she promoted in her eight years on City Council, including protecting the Spokane River, improving housing quality and revitalizing neighborhoods. She left confident she was leaving the city in a good place in finances, vision and leadership for the future.

In Amber’s second term, under the leadership of Andre Wicks, then the assistant principal of Shaw Middle School, she consulted on developing a Promise Zone proposal for Northeast Spokane neighborhoods, modeled on the Harlem Children’s Zone.

That zone is a nonprofit bringing together partners to support low-income children and families in Harlem, providing free support in parenting workshops, a pre-school program, three charter schools, and

child-oriented health programs for thousands of children and families.

Andre and Amber believed the Northeast neighborhoods, especially Hillyard, met criteria for a Promise Zone because of the poverty, low educational achievement and high crime rates. Amber was part of a team of more than 100 organizations, residents and school partners who worked for more than a year to develop a proposal for wraparound support programs in the neighborhoods.

They did not gain federal recognition as a Promise Zone, but went ahead with the Zone Project with funding from Spokane Public Schools, the City of Spokane and the Ballmer Group.

At first, Andre was its director. After he returned as assistant principal at Shadle Park High School, the project was transferred to the Northeast Community Center. Af-

ter Amber’s term on City Council, she was hired to direct the project.

In addition, she works part-time as a consultant for Urbanova, a Spokane collaboration to improve the quality of life, innovation and health in cities. It uses the University District as a living laboratory for small-city solutions that can be replicated around the world.

For information, visit www.thezoneproject.org or email amberwaldref@necommunitycenter.com.

Wide Open Panel Conversations about Israel

Sundays
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You have heard the joke about two Jews and three opinions? Panel participants will vary and represent a wide range of political perspectives on the history and current events of Israel. Moderated by Rabbi Tamar Malino and Education Director Iris Berenstein

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YWCA’s GoodGuys explore ways to prevent violence against women

YWCA Spokane’s GoodGuys will hold “What Does it Mean to be a Strong Man? Exploring Men’s Leadership in Preventing Violence Against Women,” by Jackson Katz from 5:30 to 7:30, Monday, Feb. 11, at Gonzaga University’s Hemmingson Center, 702 E. Desmet Ave.

The talk will offer new perspectives on a major health concern,” said GoodGuys co-founder, Doug Kelley. It will suggest potential solutions that could help resolve a problem that requires a collective community approach.

YWCA Spokane’s GoodGuys is a movement of local men working to prevent domestic violence.

Jackson promotes scholarship and activism on issues of gender, race and violence. He is a leader

in the global movement of men working to promote gender equality and prevent gender violence.

He is the creator, lead writer and narrator of award-winning “Tough Guise” videos. His TED talk, “Violence Against Women—It’s a Men’s Issue,” has been viewed more than 4 million times.

“We invite men to join GoodGuys and make a clear, strong, public statement that domestic violence is not okay and will not be accepted,” said Manny Hochheimer, GoodGuys co-founder.

Last year, reducing family violence was a top concern of the Spokane Regional Health District and Priority Spokane.

For information, call 326-1190 or visit ywcaspokane.org/goodguys.

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IDAHO’S ROLE IN AMERICAN RACISM, PAST AND PRESENT

Jill Gill
Professor of History
Boise State University

Thursday, Feb. 21 | 7 p.m.
Eric Johnston Science Center, Room 233
Whitworth University

BELIEVE ME: THE EVANGELICAL ROAD TO DONALD TRUMP

John Fea
Professor of History
Messiah College

Monday, March 18 | 7 p.m.
Weyerhaeuser Hall, Robinson Teaching Theatre
Whitworth University

WHITWORTH UNIVERSITY

Operation Healthy Family challenges obesity and offers oral hygiene

By Mary Stamp

Inspired by their faith and passion for improving the lives and health of vulnerable children and families, Tommy and Paula Williams combine their interests and skills—restorative justice, sports and dental hygiene—in Operation Healthy Family (OHF).

They advocate for restorative justice, challenge obesity through sports programs, teach oral hygiene habits and partner with dentists to provide care for low-income people.

Believing God had a plan for him, Tommy prayed and had a vision to start a free after-school flag football program. He wrote a proposal to do that at Grant and Sheridan Elementary Schools.

After he started the program in 2010, Paula suggested the children use mouth guards. When fitting them, she noticed several had severe dental issues from a lack of brushing. So she suggested doing a pilot oral hygiene program at Grant to teach children to brush.

That's how his love of sports and her love of dental care combined into forming OHF in 2011 under Emmanuel Family Life Center. In 2012, it became incorporated as a nonprofit.

Tommy and Paula, who are members of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, chose the name "Operation" to be intentional about the mission to help youth and families be healthy through sports and oral hygiene.

The Ballers Youth Sports Club (BYSC) offers low-income third-to-12th-grade girls and boys affordable access to basketball education and addresses health and fitness disparities by promoting physical activities to prevent obesity.

In this program, which practices in the Hillyard Baptist Church gym, everyone plays, Tommy said.

Because many sports programs are costly, often youth in low-income families don't play. They need basketball shoes, as well knowing how to dribble.

If coaches just judge children by how well they play, those who lack the skill level to compete sit on the bench. In the BYSC program children and youth at risk of dropping out are trained, beginning with their skill levels, so they learn to play, Tommy said.

For boys of color in many programs, coaches do not look like them, but in this program, many of the coaches are people of color and can identify with all players, no matter their race or family's



Tommy and Paula Williams combine interests in sports, health.

economic situation, he said.

The YMCA and Hoopfest sponsor players, so children who could not afford to play have scholarships to play in a basketball league and pay for equipment.

As players improve, they are given the opportunities to play with BYSC, AAU or YMCA basketball teams or SYSA or YMCA flag football teams.

"Along with teaching fundamentals of sports, volunteer coaches instill values of faith, honesty, respect, integrity, sportsmanship and leadership," Tommy said.

In 2018, the BYSC partnered with the Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho to form their own Girl Scouts "Lady Ballers" basketball team.

Brush for the Future is also a program that involves everyone. It seeks to improve oral health among elementary school children in Spokane's poorest neighborhoods through prevention and early intervention, said Paula.

Partnering with teachers, administrators and school nurses, OHF instills positive peer pressure to establish healthy brushing habits. Students in grades K-6 in participating schools brush their teeth in their classrooms every day, she said.

Paula works in 36 classrooms in four schools. Through the schools, as well as community agencies—Catholic Charities, World Relief, Newtech Skill Center and local congregations—she assisted 4,000 people in 2018.

"Tooth decay is one of the

most common health problems affecting children," she said. "So teaching oral hygiene habits at a young age is an investment in a child's future health."

For three years, Paula was full time oral health director with OHF. Recently, she accepted a position as operation manager with David Hone, DDS, to further her efforts to expand access to affordable dental care.

OHF in schools offers a week of oral health instruction on how to brush and floss, and why. Paula gathers with students from several classrooms to inspire them to take care of their teeth.

"I tell them that if they invest in their teeth by brushing and flossing, it's like a savings account. They will have the money they might spend on a root canal or crowns to spend to go to Disneyland or buy a car," she said.

Paula brings visual examples of bacterial colonies to the classroom to help students grasp an understanding of "why plaque removal is important."

Then she trains student leaders, not the usual ones who are outgoing, but ones who may be quiet. She encourages them to speak up. The student leaders carry the program on through the year.

Each classroom has a brushing station with a toothbrush for each child, thanks to the 2016 donation by Colgate of 10,000 toothbrushes and toothpaste. Students have taken toothbrushes home to family members.

As an entry task each day, one

student holds a chart, showing children where to brush daily. In groups of four, students come up and brush for two minutes daily.

Pre- and post-plaque score is recorded during the Brush for the Future program as a way to measure the program's effectiveness.

Paula said plaque scores showed improvement after just six months of daily tooth brushing during class.

If students brush every day in class, it may be the only time they brush.

Paula also connects children with dental emergencies to different private dentists through OHF's Dental Access Partnership Program.

"Brush for the Future is about prevention, while Dental Access Partnership Program is about intervention," she said.

That program connects people on Medicaid ready for intervention with dental care needs and willing to work on prevention, so a dentist does not fix teeth and then have the person keep coming back because of not brushing and flossing.

"Why fill a tooth for the \$33 Medicaid reimbursement, which is less than the cost, for people who will not maintain their teeth," she said.

In 2020, OHF plans to partner with faith communities and agencies to open a faith-based clinic through David's clinic, where staff speak Farsi, Spanish, Russian and Ukrainian, as well as English.

The Dental Access Partnership works with a diverse group of dental providers, many of whom are driven by their faith—Mormon, Muslim, Seventh-Day Adventist, Catholic and Protestant.

In 2015, OHF partnered with agencies like Catholic Charities to help residents in shelters and apartments have dental treatment from private dentists," he said.

"Now, we partner with the YWCA Domestic Violence Program, World Relief and other agencies to address dental needs of women, children, immigrants, veterans and elders," she said.

Originally from Chicago, Tommy played football at Eastern Washington University while studying criminal justice. After

earning a bachelor's in 1992, he played one season in the Canadian Football League before breaking his ankle in his rookie season.

He was academic counselor for the men's football and women's soccer teams at Washington State University from 1996 to 1998 while studying for a master's degree in education.

After he married Paula in 2005, she encouraged him to finish his master's thesis.

Tommy also was a probation officer and football coach with the Nez Perce Tribe and worked with at-risk youth for the Coeur d'Alene Tribal School in DeSmet.

Recently, he has been teaching criminal justice with District #81's Newtech Skill Center, a trade school for juniors and seniors.

Paula earned a GED at the age of 16 and completed studies at Spokane Community College to become a dental assistant at the age of 19. As the daughter of an optometrist and microbiologist growing up in Seven Mile, Paula was always interested in health care.

She has worked both in private dental practices and in a community health clinic (CHAS) as a dental assistant. In 2010, she completed studies at Spokane Community College to be licensed as an expanded function dental auxiliary (EFDA). In that role, she does fillings after a dentist examines and drills the teeth.

For a while, she was the only EFDA with four dentists at the downtown Dennis Murphy CHAS Clinic, so they could serve more Medicaid patients.

Tommy and Paula, who each have two sons from previous marriages and two sons together, said they "are committed to raising future godly husbands."

"To do that, we need faith," he said.

"Our mission is to honor God, follow Christ and serve the community by offering support, services and programs to help strengthen families through collaboration and partnerships with other like-minded nonprofits and businesses," Tommy said.

For information, call 720-4645, email paula@ohfspokane.org or visit www.ohfspokane.org.

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Moving beyond hate to love leads to King's vision of beloved community

Continued from page 1
image is in each of us," he said.

God made people to relate to God and to each other.

At the end of the Bible in Revelations is the image of coming before "a great multitude of people from every nation, tribe, people and language."

For Joe, that's King's image of "the beloved community," everyone made in God's image and in the end, everyone worshipping God together.

In between, people fall and fight.

"Jesus came to reconcile us with God and each other. There's a spiritual and a social wing to the Gospel," Joe said. "If we follow Jesus, Jesus leads us back to God and to each other—to love God and our neighbor.

"In the civil rights movement, we are to keep moving to the kingdom, reconciliation and justice," he said. "In the last 50 years, we made progress, but have a long way to go. We need to keep moving so we do not get stuck. King said the arc of the moral universe is bending toward justice."

"That quote is misunderstood," Joe said. "King was not a fatalist, because the arc bending wouldn't happen without people working for justice. If we live in a universe of chaos and chance, there is no arc, but if we work, God bends the arc. God is just. Don't give up. Keep moving forward."

Joe said people are to keep moving toward the other, because God's great commandment is to "love God" and "love our neighbor as ourselves."

"What is love?" Joe asked. "It is doing what is best for the other, no matter what it costs you, just as God gave his son because God loved us."

When Jesus said to love enemies, he was not talking about a feeling or emotion, but doing what's best for the enemies, Joe said.

Then he reflected on the Good



Joe Wittwer is first white preacher to speak at MLK service.

Samaritan story in answer to a man asking, "Who is my neighbor?" A Jewish man was robbed, but a priest walked by and a Levite, a priest's assistant, walked by, but a Samaritan, the enemy, bandaged him and took him to a room to be cared for. Jews and Samaritans hated each other. A Samaritan came and cared for a Jew, a stranger, a foreigner, an enemy.

"Jesus twisted the man's question, saying it's more important to move toward the other, to be the neighbor rather than to define 'neighbor.' Keep moving toward the person who is different."

Twenty years ago, even though he came to Martin Luther King Jr. services, Joe said he had no friends of color.

"I lived in a white bubble. I realized I was impoverished. I invited Rodney McAuley to lunch and said, 'I'm a white boy living in a white bubble.' I asked him to be my friend. I said I did not know what it was like to be a black man in Spokane. We are still friends, and he is a super networker. He has connected me, so now I have many friends of color. That has changed me.

"I had no idea what prejudice felt like. I had not woken up won-

dering how I would fit in the white dominant culture. I'm the beneficiary of white privilege," said Joe, who has talked with pastors in his denomination about white privilege and made some mad.

Along with making friends, he has educated himself by reading books, such as King's sermons in *The Gift of Love*, and King's letter from the Birmingham jail to white ministers.

"Reconciliation starts here in moving toward people. It starts with relationships and friends, but it does not end with relationships. The beloved community does not start until we love each other," he said.

"There's a spiritual battle around racial issues that keeps us in bubbles, distrusting, suspicious and hating. We as followers of Jesus need to rise up and say this should not happen."

Joe then moved to his second point that "we need to keep moving beyond anger to love."

When Jesus was going to Jerusalem, James and John tried to find hospitality in a Samaritan village, but were turned down. They asked if they should use their power to destroy the village.

Joe identifies with their anger. After preaching on Christmas

Eve about Jesus as a baby being a refugee fleeing violence, Jesus being a dreamer, and understanding what people on the border felt fleeing for their lives, he had a phone call from someone angered that he connected Jesus' birth with what was happening in the world.

"I was ready to give him a piece of my mind, but anger never made anyone smarter," Joe said. "Jesus did not come to destroy but to save. Jesus did not retaliate when the village turned him away, but went on to the next village. Sometimes we need to be big enough to move on. Being offended is a national sport. We need to keep moving beyond anger to love if we want reconciliation and justice. We can't get stuck at anger about the lack of justice.

"Anger may help us change a law, but anger does not change hearts. Only love can bring us together," Joe said.

He then told of Bob Goff, a lawyer, going to Uganda and learning that witch doctors kidnapped and killed children as sacrifices. He eventually found a survivor to testify against one witch doctor. He found a judge who would try and sentence him to life in a prison, joining more than 2,000 prisoners crammed in space meant for 200.

Bob brought the survivor to the U.S. for surgery that healed him, but God called Bob to love the witch doctor—the enemy. Bob visited him in prison, shared the gospel and the man became a follower of Jesus, spreading the gospel and love of Christ in the prison.

"Love did something anger could not do. Only love can change a heart," Joe said. "Bob continued to crusade among witch doctors, inviting them to learn to read and write. The books were the Bible and Bob's own book, *Love Does*."

In a sermon on loving enemies, King said there would be no permanent solution to the crisis in race relations until people of different races learn to love each other. He recognized it might be ideal, not practical, but "we have followed the practical way and it has led to confusion and chaos, but we are not to abandon righteous efforts.

"To rid the nation of segregation and racism, we are obligated to love. We may abhor segregation, but are to love the segregationist," Joe said.

He repeated, "We are to move beyond hate to love. We need to be willing to do what is best for the other despite the cost to us. Love will lead us to the beloved community."

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Flannery lecturer will speak on racial mercy

Maureen O'Connell, associate professor of theological ethics and chair of the department of religion and theology at La Salle University, is the Flannery Lecturer at 6 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 28, at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University.

Speaking on "From the Upper Room to Pentecost: Toward an Ethic of Racial Mercy," she will liken the experiences of white Christians in the U.S. now—related to conflicts around racialized inequality—to Jesus' disciples locked in the upper room between the crucifixion and Resurrection.

She will discuss how many are trapped by emotions of fear, shame, guilt, frustration and anger, needing to move from that confining space toward the em-

powering, multicultural event of Pentecost, transformed by God's mercy. Gonzaga's Department of Religion sponsors the lecture.

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Three gain ideas for interfaith event, church's series, service project

Three members of Unity Spiritual Center in South Spokane, who were among 8,000 people of more than 200 traditions at the Parliament of World Religions Nov. 1 to 7 in Toronto, are now applying ideas from that gathering in their congregation and for interfaith work through One Peace Many Paths.

The 2018 Parliament marked 125 years since the first Parliament in Chicago in 1893.

It was Hank Broeckling's first Parliament, but the second one for Joan Broeckling and Jane Simmons. Joan went in 2015 to Salt Lake City. Jane and her husband Gary, co-pastors at Unity, went in 2012 to Melbourne.

They are incorporating ideas for interfaith work, an upcoming event, study program, native-non-native ties, a mat project and the Compassion Games.

Inspired by diversity

Because they are involved in peace and interfaith work in Spokane, they gained inspiration at the Parliament.

"I soaked up energy from the diversity and acceptance," Joan said. "It was fascinating to be among so many people of so many traditions on the world level, gathering and recognizing our commonalities. Unity teaches about the oneness of creation. We live out our oneness in everyday relationships."

Jane said it made her "heart sing" to be under one roof with so many kind, compassionate people.

Hank said it deepened his sense of oneness with everyone to connect with people of so many races and beliefs.

"I recognize we are one from the Creator. Horizons opened for us, realizing those who were there are taking that energy back to their homes," he said.

Sharing 'Speed Faithing' event

One Peace Many Paths is planning an "Interfaith Potluck and 'Speed Faithing' Dialogue" from 6 to 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 9, at the SGI-USA Spokane Buddhist Center, 1717 W. 6th Ave., as part of the 2019 United Nations' World Interfaith Harmony Week.

"Speed Faithing," a spin-off on speed dating was introduced at the Parliament, said Joan.

"In small groups, we will share how our faiths impact our questions, perspectives and life choices," she said. "With others from our spiritually diverse community, we will explore such topics as gratitude, love, environmental responsibility, spiritual practice, relationship to the divine, giving and receiving, peace and justice, prayer and meditation, and service."



Jane Simmons, Hank and Joan Broeckling bring Parliament home.

Groups and individuals may RSVP at onepeacemanypaths@gmail.com.

Offering series to act on faith

Inspired by interacting with many of the 250 people at the Parliament from The Association of Global New Thought, Jane decided to lead a year-long Sunday series with Gary, called "Don't Believe a Word I Say." Congregants are invited each week to put the principles spoken about into practice rather than just hear about them.

"New Thought seeks to create a world that works for everyone," she said. "The world is changing. Change happens through us."

The series encourages participants to take words of faith and put them into practice to see what changes they bring, she said.

"Unity is about practicing spirituality," Jane said.

Insight for indigenous ties

Hank connected the recognition and presence of Canada's First Nations and other indigenous people with his involvement locally with the Native Non-Native Talking Circle, started six years ago by One Peace Many Paths.

Last September, the 2018 Spokane Compassion Games included a Horse Massacre Healing Event, acknowledging the 1858 U.S. Army massacre of 800 Indian horses, "honoring the resilience of tribes and pledging for native and non-natives to work together for a positive future," Hank said.

He and Joan also participated in a Spokane Tribe regional tour of 160-year-old battle sites and heritage spots.

At the Parliament, Hank learned that Canada's 2006 National Reconciliation Act seeks to bridge relationships with First Nations. It includes rewriting history books, because most have been written

from the white man's perspective of coming to tame and civilize indigenous people. He also learned how Canada is valuing and promoting First Nations' culture.

"From that and my connection with the Native Non-Native Talking Circle, I realize we all need to heal," Hank said, aware that poverty is still an issue for indigenous people and indigenous women continue to disappear.

Doing a service project

Joan looked for ideas she could bring back to use in the Unity Sunday school and worship, as well as in One People Many Paths workshops on compassion, environment and interfaith gatherings.

At Unity Spiritual Center, she has started a project with third to eighth graders, called "Mats of Love," creating mats with plastic bags to give to homeless people.

"We are weaving long newspaper bags into four-by-six-foot mats on a loom with two-by-four boards," Joan said. "The mats are four inches thick, providing insulation from the ground."

Joan seeks donations of thousands of bags for this intergenerational activity—doing a little every Sunday.

That project connects concern about homeless people with the concern about plastics in the environment.

At an environmental presentation that challenged single-use plastic bags, Hank learned that only "nine percent of plastics are recycled, and the rest goes into landfills and the ocean."

He was impressed by the openness to change among Parliament participants and by recognition that "we can't keep doing what we are doing," especially given reports that climate change is speeding up."

Compassionate Cities met

Joan met representatives of four other—"Compassionate Cities"—Rotterdam, San Jose, Pomona and Austin. For more than 10 years, some have been connecting governments, nonprofits, artists and others to reduce poverty and make their cities more compassionate.

"Each year, One Peace Many Paths and the Compassion Games promote the United Nations' 15 Sustainable Development Goals," said Joan, who learned how the SDGs are being spread worldwide.

"How can we as a city and region integrate compassion into our policies, courts and education?" she asked. "I am one small voice. Compassion needs to be systemic and global, not one little effort here."

"We have more compassion in the community now, but it's not yet systemic. We have to work with city leaders so it runs through policy," she said. "It's also important for interfaith work to demonstrate compassion."

Interfaith is not a luxury

"Interfaith is no longer a luxury or nice option. It's a necessity in facing today's challenges," Joan said.

Opening night, she felt grateful and inspired to see people of so many ethnicities and walks of life finding many ways to be a compassionate presence, motivated by their faith traditions," said Jane. "We all want to make a difference so children have a safe place to

live and a clean earth."

Every session, 25 to 40 workshops were offered, covering many issues from many perspectives.

"It's important for faith communities to connect with people who are affiliated with any faith or no faith through common causes, the environment and social justice issues," Jane said. "Many young people don't come to church Sundays, so we need to build relationships and discuss spiritual aspects to deepen connections."

In one "jam packed" session on the future of religion, Jane came to realize that many who are labeled as "nones"—not identifying with or affiliated with any religion or faith community—are not people with no faith.

"Most seek spiritual meaning and are concerned about social justice," she said.

For information, call 838-6518, email drjane@unityspokane.org or onepeacemanypaths@gmail.com, or visit parliamentofreligions.org.

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Disability Action Center helps people find resources to help themselves

By Kaye Hult

When people who have disabilities contact the Disability Action Center NW (DAC) for assistance, they often hope the DAC will solve their problems for them, said Virgil Edwards, one of the independent living advocates in the Post Falls office.

Instead they learn that DAC expects to help them help themselves.

"We're peers, not professionals," he said. "We just provide resources."

"DAC is an independent living center," said Virgil. "We give people information so they can take care of their own issues. We're a conduit. The idea is to give people the power."

Virgil's can-do attitude stands him in good stead as he works with clients. He has suffered for a long time with disabilities of his own—bi-polar disorder and physical problems. They could have been roadblocks to him, but he has taken the time to re-think how to keep moving ahead with his life and has made adaptations necessary to do that.

He uses himself as an example with clients, helping them realize they have what it takes to advocate for themselves and achieve their goals.

As a member of the staff in one of the three DAC locations—in Lewiston, Moscow and Post Falls—Virgil offers a wide range of services to those he assists.

DAC's specialties are individual and community advocacy, information about and referral on a variety of topics, independent living skills, businesses and government, communication services, community involvement, housing advocacy and assistance, peer advocacy counseling and transportation services.

Staff keep up with resources available in their areas. They also advocate for a community more inclusive of those with disabilities.

Virgil was born in Colorado, the third child in his family. When he was young, the family moved to Spokane.

His mother was religious and read the Bible over and over. She was brought up Catholic, but never found a denomination that worked for her, he said. She wanted him to become a preacher.

"I had no interest in church, which disappointed her," he said. "Still, she tried to make me a good person and teach me from the Bible. I learned, but did not become Christian."

His mother, who had diabetes, sought to help people with similar issues. Virgil described her as tough and strong.

"I never got into much trouble," he said. "I was more afraid of Mom than cops. I didn't want to disappoint her."

Growing up in a working class family, he began working in grade school peeling potatoes at the Star Grill Cafe. Soon, he did everything but cooking. Agnes, the owner, became like a second mother, influencing him to move forward with his life.

"She was tough. If I wanted stuff, I had to earn it," said Virgil, who worked there until he graduated from Ferris High School in 1968.

He began working at odd jobs. For many years, he put in sprinkler systems. When he developed a bad back, he persevered until he found other work. He realized he didn't have to do physical labor.

"All along, I had used what I had learned to help others who were working for me," Virgil said. "It was natural. I wasn't anybody special."

"I could see what other people were doing and help them more than I could see my own strengths. Without realizing it, I did mental work—such as planning, sales and designing systems."

He began working for SL Start, where he helped clients with disabilities find employment. The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation sent him clients.

"I led them to realize they had many strengths and then trained them in new skills for new work," Virgil said.

About 15 years into his job, he saw an ad saying DAC needed help.

"If I wanted to move forward in my life, I needed to re-think my abilities," he said. "I had to figure out how to sell myself to a prospective employer."

He had met Mark Leeper, the executive director of DAC, while working for SL Start. He also was familiar with the Coeur d'Alene DAC and its former manager.

Virgil contacted Mark, who hired him part time at first, then full time, in part because of his understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

"I was hired in 2008 to make it an independent living center," he said.

Virgil has helped the center transition into a place that empowers people to do for themselves. He uses his physical and mental disabilities as an example from which his clients can learn.

"I saw myself overcoming different things and mental health issues," he said. "It seemed I had much against me, but I never saw it that way. I am still able to hold jobs and succeed."

"I know where a disabled per-

son is coming from," he said. "I know to begin with little steps and move from there to big ones."

He and his co-workers investigate things with individuals rather than for them. Sometimes people with disabilities run into roadblocks and think DAC will help with lawsuits. It does not, but refers them to a lawyer. If a client doesn't have a computer at home, Virgil informs them of the computer access at the library.

For people who have no money, DAC can give or lend assistive devices it keeps on hand.

Having moved several times in Coeur d'Alene, DAC moved to Post Falls in 2016. They purchased the building at 3726 E. Mullan Ave.

Already outgrowing that building, they have added staff, and are branching out to work in Spokane.

DAC's advocacy extends beyond helping individuals. They also work for changes at the community, state and national levels to remove physical, communication and attitude barriers for people with disabilities. They strive to gain community support for independence and to include people with disabilities in community life.

In October 2018, DAC recognized Paul Kinney, public works maintenance manager for the City of Post Falls, and his staff for supporting those with disabilities by working with the Post Falls community to make travel by wheelchair easier.

Recently, they presented the City Council with the Tom McTevia Memorial Award for going above and beyond with proper snow removal and putting in more sidewalks.

"Post Falls is making many changes because it is growing fast," Virgil said.

The Silver Valley Community Resource Center
SUPPORT funding for the Community Lead Health Clinic/Center
208-784-8891 - Kellogg, ID

In November 2018, DAC hosted a National Career Mentoring Day at Spokane Community College for students ages 16 to 24 with a disability. Students shadowed the career of their choice, giving them a chance to test drive their dream job.

In January 2019, the Moscow office of DAC hosted a celebration to reintroduce the Disability Integration Act (DIA) in Congress. The bill ensures people with disabilities can live in freedom in their communities.

It received bipartisan support in both the Senate and the House in Congress in 2018. He hopes that results of the midterm elections mean an opportunity has opened for the bill to pass this year.

From 4 to 6:45 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 7, Lewiston's DAC office will show the film, "Ride with Larry," at the Lewiston City Library, 411 D St. The documentary follows Larry Smith, who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease more than 20 years ago, as he does one last big thing: ride his bike 300 miles across his state, South Dakota, to inspire other people living with Parkinson's and show that sometimes the best cure is to live life to the fullest.

In the middle of 2018, Virgil suffered a stroke. He has returned to the office, having asked, "How do I get past this?" His answer:

"Retrain myself and keep moving forward."

His stroke has made office staff stronger as a group, he said.

"Even negative issues can turn out to be positive," he said. "I try to set my day and not let life dictate to me."

Virgil continually exhibits that can-do attitude to his clients, inviting them to adopt it too.

For information, call 208-664-9896 or 800-854-9500 or email vedwards@dacnw.org.

Inviting All Jewish Families

Tot Shabbat Saturdays
Feb. 2, March 2 & May 4
11 a.m.

Throughout the year, we have a service on Saturday mornings created for our youngest members. The Tot Shabbat service is hands-on and playful to encourage our little ones to join in the joy of celebrating Shabbat with our community.

J-Village Sundays
March 17 & April 14
10 a.m.

Are you a parent with kids ages 0 to 5 and excited to help your child learn and love their Jewish identity?

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Meditation helped teacher of teens be able to manage their struggles

Because many of her 18 years of teaching were working with troubled teens, Mary Naber saw the need for helping them with anger management. She also realized she needed to be calm and patient in interacting with them.

That began her path to learning and teaching passage meditation, which focuses attention by repeating words of prayers, texts and sayings from many of the world's faith traditions.

She said passage meditation is "designed for the western 'monkey mind' of multi-tasking, distractions and moving fast."

"Passage meditation helps us change our lives, starting where we are," said Mary. "We don't need to change our beliefs. It's a universal practice that people from many backgrounds, traditions and beliefs can incorporate in their spiritual path."

From seven years of work with IBM in the 1970s in Northern California, she learned to repair typewriters. When first she moved to Spokane in the early 1980s, she did that.

"I was asked to fix the typewriter at the Spokane Buddhist Temple. It turns out that the Rev. Fuji fixed me," said Mary.

Involvement with that community reinforced meditation and introduced her to resources and leaders in the nonviolence movement, including Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi.

A primary resource has been Sri Eknath Easwaran's book, *Gandhi, the Man, The Story of his Transformation*. It teaches passage meditation. She has visited his Blue Mountain Center for Meditation (BMCM) many times in Tomales, Calif.

For the 11th year, Mary, who meditates regularly, is offering an "Introductory Passage Meditation Workshop" from 6 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesdays, from Feb 5 to 26, at the Spokane Buddhist Temple, 927 S. Perry St.

The sessions include video instruction, discussion and half an hour of meditation on words that embody a person's ideals to drive them deep inside their consciousness.

"In passage meditation, we choose passages. Easwaran has compiled passages from different traditions. He often start people with the prayer of St. Francis, assuming many are connected to churches," she said.

There are Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi, Gandhi's teachings, Native American texts and Kabir and other mystics' sayings, as well as many Christian passages.

"Our lives are shaped by our minds. We may become what we think," the Buddha said.

Mary introduces people to eight steps of passage meditation: 1) pick a passage, based on their reality; 2) memorize it to repeat



Mary Naber

as a mantram or mantra to steady their minds when they feel angry or agitated; 3) practice slowing down throughout the day; 4) have one-pointed attention; 5) train the senses; 6) put others first; 7) find spiritual companionship, and 8) spiritual reading from many traditions.

She said many who come to the workshops are in a hurry, but ready to slow down and focus their lives.

Her own practice of meditation 30 minutes twice a day helps her find peace and calm to make positive changes in stressful situations.

Mary, who is used to exercising her body as a cross country skier and runner—in November she ran a marathon in Athens, Greece, with two friends—knows she needs to exercise her brain.

In college, she had begun exploring meditation.

After graduating in 1971 from San Jose State with a bachelor's degree and in 1972 with teaching credentials at Sonoma State, she worked just three months teaching junior high before she began working with IBM for six years.

"I was idealistic then—and now," she said.

Mary took three months to ride a bike across the U.S. Then, concerned about the threat of nuclear war, she decided to enjoy life working at a ski area at Tahoe a few years.

Mary fell in love and moved with the man to Spokane. She decided to complete a master's degree in special education in 1985 at Whitworth.

While studying, she worked with troubled children at Tamarack Center. After two years, District #81 asked her to teach behaviorally disturbed teens at Sacajawea Junior High for a year. Then she taught math and science to hurting teens for about six years

at Excelsior Youth Center.

Next she worked at the district's Skills Center with disabled youth seeking vocational training—learning auto body repair, construction, welding, cooking, graphic arts, nursing and veterinarian skills.

"I felt valued and helpful," she said.

The need to teach anger management in these schools led her to explore meditation further.

While at Excelsior, she began meditating, realizing, "I needed to help myself to help others," said Mary, who also took classes in peace studies and anger management.

"I progressed from looking at the world in negativism. For years, I had gone to Al-Anon at least twice a week because of relationships with alcoholic or addicted people," she said.

"By meditating, however, something changed for me. I have gained a sense of the unity of life, moving from feeling alone, in darkness and hopelessness, to feeling in love. I didn't trust, and all of a sudden I felt I belonged and was loved."

"I still may get angry, but we need to take responsibility for our own ignorance and disconnection," she said.

Meditation empowers her to show compassion one-on-one, like helping a mother with her children, or taking care of her

90-year-old mother.

Along with meditating, Mary is involved in the Spokane Buddhist Temple. She explained that the Buddha's teachings on "the four noble truths" are sometimes compared to a physician diagnosing an illness and prescribing a treatment.

- The first truth tells what the illness is: "Life is suffering."

- The second tells what causes the illness: attachments to people, things and ideas.

- The third holds out hope for a cure: letting go of attachments.

- The fourth is the practice of Buddha's Eight-Fold Path.

"I feel connected to people now," she said.

"Buddha does not focus on what we do wrong, but on there being 10,000 paths to truth. Buddhism encourages us to question—to listen to what people have to say and see if it works for us and helps us be good people," Mary said. "Buddhism has given me confidence."

When she started attending, the temple had about 25 Japanese and three white members. Many of the Japanese had been in area internment camps, settled here and found community at the temple, she said.

"It was a rude awakening for me to learn about the internment camps," Mary said. "I have learned from their experience of losing everything, but not complaining."

Over time, more non-Japanese came to the temple wanting to know about Buddhism. Now there are only four Japanese people.

"It's not a big enough congregation to have a minister. We have three lay ministers and a supervising minister in Seattle," she said.

A few members know the language and keep up traditions,

teaching other members.

"We have learned to prepare sushi, senbei and other dishes, and learned obon dancing," Mary said.

Nine years ago shortly after she retired, Mary went to Spokane's Sister City in Nishinomiya, Japan and taught English to junior high students for two years.

Meditation also gives her strength to work for social justice.

Mary is also one of Spokane's Raging Grannies, who wear old-fashioned granny clothes and sing funny songs that advocate for social justice. Many songs are take-offs on familiar songs.

"I feel I make a difference as a Raging Granny," she said of the group that includes 12 others. She is also involved with the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane.

Through PJALS she also does nonviolence training for people willing to be a nonviolent presence at Pride Parades, Planned Parenthood, Unity in the Community, and protests about coal trains and other peace and justice issues.

Mary has also experienced the value of intercultural connections through her many years of involvement with the Fall Folk Festival. As volunteer coordinator, she has learned about and helped connect people with the different cultures in Spokane. She has also encouraged people to connect with their own cultural heritages.

"The festival is a way to let people meet people of different cultures and discover they are like them," she said.

Through meditation, social justice work or intercultural awareness, Mary feels she has found her true self.

For information, call 570-6876 or visit bmcm.org, spokanebuddhisttemple.org.

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Nonprofits and faith organizations step up to assist in times of need

Many people, nonprofits, agencies, programs and faith communities in the “servant” sector were stepping up to do what they do in emergencies—helping people through tough times—when the shutdown ended temporarily.

Many public servants, who are part of the infrastructure of helping the country function, were facing need for help through the shutdown. Federal government employees face missed paychecks and public assistance beneficiaries faced cuts.

In a late January press release, Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington announced it was ready to support those in the region affected by the shutdown, from “TSA agents at the Spokane International Airport

to forest services in Okanogan County, public servants who work every day to keep people and the environment safe.”

Missing paychecks, working and furloughed government employees had to decide what to pay—mortgages, rent, utility bills, medicines, food and other necessities.

Rob McCann, president of Catholic Charities, said the shutdown of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Agriculture Department, which operates SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, “puts thousands of our vulnerable neighbors at risk of homelessness and hunger.”

Catholic Charities, the Salvation Army, Goodwill, community centers, outreach

ministry centers, food banks and faith communities are in place, as always, to make sure everyone has basics they need—housing, food and companionship. How long could they have helped without affecting their ongoing outreach?

Catholic Charities’ Emergency Assistance can help with one-time housing, utility or fuel bills. It could assist with tenants’ rights to help negotiate with landlords, as can the Tenants Union. Food banks were already helping families of federal employees and families on SNAP with food. Through more than 250 food pantries, meal sites and partners, Second Harvest helps feed people in need and was ready to assist those struggling in the shutdown.

With added demand for services in this time of increased need, nonprofit agencies need additional financial donations and volunteer assistance.

As we heard voices of people in the indigenous people’s, women’s and Martin Luther King Jr. marches, it’s up to us to speak out, advocate for justice, love people and serve those in need in our families and communities. We advocate because government infrastructure has a crucial role in our lives, and the people in charge of running it day-to-day are public servants.

A question is: Do we want shutdowns or states of emergency to be the way the federal government makes policies?

Mary Stamp - editor



‘We exist. We resist. We rise.’ Indigenous speakers share values

“We exist. We resist. We rise,” said a message carried by several among the 400 in the Jan. 18 Indigenous People’s March in Spokane as they walked from The Gathering Place by City Hall to the bridge beside the fountain in Riverfront Park.

Excerpts of comments by several of the speakers are included here.

David Brown Eagle, an enrolled citizen of the Spokane Tribe of Indians, said it’s easy to wait for someone else to act, but “we need to be willing to act. For us to make change, we need to be there as individuals and collectively. We need to care about the whole planet,” he said, wondering what the world will be like for his two great grandsons and telling them to prepare for their future.



David also shared an insight from his grandmother. He said he used to hate whites, blacks, Mexicans, halfbloods, full-bloods. “I hated everyone and everything because I hated myself for doing what my parents and grandparents taught me not to do,” he said. “If you want to hate me, I understand hate, but today I can I love you.”

His grandmother told him, “There is no hell, but if there is, you’re living it. What you do creates stories and stories can elevate us to heaven. If there is heaven, it’s here. If you want to walk in hell, hate. If you love and forgive, your life is heaven.”

James Pakootas of the Colville Confederated Tribes said he had been overcoming influences of having a father in prison, abuse and being separated from his heritage until his mother married a man who helped him connect to “who I am,” by teaching him his traditions. “I have been empowered by finding my language, ways and culture,” he said.

“We here today are proof that 500 years of genocide and assimilation have not worked, I have survived traumas and my people have survived traumas,” said James, who began learning his language in the last two years. “Now I can say in my own language that I come from strong people, seven generations back and seven generations back before that.”

Now two years in recovery, he works at the Healing Lodge in Spokane with youth who have lost their ways. James is a motivational speaker. For information on his work, visit www.jamespakootas.com.

Angeline Tomeo Sam was humbled by the number of people in the march. “We still are. We are here. We are not

going anywhere. We have been here. We are staying here,” said Angeline.

Angeline, who works for the Bail Project, marched for people locked up in jails away from their families and communities before their trials even though they are innocent. That’s more likely for native people, she said, because their bail is many times higher than bail for whites.

She is grateful for those whose minds are changing.

“We are the change,” she said. “I am grateful for my indigenous ways, morals and ideals.”

Shelly Boyd of the Snaycktx Arrow Lakes Band of Indians living at Inchelium on the Colville Confederated Tribes Reservation, called forward women wearing ribbon skirts to stand with her to remember missing and murdered indigenous women.



“The Arrow Lakes Snaycktx Nation is still here,” she said. “It’s a miracle.”

She challenged consumerism, quoting writer Winona LaDuke, who said, “We are ‘drinking the koolaid’ as consumer people,” observing that if all the world consumed like the U.S. it would take six planets to support everyone.

“We need to remember that the world is greater than us,” said Shelly. “We are from strong people over seven generations. Stand up. Speak truth. Protect the land.”

Iaitia Farrell, a Lakota of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, said, “We are fighting genocide, assimilation and pipelines crossing our lands. We are confronting the violence of the oppressor. We are standing together in solidarity for upcoming generations, fighting contamination of water by fracked oil. Water is life.

“Women, youth and water need protection,” she said.

Iaitia calls for solidarity in advocating that governments abide by treaties, not open public lands for oil, build innovative green technology and fight for a better future with clean water.

Tara Dowd, who recently moved from Spokane to Seattle to work with the Potlatch Fund, said that “as we have learned to survive in a colonized world, I am thankful for allies.”



She also urged native people to be counted in the 2020 census, in order to be seen, “so we are not an invisible race, but are seen as being alive and here to stay,” she said.

“No one in the world can empower us. We are powerful people who have experienced atrocious crimes, and we are here. We are beautiful people. We celebrate our elders and those who have fought for our land,” Tara said.

Drea Rose, a member of the Spokane Tribe, said: “We are the answer to our ancestors’ prayers. I made a shift as I became an adult and have taken my place to live and teach the way of my ancestors.”

A year ago, she started the Music, Arts and Creativity Movement, to spread awareness about missing and murdered indigenous women. They met recently with City Council to propose a resolution.

“We painted our hands red and put our handprints on the sidewalks over the cracks to represent blood of missing and murdered women who are falling through the cracks,” she said.

“We have now changed the resolution to be for all missing and murdered indigenous people,” she said.

Deb Abrahamson of the Spokane Tribe said, “I stand before you with fourth stage sarcoma cancer as a result of the uranium mined on our reservation.

“I’m not the only one. Many indigenous people around the world are being killed off by ecocide, because corporations have taken resources from our land and left toxins,” she said. “So we eat, breathe and are surrounded by the toxins.

“Sisters and brothers around the world have parallel genocidal experiences because of what governments are doing,” Debbie said. “The second day in office, Trump approved the Keystone Pipeline. We can’t keep letting such things happen.

“We are one people. We need to fight, unify and be in solidarity with white allies to keep ourselves and our children sustainable, so we move forward as our ancestors intended. I love the land, water and people. They are the future for all humankind. We need to raise our voices.”

John Sirois of the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT), a member of the Okanogan and Wenatchi on the Colville Confederated Reservation, promotes salmon passage.

Motioning to the Spokane River he said

that “80-pound Chinook used to come here. The people relied on eating salmon. Tribes are working together around salmon, water and land.

“We seek traditional foods for our bodies. Salmon will help the economy and bring jobs and health for all people,” he said. “Treaties and agreements guaranteed our food sources. We need to support them. ‘Salmon people’ give up their lives for us, so when we gather to share food, we express our gratitude, care and love,” John said.

Every time he talks with federal agencies in charge of operating the dams who say it’s too hard or complex to restore salmon runs.

“Tribes together are planning how to get the salmon back and improve water quality. We need to write our representatives to uphold the rights of native people,” John said.

Donell Barlow, who is a certified health coach, said it’s important “to protect our health and not rely on the corrupt government or corporations for food.”

She said that “food is medicine and preventative health care. We need to eat food as medicine, grow community gardens and reuse food waste, rather than eating food shipped thousands of miles.

“What is our relationship with food? Will our choices build our bodies? Do we support corporations that poison our bodies?” Donell asked. “We will thrive if we go back to the old food ways based on the knowledge of our ancestors.”

Ingrid Sub Cuc expressed pride in being part of the resistance of indigenous people, no matter where they are. She spoke of the “ever-growing indigenous diaspora”

and called for resilience of indigenous people everywhere as they are displaced from their lands and made to cross m a n - m a d e borders to survive. “I march for the strength, resilience and unconditional love of indigenous women and for our Madre Tierra!” she said.



Calendar of Events

- Feb 1-8 • Spokane International Film Festival**, The Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, and The Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague, spokanefilmfestival.org
- Feb 2 • "The Future of Interfaith" Panel and Coffee Talk**, Spokane FAVS, Origin Church/Interfaith Center, 5115 S. Freya, 10 a.m., 240-1830
- **"The Presumption of Innocence: Further Conversations about Bail and Incarceration in Spokane,"** Kurtis Robinson and Christina Kamkosi, Shadle Library, 2111 W. Wellesley, 3:30 p.m., spokanelibrary.org/calendar
- Feb 3 • Moroccan Society and Culture**, Mohammed Boudoudou, South Hill Library, 3324 S. Perry St., 3:30 p.m., spokanelibrary.org/calendar
- Feb 4 • "Blackfishing: Cultural Appropriation and Bias,"** Black Student Union, Monroe 205, Eastern Washington University (EWU) Cheney, noon, 359-2205
- Feb 5 • African American Heritage Month Lecture – Austin Channing Brown**, author and voice on racial justice, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University, 7 to 9 p.m., 777-3583, jroyal@whitworth.edu
- Feb 5-26 • "Introductory Passage Meditation Workshop,"** Spokane Buddhist Temple, 927 S. Perry, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays, 570-6876, spokanebuddhisttemple.org
- Feb 6 • "More than Just an Entertainer, Athlete or Criminal: Invisible Stories of a Black Man in America,"** George Duvall, Monroe 205, EWU, Cheney, noon, 359-2205
- Feb 7 • "South Africa – An African Plant Sale,"** CenterPlace, 2426 N. Discovery Pl., 6:30 p.m., 535-8434, tieg.org
- **Roundtable Homelessness Panel Discussion**, "Hope for the Homeless: A Call to Action," Spokane Valley United Methodist, 115 N. Raymond, 7 p.m., 924-7262
- **Spokane Dances of Universal Peace**, Unity Spiritual Center Spokane, 2900 S. Bernard, Spokane, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 509-534-4650, bkfergin@msn.com
- **Meals on Wheels of Spokane Cinn-A-Gram**, order online deadline, mowspokane.org
- Feb 7, 14 • Peace & Justice Action Committee**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- Feb 7, 14, 21 • "Diverse Voices Writing Group,"** Spark Central, 1214 W. Summit, 5:30 p.m., 279-0299, sparkcentral.org
- Feb 9 • Spokane Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration and Cultural Fair**, Southside Senior and Community Center, 3151 E. 27th, 2 to 5 p.m., spokanechinese.org
- **"The Critical Tenants for the Sphere of Dominance and White Fragility,"** Claudine Richardson of Spokane Falls Community College, South Hill Library, 3324 S. Perry, 3:30 p.m.
- **"Speed Faithing Dialogue,"** SGI-USA Spokane Buddhist Center, 1717 W. 6th, 6 to 8 p.m., 838-6518, onepeacemanypaths@gmail.org
- Feb 10 • "My Beloved's Voice: A Valentine's Concert,"** St. John's Music Series and Spokane Kantorei Chamber Choir, Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th, 3 p.m., spokanekantorei@gmail.com
- Feb 11 • "What Does It Mean to Be a Strong Man? Exploring Men's Leadership in Preventing Violence Against Women,"** Jackson Katz, YWCA Spokane's GoodGuys, Hemmingson Center at Gonzaga, 702 E. Desmet, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., 326-1190, goodguys@ywcaspokane.org
- **The Opioid Crisis in America,** Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 7 p.m.
- Feb 12 • "Beavers and a Healthy Community,"** Ben Goldfarb, The Lands Council and Spokane Riverkeeper, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 7 p.m., spokaneriverkeeper.org
- **Silent Day of Prayer on Confession**, "Penance: Gateway to Freedom," Fr. Tim Hayes, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC), 6910 S. Ben Burr, 448-1224, kparker@ihrc.net
- Feb 12, 20 • Alma Woodsey Thomas for Kids:** Black History Month for Kids, 12th - Indian Trail Library, 4909 W. Barnes; 20th - Hillyard Library, 4005 N. Cook, 4 p.m.
- Feb 13 • Hispanic Business/Professional Assn.** Monthly Luncheon, Sabes Que – Alejandra Heredia, Mexicana Fiesta, 1227 S. Grand, 6 to 8 p.m., hbaspokane.net
- Feb 14 • Coeur d'Alene Dances of Universal Peace**, Unity Spiritual Center of North Idaho, 4465 N 15th, Coeur d'Alene, 6:30 p.m., 509.534.4650, bkfergin@msn.com
- Feb 14, 28 • Showing Up for Racial Justice**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- Feb 15 • Native Project Healthy Heart Pow Wow and Dinner**, Rogers High School, 1622 E. Wellesley, 5 p.m., nativeproject.org
- Feb 16 • "BlackKlansman" movie**, East Side Library, 524 S. Stone, 6 p.m.
- Feb 17 • Introduction to Buddhism Program**, Hotel RL at the Park, 303 W. North River Dr., 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 534-7954, spokanebuddhisttemple.org
- Feb 18 • NAACP General Membership Meeting**, 25 W. Main, 7 to 9 p.m., spkncpbr@gmail.com
- Feb 19 • "Ten Reasons Why the Science and Theology Dialogue Matters,"** theologian, philosopher and scholar, Thomas Jay Oord, Whitworth, 7 p.m., 777-1000
- Feb 19-20 • "Steering Our Lives toward Holiness: An Honest Look and Appraisal,"** 24-Hour Retreat on Gaudete Exsultate with Bishop Emeritus William Skylstad, IHRC, 6910 S. Ben Burr, 4:30 p.m. Tuesday to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, 448-1224, ihrc.net
- Feb 20 • Go Red for Women Luncheon**, Spokane Convention Center, 10:30 a.m., ahaspokane.ejoinme.org
- Feb 21 • Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience**, Veradale United Church of Christ, 611 S. Progress, 9:15 to 11 a.m., 926-7173
- **"Sultan and the Saint,"** Panel Rabbi Tamar Malino, Sr. Pat Millen OSF, Nezar Hussein, moderator Tracy Simmons, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., 747-8803
- **Spokane Dances of Universal Peace**, Unity Spiritual Center Spokane, 2900 S. Bernard, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 509-534-4650, bkfergin@msn.com
- **Idaho's Role in American Racism**, Past and Present, Eric Johnston Science Center 233, Whitworth, 7 p.m., 777-3270, anitalewis@whitworth.edu
- Feb 22 • Gospel Explosion**, Seeley Mudd Chapel Sanctuary, Whitworth, 7 p.m., 777-4568, sbeans@whitworth.edu
- Feb 22 & 23 • 10th Annual Peace & Justice Action Conference**, "Building Beyond the Moment," Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Ft. George Wright Dr., 6 to 8:30 p.m., Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 838-7870, pjals.org/2019conference
- Feb 23 • St. Lucy's Breakfast**, Shalom Ministries Benefit, Rockwood Event Center, 2093 E. 25th, 9 a.m., 710-0204, healingpen@comcast.net
- **"Off the Beaten Path: Ten Years Teaching and Traveling in China,"** Shadle Library, 2111 W. Wellesley, 3:30 p.m.
- **Blue Jean Ball Fundraiser for Communities in School**, Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 5:30 to 10 p.m.
- **13th Annual Viba Vino & Brew Scholarship Fundraiser**, Shriner's Event Center, 7217 W. Westbow Blvd., 6 p.m., hbaspokane.net
- **Baroque Concert "Handel's Journey,"** Spokane Symphony, Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington, 624-1200, spokanesymphony.org
- Feb 24 • "Wide Open Panel Conversations about Israel,"** Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, 10 a.m. to noon, 747-3304, www.spokanetbs.org
- **Baroque Concert "Handel's Journey,"** Spokane Symphony, Spokane Valley Church of the Nazarene, 15515 E. 20th, 3 p.m., spokanesymphony.org
- Feb 26 • "Thriving after Service: Veterans Living with TBI,"** Spokane Downtown Library, 906 W. Main, 3:30 p.m.,
- **"Finding York of the Lewis and Clark Expedition,"** Bob Bartlett, Shadle Library, 2111 W. Wellesley, 6:30 p.m.
- Feb 27 • The Fig Tree mailing and deliveries**, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 24th and Grand, 9:15 a.m., 535-1813
- Feb 28 • The Fig Tree Benefit and Board**, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., noon benefit and 1 p.m., board, 535-1813
- **"From the Upper Room to Pentecost: Toward an Ethic of Racial Mercy,"** Flannery Lecture, Maureen O'Connell of LaSalle University, Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University, 6 p.m., 313-6782, gonzaga.edu/religious-studies
- Feb 28-Mar 1 • WSU College of Education's 15th International Globalization, Diversity and Education Conference**, "Healing the Mind/Body/Soul: Community, Activism and Justice in Education," Northern Quest, 100 N. Hayford Rd., Airway Heights education.wsu.edu/globalization/
- Mar 1 • March for Meals**, Meals on Wheels Greater Spokane County, Spokane Valley Mall and Northtown Mall, 8 to 10 a.m., 924-6976, gscmealsonwheels.org/events
- **"Winter Waters,"** Patsy Clark Mansion, 2208 W. 2nd Ave., 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., 270-6995, waitsoe@gmail.com
- Mar 3 • Opening Concert Bach Extravaganza!** St. John's Cathedral, 127 E. 12th, 800-838-3006, nwbachfest.com
- Mar 8 • The Fig Tree's Benefit Lunch**, Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 535-1813
- Mar 13 • The Fig Tree's Benefit Breakfast**, Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University, 7 to 8:30 a.m., 535-1813

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 208-962-2000, www.Spirit-Center.org

Rally speakers, marchers' signs carry King's message and mission

More than 3,000 marched for freedom, justice and equality on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

In the rally that preceded it in the Spokane Convention Center, thousands listened to speakers remind them why they were walking.

Spokane Mayor David Condon said that the day honors the life and legacy of King, who inspired peaceful change as he called for freedom, equality and integrity.

In marching to promote justice and move beyond racism, he said, "We cannot walk alone. Across the city, state and nation, it's a day of service to give thanks for how far we have come since segregation.

"We need to commit to justice, with equality and integrity for all as we march," David said, recognizing the city is not immune to racism and bigotry, but that change "comes through continued struggle.

"We need to be allies because people continue to face prejudice," he said, announcing that the city has a new supportive employment ordinance for people with disabilities. "We need to embrace all citizens.

"Every day is a 'day on' to support those who are marginalized and victimized," David said. "We need to continue to live King's principles of all working together for humankind."

City Council President Ben Stuckart spoke by video, celebrating local civil rights heroes—Freda Gandy, Happy Watkins, Sandy Williams and Kurtis Robinson, leaders of I Did Time and the NAACP working to reduce inequities in the criminal justice system.

Feruz Tikue, a sixth grader at Grant Elementary School, read Grant's Dream, written by the schools Associated Student Body Cabinet. The dream includes:

- All people learn each day.
- All being kind and compassionate.
- Not giving up in face of ostracism.
- All having the opportunity to learn.
- Everyone appreciating others.
- All being respectful and kind.
- Helping everyone in need.
- Standing up for rights.

Kurtis Robinson, president of Spokane's NAACP, said 2019 is the 100th birthday for the local chapter.

"We will look at what it took to get here. We did not get here alone," he said.

"The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People includes all of us. We are



Two boys in march share their reality: friendship.



Feruz Tikue speaks for Grant student body cabinet.



Marchers share the dream, call for doing what's right.



Faith is taking the first step.

for the advancement of all of us," he said, announcing that the year will be time to honor the lives and legacies of people who gave their lives and time for freedom.

There will be trainings and workshops, such as on "Why Race Matters" and on the "Bail Project."

Commenting on the "uprising" of women being elected in 2018, Kurtis said that King and civil rights leaders "took us so far along the long road, but we have a long way to go. King encouraged us to be steady and tenacious."

He reminded of King's words that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Stephy Nobles Beans of Whitworth University reminded those gathered that King was first a minister, then a messenger and

then a man who had impact on the world.

"Growing up in the civil rights era, I will never forget the man who made the world a better place," she said, singing, "Won't let nobody turn me around," and adding that "today, we still refuse to turn around. We are united as hundreds, thousands and millions march.

"There is much to be done. We all can be great. We all can serve by what we do to help others, to make a different community, to assure all are equal and to protect the earth.

"We need to keep moving toward others, to be neighbors," she said, quoting Joe Wittwer's sermon.

Stephy uplifted five points of unity:

- King's dream holds true that all men and women are created

equal and are to be treated with dignity and respect.

• His dream includes celebrating all cultures. It's not a black thing or a white thing. It's a Jesus thing that all are to live together as brothers and sisters or "perish as fools."

• His dream is about investing in the future of young people to have an equal playing field so they can be successful. "Justice plus equality equals success. We can't let them down," she said.

• The time is always right to do what is right. The time is now to come together in unity, harmony and love.

• There is power in numbers. "We may have differences and disagree, but we can come together to have impact by doing what is right," said Stephy.

"So I say—she began singing: 'We have overcome. We have overcome. We have overcome, today.'"

The Rev. Happy Watkins, pastor emeritus of New Hope Baptist Church, thanked everyone in the community for their love and for

working to "make a difference until making a difference don't make no difference anymore."

He recited the words of King's "I Have a Dream" speech as he has for many years in many community groups, adding a change in saying "Let freedom ring," from the mountains of New York, the Alleghenies of Pennsylvania, from Trump Towers in Manhattan and Moscow. "From every mountainside, let freedom ring."

He reminded that "the dream is rooted in the American dream," and expressed hope that "one day the nation will rise up and live the truth that all are created equal."

Happy concluded with the promise that one day all will be free and all of God's children will sing with new meaning, "My Country 'Tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty," and all God's children, black and white, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, Democrats and Republicans will live together in unity."

For information, call 868-8056 or visit mlkspokane.org.

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