

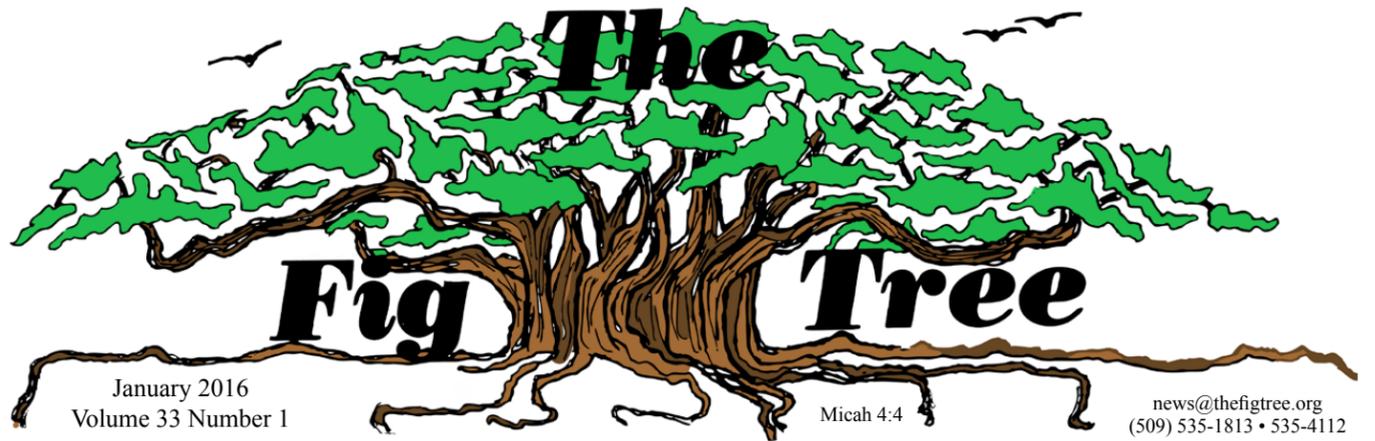
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January 2016 Volume 33 Number 1

Micah 4:4

news@thefigtree.org (509) 535-1813 • 535-4112

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

Center seeks to double its capacity

By Mary Stamp

Aiming to double its capacity to serve children and families, the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center is launching a capital campaign to build a new, two-story facility to replace the fire house and house at 845 S. Sherman.

The center started in 1970 as a drop-in recreation center for school-aged children in the basement of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. It moved to the fire station in 1982, renting the building from the city for \$1 a year.

Last December, the center purchased the building so it could tear it down to build the new facility. Under the lease, renovations had been limited.

Freda Gandy, executive director of the center, and the board are kicking off the campaign, "Building Dreams," at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Rally and March that begins at 10 a.m., Monday, Jan. 18.

They hope that many of the 3,000 people who usually attend that event will donate to supplement grants from government and private sources toward the total project cost of \$3 million.

The focus in 2016 will be fund raising. Construction will begin in 2017. During construction, the



Freda Gandy, director of MLK Family Outreach Center, is beside art by children.

center's offices, programs, family services and preschool will be in another location.

"We want families and children of diverse backgrounds to receive services they need in a multicultural center, where people are treated equally and respectfully, and where no one is turned away because of skin color or situation," said Freda.

Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center helps parents be better parents, people transition from homelessness and poverty, families find jobs, and people write and review resumes.

"I have seen families move from shelters to find jobs and become stable," she said. "I have seen foster parents open their doors to children in need. I have seen children affected by trauma be in trauma-sensitive environments, where they learn and grow."

In addition, Freda has seen university student interns enter social work after practicum experiences there that enhance their ability to work with children and families who live in poverty.

That was Freda's own experience.

Her son Demarcie was four when she first came through the doors of

Continued on page 4

Legislative Conference features issues before 2016 session, global-local ties

Speakers and workshops at the 2016 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference will explore "Our Responsibility for the Common Good" from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave.

In her keynote presentation, Linda Haydock, SNJM, executive director of the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center in Seattle, will discuss "Connecting Global UN Goals with Local and State Issues." After lunch, she will also give a presentation on how to engage in advocacy.

Catholic Bishop Emeritus William Skylstad will give theological reflections based on Pope Francis' encyclicals, "Hope, Grace, Mercy," and "Laudato Si'" on climate change.

In a workshop on environmental issues, Jessie Dye of Earth Ministry will discuss toxic-free kids, solar tax credits, pesticide notification and reducing CO2 emissions. John Sirois of the Upper Columbia United Tribes will also share his observations as a participant in the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, as

well as state and local issues on earth and river resources.

In a second workshop, Sr. Sharon Park, OP, director of the Washington State Catholic Conference, and the Rev. Paul Benz, co-director of the Faith Action Network, will discuss the impact of two initiatives on wealth inequality.

In a workshop on education issues, Jonas Cox of Gonzaga University's School of Education, and Ivan Corley, principal of Grant Elementary School, will discuss issues related to funding schools and testing, curriculum changes and struggles schools face.

Phil Tyler, vice president of the NAACP-Spokane, and Layne Pavey, mental health clinician, and member of Smart Justice Spokane and I Did the Time, will inform participants about criminal justice issues before the legislature, including ban the box, abolishing legal financial obligations and certificates of restoration.

Also bringing a global-local
Continued on page 3

FAN honors Tri-Cities imam for his leadership

By Alyssa Nedrow

Faith Action Network (FAN) of Washington presented Imam Mohamed Elsehmawy of the Islamic Center of the Tri-Cities their Interfaith Leadership Award at their Annual Dinner during November in Seattle.

FAN, a statewide, interfaith nonprofit organization, partners for the common good with more than 100 faith communities across the state.

The Islamic Center in the Tri-Cities (ICTC) and Imam Mohamed Elsehmawy have been in partnership with FAN for a year, working together to tend the flame of interfaith understanding and collaboration.

In presenting the award, FAN co-director Paul Benz said Elsehmawy and ICTC embody the spirit of interfaith partnership. During 2015, the Islamic Center planted a pear tree on the grounds of Shalom United Church of Christ as a gift of peace to signify the bridge of connection between religions and the connection of love, faith and humanity.

In accepting the award, Elsehmawy reflected on the importance of and need for this peace and connection.

The dinner followed recent attacks on Beirut, Lebanon, and Paris, France.

Many attendees were saddened and confused by the violence that is taking place everyday all over the world, said Paul.

Elsehmawy's dream is to one day turn on the TV and hear that there is no war in the world.

"Terrorism does not have any religion," he said. "I'm really sad when I see Jewish children killed. I'm really sad when I

Continued on page 3

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Religion News Briefs

Around the World

World Council of Churches News, PO Box 2100
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WCC, AACC express grave concern on Burundi

The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) expressed concern for people of Burundi in a situation of tension and escalating human rights violations. In a statement issued on Dec. 18, they called attention to "the brutal violence, targeted attacks, extrajudicial killings, severe oppression and incitement of communal tensions."

They appealed to leaders of Burundi to "step back from the path of violence onto the path of peace," and called for "responsible leadership that does not tolerate complicity in killings and other violations so prevalent in the country. We pray that all those who now espouse violence and division there will pursue the things that make for peace in this wounded land."

Appeal made to ratify Rights of Migrant Workers

On International Migrants' Day on Dec. 18, the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, the Conference of European Churches and the WCC appealed to states to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. It is poorly ratified, particularly by migrant-receiving countries in Europe. The convention, adopted 25 years ago, is the most comprehensive, coherent international instrument to protect human rights of migrants and their families, and promote their access to justice, humane and lawful working and living conditions. It also challenges abuse and exploitation of migrant workers and families in the migration process.

Protestants, Catholics agree on refugee services

A coalition of Protestant and Catholic organizations has made an agreement with the Italian government to provide travel and integration services for refugees from North Africa and the Middle East. The government will provide visas to ensure the right to take up residence. The visas will not allow passage to other countries in the European Union. Christian agencies will furnish airline tickets to Italy, plus accommodation, assistance with asylum procedures, educational opportunities and Italian language courses.

Air travel is an alternative to dangers of illegal passage across the Mediterranean, described by Marco Impagliazzo of the Catholic lay movement Sant'Egidio as "a death journey" for up to 3,700 migrants who died or went missing in 2015. With the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy, Sant'Egidio soon will open offices in Morocco and Lebanon, and possibly Ethiopia. The first arrivals in Italy are expected in late January 2016.

The Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, met with Italian religious leaders and said, "This agreement is an essential step in addressing the humanitarian crisis we face. It is a model for churches, faith-organizations, governments and the international community to act together to respect the dignity and safety of all, and our common interest to realize justice and peace on earth."

Christian organizations will contribute \$1.3 million initially. The Italian government will provide no funds, only the visas.

Faith leaders played vital role in climate talks

Church leaders and other leaders of faith communities played a vital role in Paris, said the general secretary of the WCC, in an interview during the week following the COP21 UN conference on climate change. In Paris, Olav said, there was a creative interaction among civil society, vulnerable communities and politicians, "working together in ways we haven't seen before." He praised religious organizations for "learning to speak the same language" in "representing the voices of the poorest communities who are worst affected by climate change."

"Monitoring and implementation of the agreement are of the utmost importance," he said, adding that pressure for environmental action must be maintained to "hold world leaders accountable to the commitments they have made."

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Alliance informs on digital citizenship bill

The Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media (NARM) has learned that a state senator and two representatives are co-sponsoring a bill that would promote digital citizenship and media literacy through Washington schools.

Senator Marko Liias and Representatives Lillian Ortiz-Self and Strom Peterson seek other state senators and representatives to co-sponsor the bill they will introduce after the session begins Jan. 11 in Olympia.

The legislators said that "as technology becomes more prevalent, students must learn how to use technology thoughtfully,

ethically and responsibly."

The goal is to provide a process for students, parents, guardians, teachers, school employees, administrators, volunteers and the community to discuss safe use of technology and digital citizenship.

It includes digital and media literacy related to ethics, etiquette and security, and having the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and interpret media.

"That's the work the NARM has been doing in relationship with schools," said John Caputo, NARM director and chair of communication leadership studies at Gonzaga University.

The bill calls for the Washington

State School Directors' Association to revise and distribute its policy and procedure on electronic resources and internet safety to address safe technology use and digital citizenship.

The NARM promotes digital and media literacy in schools through video contests and media events that involve students.

It recognizes people in media who act responsibly. It offers films to raise issues on the images of women and men in media, which define and limit cultural roles.

For information, call 313-3578 or visit www.nwaresponsiblemedia.org.

Sister City proposal awaits approval

After taking more than 300 Gonzaga University communication students to Cagli, Italy, over nearly 13 years, John Caputo, director of the communication leadership studies program, proposed that Cagli be a Sister City for Spokane.

"After much work between the cities, the Spokane Sister Cities

Commission passed a unanimous resolution to support a Sister Cities Agreement between the two cities on Nov. 3," said John, who is also meeting with Washington State Sister Cities Organization.

It has been passed on to the International Sister Cities Organization in Washington, D.C., for final approval.

The American-Italian Club of Spokane and the Washington State Sons of Italy have also been sponsors of the agreement.

The Mayor of Cagli and the Cagli Sister Cities Committee have suggested steps to make this a global, cross-cultural, person-to-person reality, John said.

For information, call 313-6656.

RESULTS organizes group in Spokane

The Spokane area RESULTS group is sponsoring a "Save a Life" lunch from noon to 1:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 23, at Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington St.

Participants will learn about RESULTS, a volunteer organization that creates the political will to end poverty.

Organizer Randy Crowe said

that each day, worldwide, more than 16,000 children under the age of five die from preventable causes, like pneumonia or malaria.

"We can spend a few hours a month to use our voices to save a child's life," he said. "RESULTS advocates are volunteers, not paid lobbyists."

"We come from all around the country and the world. We prove that every voice has power

and that by bringing our voices together, we can change the world," Randy added.

Volunteers receive training, support and inspiration to become skilled advocates who advise policy makers towards decisions that improve access to education, health and economic opportunity.

For information, call 232-9589 or email randycrowe.crowe@gmail.com.

Nonprofit Network hosts lunch on Jan. 11

Spokane Nonprofit Network's Brown Bag Lunch will be on "Open Reflections on Nonprofit Culture" from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday, Jan. 11, at the Spokane County United Way, 920 N. Washington.

The first 30 minutes will be dedicated to networking, with an exchange of business cards and information about the participating nonprofit organizations.

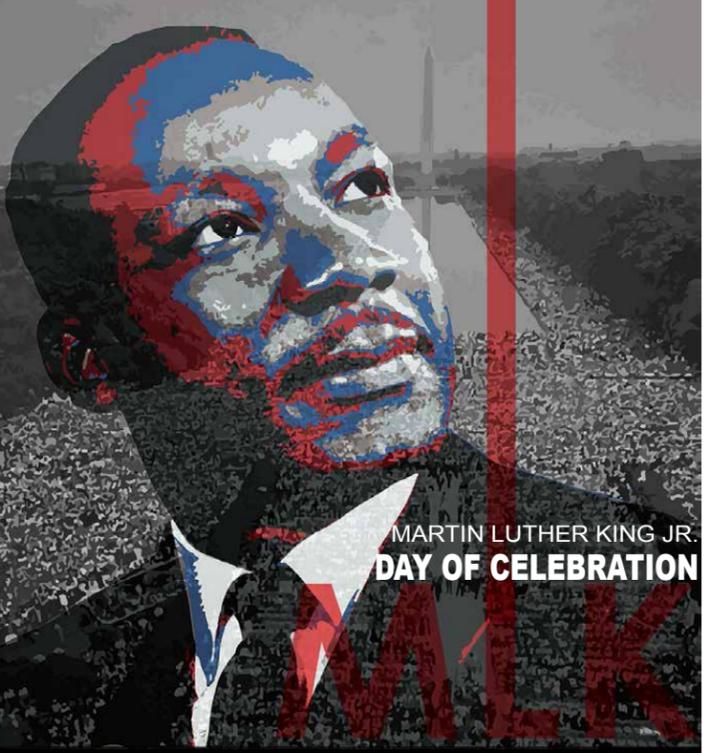
The program will look at how the sum of attitudes, customs and beliefs define nonprofits.

Convened by Washington

Nonprofits and Spokane County United Way, the Spokane Nonprofit Network creates space for nonprofit leaders and staff to learn, connect and share resources.

The gathering is open to anyone with an interest in nonprofits.

For information, call 855-299-2922 or email info@washingttonnonprofits.org.



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For more information, call (509) 455-8722 or visit mlkspokane.org

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Area peace and justice league honored by Fellowship of Reconciliation

As part of the 100th anniversary celebration of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) in New York City in November, Mark Hamlin of the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) was on hand to receive FOR's Local Hero award for PJALS as one of its affiliates.

PJALS is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2015-2016.

Mark not only gave an acceptance speech on the importance of PJALS work for peace and justice in the region, but also learned about FOR's history at a centennial exhibit at Union Theological Seminary's James Chapel.

Before the end of a 1914 ecumenical conference in Switzerland seeking to prevent war in Europe, World War I had begun. Participants pledged to work together for peace. That December, Christians met in Cambridge, England, and founded the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

The U.S. FOR was founded in November 1915 in Garden City, Long Island, N.Y. The FOR is an international, interfaith movement with affiliates in 50 countries. Its members include Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Baha'i, people of indigenous and other



Liz Moore and Shar Lichty, co-directors, show plaque with Mark Hamlin, who received it in New York.

faith traditions, and no religious affiliation.

Mark also visited the FOR offices in Nyack, N.Y., north of New York City, where he saw a memorial to contributions of members and supporters.

The main event, he said, was a multi-faith service at the Riverside Church, including an address by Arun Gandhi, a grandson of Mohandas Gandhi, and the presentation of three awards.

The Local Hero Award recognizes FOR-related groups

that work tirelessly for justice and reconciliation in their communities and regions, engaging people to build a just nonviolent world. Douglas Mackey of Olympia had nominated PJALS.

Laurie Childers, the FOR National Council president and member of the Western Washington and Oregon FOR, spoke of attending a PJALS Action Conference in Spokane.

In a recent interview, Laurie said she was impressed how PJALS involved young people

as speakers, musicians and workshop leaders, with older people listening to their ideas.

"As a culture, we do not spotlight young people enough," said Laurie, who lives in Corvallis.

She has been a donor for 30 years and has been involved for 24 years in planning for the July FOR conferences at the Seabeck, Wash., Conference Center.

Mark, a former PJALS Steering Committee member and chair, is now on the committee as an advisor. He began connecting

with PJALS 14 years ago, after the push to go to war in Iraq following the attack on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I was looking to be involved in local actions and found PJALS a home, a place with people of common beliefs," said Mark, who has worked in construction and computer consulting, and now is focusing on sustainable building.

He recently completed online studies in social work and teaches nonviolent communication to prisoners at Airway Heights.

"I am convinced that nonviolent communication is the basis for developing a more nonviolent world," he said.

At the awards event in New York City, Mark said there were two other awards.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Award went to two women from the Spirit House Project in Atlanta, Ga., for racial justice and multicultural coalition work. The Pfeffer International Peace Award went to two young men, a Palestinian and a former Israeli soldier, who urge non-violent action against the occupation and violence in their lands through the organization Combatants for Peace.

For information, call 999-9759 or visit pjals.org.



Imam Mohamed Elsehmawy

FAN speaker promotes language of love

Continued from page 1
see Christian children killed. I'm really sad when I see Muslim children killed. For what? God created human beings to spread peace on the earth."

Other speakers addressed the importance of working as people of all faiths to come together in partnership for the common good.

"We must be the faith

community so that we can speak to the issues," said the Rev. Carey Anderson of First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Seattle, the keynote speaker. "There is something going on beneath the waterline, and that something is structural racism."

He proposed that people use a new language.

"We must equip people with a language of love, a language of harmony, a language of social

justice. A language that says injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," he said.

"There are consequences if we leave this place without this new language. There is an ecclesial issue we must address if we do not see ourselves connected—connected by head, heart, passion, faith and social justice," said Carey.

For information, call 206-625-9790.

Faith leaders share insights on policies

Continued from page 1
connections perspective will be Skyler Oberst, president of the Spokane Interfaith Council, member of the Human Rights Commission and legislative assistant with Spokane City Council, discussing policy recommendations from the 2015 Parliament of World Religions related to city and state issues.

Sr. Sharon and Paul, who are involved in legislative advocacy

with the Washington State Legislature, will review issues before the 2016 session.

The Rev. Dale Cockrum, Inland District superintendent of the United Methodist Church, Lutheran Bishop Martin Wells, and Episcopal Bishop Jim Waggoner Jr., will also present reflections and prayers to inspire participation in the year's legislative process.

Nonprofit agencies and

ministries will bring displays to share resources about legislative initiatives and their programs that serve people in the region.

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

For information, call 535-1813 or email mary@thefigtree.org. Fliers are at thefigtree.org/FigTreeEvent.pdf.

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Center plans to build larger facility to serve more children, families

Continued from p. 1
the center to have him participate in the ECEAP preschool program. Now he's 21.

Freda, who was studying developmental psychology at Eastern Washington University to be a school counselor, began to volunteer. Then she came on staff as a teacher and continued at the center after she graduated in 1995, working as a social worker and as the director of children's services before becoming executive director.

"This project is dear to my heart," she said. "Over the years, I have watched services expand and seen their impact on diverse families and the community."

The new building will mean all the services can be under one roof.

"It's important for us to stay in this neighborhood so we are accessible to families and schools by bus and walking," Freda said.

The children's services serve 80 children in the before- and after-school programs, summer program and preschool. The after-school program is currently at Grant School.

Freda plans to keep the partnership with the school district while raising funds and during the construction phase.

"It's been good to partner with Grant Elementary School, where 35 children from Grant, Sheridan and Franklin are in the after-school program. In addition, there are 47 children in the preschool," Freda said. "The new facility will make it possible to serve 150 children and serve teens year round, rather than just in the summer."

The 10-week summer teen pro-



Freda Gandy shows house and fire hall the center will replace.

gram was designed for 10 teens, but had up to 25. In a teen space in the new building, students will have help with homework, be mentored and be in leadership programs year-round.

Last year, 1,800 families used referral services for rent and utility assistance, help with back-to-school supplies and holiday assistance.

Freda said the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center also expands the capacity of nonprofits to work together in collaborative efforts for families.

"We do not do everything for families, but refer families to other services and resources they need," she said.

Its family services connect with Child Protective Services, foster care visitation, parenting classes and counseling.

The parenting classes are using a new curriculum that builds secure attachments and relationships to help families and children—in their homes or when children are removed from their homes—deal

with anger management and use positive discipline.

"We will work with the state on parent-child visitations for children in foster care in a safe environment under the supervision of social workers who will support the parents' growth and development.

"In the current facilities, we cannot do enough," Freda added. "The state has parents and children on a waiting list and needs more providers for visitations and parenting classes."

More space and services will mean there will be need for more staffing to build the center's capacity in administration and programs, which in turn will require increasing the donor base.

The Spokane Ministers' Fellowship has become involved and has planned a Prayer Breakfast from 9 to 10:30 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 9, in Hemmingson Center Ballroom at Gonzaga University to build support from the faith community to pray for and support the center, the families, the programs and the campaign.

"We want to keep in the forefront that Dr. King was a minister. One way to keep his legacy alive is to have a building where no one is turned away," said Freda. "The fire station has served us well, but it's time for the city to have a modern facility named after Dr. King to embody his life and legacy for the next 40 years."

The MLK Center organizes the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Commemorative Service, at 4 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 17, at Morning Star Baptist Church, 3909 W. Rowan, and the March, Rally and Resource Fair from 10 a.m.

to 2 p.m., Monday, Jan. 18, at the Spokane Convention Center.

The resource fair is part of its collaborative effort to bring social service agencies together to see

what services are available. It brings together people who serve others with people in need.

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

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Walter Kendricks is speaker for MLK Commemorative Celebration

The Rev. Walter Kendricks of Morningstar Missionary Baptist Church will be the keynote speaker for the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Service from 4 to 6 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 17, at Morningstar Baptist Church, 3909 W. Rowan.

Walter said he grew up near Cleveland in the 1960s and was shaped by the assassinations of Dr. King and Robert Kennedy, by the fires and race riots, by Carl Stokes' election as the first African American mayor.

He worked from 1977 to 2012 with United Airlines in Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver and Seattle. He was a prison minister after being ordained in 1997 at the Martin Luther King Memorial Baptist Church in Renton. He served Eastside Baptist in Tacoma, until coming to Morningstar in Spokane in 2013.

In an article in the February Fig Tree, he will share his story of rebuilding the Spokane church and doing prison ministry here.

He is involved with the Spokane Minister's Fellowship, which is planning the Jan. 9 Prayer Breakfast Benefit for the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center. He is also involved with the center and the Spokane NAACP.

For information, call 534-4878 or email wkendricks@outlook.com.

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New Catholic bishop finds that hope is grounded in reality and in faith

When he began last May as Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Spokane, Bishop Thomas Daly found the Catholic community in the area living “in a long winter” following “the cloud of abuse and bankruptcy.”

“It was hard for Catholics to step out of that winter,” he said.

There were issues that needed to be addressed, but now Bishop Daly said he is ready “to lead the diocese to focus on priestly formation, Catholic education and the spiritual growth of the Catholic faithful in Eastern Washington.”

Media coverage, he said, had an impact, as coverage of religion moved to silence, then to rejection and hostility. In the late 1980s and 1990s, he said that the Archdiocese of San Francisco shifted from having good relationships with media and city officials to being defensive.

Instead of being paralyzed by impressions, Bishop Daly said, “we need to be realistic, humble and trusting. We can’t lose our sense of joy or sense of being people of hope.”

“**Hope is not optimism** or wishful thinking, hope is reality grounded in faith and Jesus’ promise ‘I will be with you to the end of the age,’” he said.

“The Pope speaks of the ‘Joy of the Gospel.’ With what happened in the past in the diocese, we have a role to spread joy. As Pope Francis emphasized, too many Catholics forget Easter and focus on Lent. It’s like saying we are in winter and need spring,” he said.

Given that a bishop’s role is to teach, govern and sanctify, he appreciates working with school personnel, priests and families in the diocese’s schools.

In the Archdiocese of San Francisco where he was ordained in 1987, Bishop Daly was vocations director and president of Marin Catholic High. In 2011, Pope Benedict XVI named him auxiliary bishop of San Jose responsible for formation of priests.

Bishop Daly has found that the Diocese of Spokane’s 13 elementary schools range from 36 students at Guardian Angels School in Uniontown to 300 at St. Aloysius School. The high schools are Gonzaga Prep in Spokane with 800 students, Tri-Cities Prep in Pasco with 300, and DeSales in Walla Walla with 100.

A poll of U.S. Catholics by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), requested by Holy Cross Fathers at the University of Portland and Notre Dame, studied Catholic families in preparation for the recent visit of Pope Francis I and the Synod on Families in Rome.

The study found that two-thirds



Bishop Thomas Daly focuses on priestly formation, education.

of Catholic families do not have their children in Catholic schools or religious education.

“It’s especially a concern if they are not being educated in the family,” Bishop Daly said.

The diocese’s pastoral plan, “Know, Love, Serve,” adopted under Bishop Blase Cupich, began with an emphasis on faith formation the first year, followed by strengthening community and young adults this year, liturgy the next year and evangelization the fourth year.

“The plan gives us a direction, but as I told participants at our recent Assembly, we’re not checking off boxes. Faith formation is a concern every year,” he said.

“We need to continue to address vocations of priests and faith formation, giving more attention to schools and religious education,” he said, noting that the study suggests that the diocese needs to know why families don’t send children to Catholic schools.

“Do they cost too much? Is there confusion about the purpose?” Bishop Daly asks. He added that the Nazareth Guild, started by Bishop Blase Cupich, helps with tuition for Catholic schools.

Bishop Daly finds outreach “an area of blessing for the diocese,” because Catholic Charities of Spokane serves a large number of poor, needy, marginalized and

homeless people.

“Catholic Charities continued to serve the region through the years the diocese was dealing with the challenges of abuse and bankruptcy,” he said. “It would have been easy to take our eyes off care for the poor, but we do not stop caring for others. We need to deal with our own issues while we are caring for people.”

“I have been surprised by the poverty in Spokane,” he added.

Driving to say Mass with the Sisters of the Mission of Charity in Hillyard from where he lives at Bishop White Seminary, he realized, “We have poverty in Spokane. The poor need assistance and hope. The church has an important role in serving them.”

“We are to proclaim the Good News working with priests, laity, and women and men religious to strengthen community to give witness to the gospel,” he said.

The problem is not the church in the world, but the world in the church, so the church’s mission is not co-opted by pettiness, jealousy or despair.”

Soon after he was installed as bishop on May 20, he appointed Fr. Dan Barnett as rector of Bishop White Seminary, and appointed pastors, with 18 changes. He also appointed the Vicar of Priests, the Vicar of Finances and the Vicar General, who also serve parishes.

“No priest works full time in the diocesan office,” he said. “All have pastoral responsibilities outside the Chancery.”

Bishop Daly as of late November had visited 40 of the 80 parishes and many schools, including Connell, Basin City, Chewelah, Uniontown, Tekoa and Clarkston.

The bishop has been impressed with the friendliness of people in the diocese and Spokane’s small-town flavor. He noted that in contrast with the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Diocese of San Jose, which are each 1,000 square miles, the Diocese of Spokane is 24,000 square miles—smaller than the Diocese of Helena with 55,000 square miles or Maine with 33,000 square miles.

“I can reach any part of the parish in three hours or less,” he said.

There are 100,000 Catholics in 80 parishes in the Diocese of Spokane, in contrast with 600,000 in 50 parishes in the Diocese of San Jose and 450,000 in 90 parishes in the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

The Catholic Church is visible with Gonzaga University and Providence Health Care.

“With changes in the way farming is now done, many parishes in wheat farming communities are small. For example, there are 10 families at Sprague,” he said.

While he was involved ecumenically in Marin, in the Spokane

diocese he said his emphases are in diocesan and school settings, and in addressing financial issues.

He has asked Bishop Emeritus William Skylstad to continue the ecumenical ministries, along with spiritual direction in the seminary, doing Marriage Encounter and retreats, and filling in for priests.

“In Eastern Washington, with the reality of advanced communication technology, lines between work and family/home are blurred,” Bishop Daly has observed. “People need time to be quiet.”

“In agriculture, people sense God in weather, rain and sun. They know growing crops takes patience. In technology, it seems that men and women are creators, and that God is absent. In fast communication, patience is antiquated,” he observed.

“As I drove through wheat fields during the harvest, I felt that the lesson from the farming community is trust, patience and a focus on need as opposed to want,” he said.

“In the beauty of this area, I give thanks to God. The Pope’s encyclical reminds us that Creation is a gift from God,” said Bishop Daly, who always liked going to the country and mountains from his home in San Francisco.

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Whitworth professor's book delves into religious activists as 'outsiders'

From his interest in the Northwest and religion in the region, Whitworth history professor Dale Soden did 20 years of research for his recent book, *Outsiders in a Promised Land: Religious Activists in Pacific Northwest History*.

In his 30 years at Whitworth, he has taught American history, the Vietnam War, Pacific Northwest history, American popular culture, intellectual history and post Civil War history.

He taught two years while finishing doctoral studies at the University of Washington in 1980 after undergraduate studies at Pacific Lutheran University. He taught five years at Oklahoma Baptist University before coming to Whitworth in 1985.

Dale wrote on religion and public life in the Northwest in his first book, a biography of *The Rev. Mark Matthews: An Activist in the Progressive Era in Seattle* (from 1902 to 1940). Other books include a history of Whitworth, *An Enduring Venture of Mind and Heart*, and *Historic Photos of Washington State*.

"People normally talk of the Northwest as the most secular region in the United States—the 'None Zone.' Early Pacific Northwest history has focused on entrepreneurs, explorers, miners, loggers and politicians. Many often spent time in saloons, gambling halls and brothels," he said.

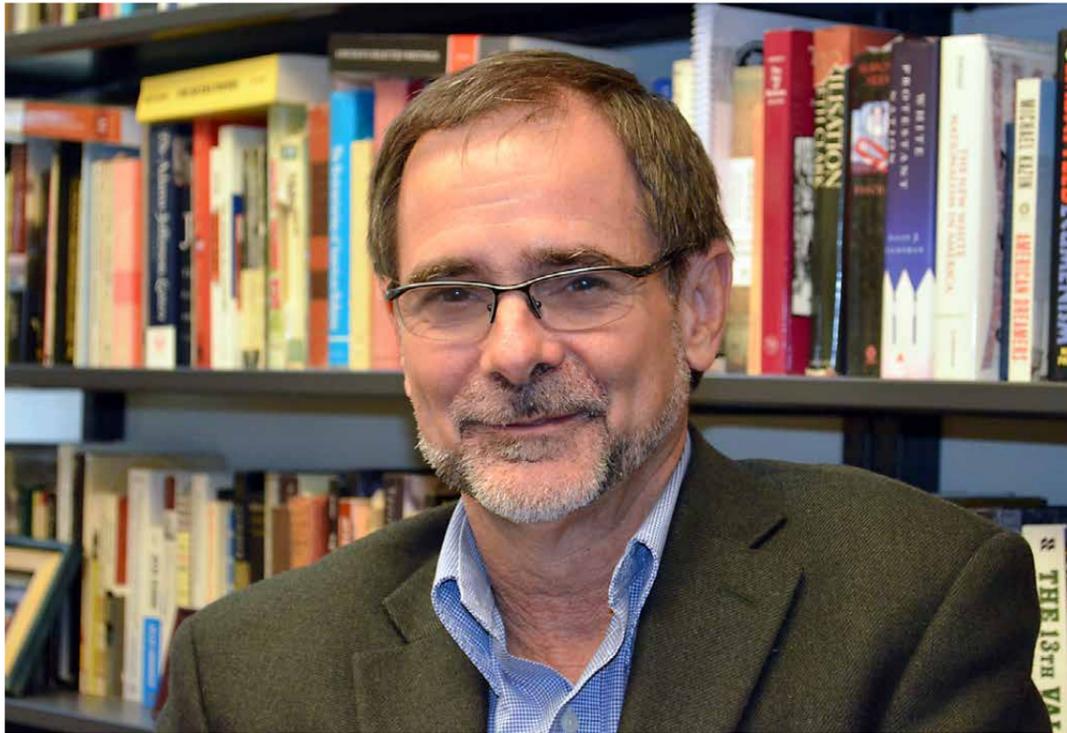
"Except for missionaries, we hear little of religious people helping shape the culture," said Dale, a member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Spokane, "but Protestants, Catholics and Jews worked together to provide social institutions.

"In spite of the Northwest being the least church region, religious activists were more important than previously understood," he said. "Both progressives and conservatives in Oregon and Washington were outsiders and considered themselves to be outsiders to the prevailing culture."

Dale found that from the late 1800s to the 1930s, religious activists sought to protect women and children. They established schools, orphanages, rescue homes, YMCAs and YWCAs, and fought for prohibition and regulation of child labor.

During and after the Depression, activists began to advocate for unemployment insurance, education, public assistance and a minimum wage.

In the mid-20th century, progressive and liberal Protestants, Catholics and Jews advocated for civil rights of African Americans and Japanese Americans. Religious conservatives were wary about communism, labor unions



Dale Soden intersects history of liberal and conservative religious activists in the Northwest.

and secularism in public schools.

Dale said the divisions grew to a "full-blown culture war" in the 1970s, reacting to radical feminism and public acceptance of abortion and homosexuality.

The second half of the book explores the emerging debate by the middle class on whether conservative or liberal social values should prevail.

For conservatives, the values are family, patriotism and capitalism.

For liberals—as individuals, denominations and ecumenical organizations—advocacy for the poor, marginalized, and racial and ethnic minorities was central.

"In the present, we see the clash of cultures between conservative social activists, who oppose tolerance of gays and abortion, and liberal/progressive social activists, who advocate against war and for the environment, justice for the poor and gay rights," said Dale.

Religious activists reflect the divide in the political system, said Dale, whose interest in religious activists began in his undergraduate years in the 1970s, when civil rights struggles, the anti-war movement and environmental issues led to heated debates among people of faith.

Dale learned that:

- There are more examples of religious activism of greater breadth and depth than he anticipated.

- A Methodist minister resisted the internment of Japanese Americans.

- Some Protestant ministers were in the Klu Klux Klan in the 1920s.

- The current cultural war between liberals and conservatives

has longer and deeper roots than he realized. It began before the 1970s conflicts between the Moral Majority and Focus on the Family on one side and feminism and advocacy for the marginalized, poor and gays on the other side. The conservative-liberal split went back to the 1930s and 1940s.

Dale also learned:

- about many women involved in religious activism on behalf of various causes;

- about the role of religious activism in the 1960s Civil Rights movement in Portland and Seattle, and

- about the role of ecumenical organizations—councils of churches in Portland and Seattle, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and the Washington Association of Churches—now the Faith Action Network.

"Ecumenism was an important feature, beginning early in the century with Protestant churches organizing around issues for social change and justice—such as improving conditions of the working class; challenging behaviors like alcoholism, prostitution and gambling; promoting peace activism; developing environmental statements, and reconciling with Native Americans and non-Christians."

Evangelical groups like Promise Keepers, Focus on the Family and branches of the National Association of Evangelicals also included advocacy, he said.

"Catholics were involved in

ecumenical organizations, then dropped out of them and recently have been involved again. Through the 1960s, they were active with, although not necessarily formally tied to, Protestant ecumenical organizations," he said. "Their contribution to social activism has been in advocacy for the poor and on peace issues, as well as opposing Communism and abortion. Catholic bishops have been active on environmental issues."

The book includes the Jewish community's advocacy for social justice.

"In the early 20th century, rabbis were socially active along with Protestant pastors and Catholic priests. They opposed child labor and advocated for providing ser-

vices for the poor," Dale said. "In the middle of the century, Jewish organizations, especially of the Reform tradition, advocated for social justice for marginalized groups."

A chapter looks at African Americans in Portland and Seattle, led by the Rev. Samuel McKinney and the Rev. John Adams, classmates of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. They organized resistance to segregation.

Dale concludes *Outsiders in a Promised Land*, which was published by Oregon State University Press, with two cautions: 1) liberal/progressive activists may be in danger of being indistinguishable from the prevailing culture of secular peace and environmental activists, and 2) conservatives may be so far outside the culture they are irrelevant.

"The outsider status is important, but people can't be too outside or inside the culture to influence it," he said.

Dale also finds that more evangelical churches are now engaged in social issues related to environment, human trafficking and poverty.

"I end with cautious optimism that conservatives and liberals can find more ways to work together," Dale said, noting that the greatest division today is about how to bring about God's Kingdom.

In working on the book, he gained greater appreciation for the role of institutions.

"The story continues to unfold. This is not the last word on religious activism in the Northwest," said Dale, who hopes the book gives a historical framework for understanding the present context.

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Intercommunity Center engages people in the pursuit of justice

Over its 25 years, the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, a partnership of 19 women's religious communities and one men's religious community, has challenged corporations to change unjust practices, advocated for sustainable water resources, sought to end human trafficking, facilitated communities through Women's Justice Circles, and empowered young adults to gather for justice, spirituality and community building.

"In 1991, women's religious communities met and asked what they could do together better than alone to respond to critical needs of the times," said Holy Names Sister Linda Haydock, its founding director.

"It's important to build community to address issues," she said, "because we do not want to be so issue-driven that we lose sight of the community and dialogue."

The center works with Catholic, ecumenical and interfaith groups.

"We are also a peace and justice center creating systemic change for economic justice," Linda added.

The IPJC, which started as a Northwest center, is now global, working in 19 countries, relating to people face-to-face and through technology.

"The world is struggling. As political, economic, social and ecclesiastical systems break down, we need to create new systems," she said. "We are people of hope, because nothing is impossible to God."

"If we dream it, we can do it. Systemic change is a long-haul process, so we need to be rooted in community and spirituality," she said.

After graduating from high school in Seattle, Sr. Linda attended the University of Washington and Seattle University. She taught at Immaculate High School in the inner city before she entered the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

Seeing the commitment of the Holy Names sisters to poor students and experiencing a month of immersion in 1980 in local life in Nicaragua, she realized she could do more and do it more boldly with others than alone.

In Nicaragua, she lived with Maryknoll Sister Maura Clark, one of four sisters killed the next fall in El Salvador.

For her, Holy Names sisters were models for living with joy, working for justice, serving marginalized people and transforming the world.

In 1980, Sr. Linda began formation in religious life in Portland, where she took her vows and began theological education. She



Sr. Linda Haydock, SNJM, has led the center for 25 years.

led a campus ministry, and taught adults about theology, and about peace and justice.

As executive director, she envisions, creates and helps lead programs, finding ways to make them sustainable.

Women's Justice Circles are in 50 cities in Washington, around the nation and in eight countries, including Cambodia, Tanzania, Columbia and Peru. There are Spanish-speaking groups in rural Washington. The IPJC has facilitated circles for 15 years.

Issues circles address vary.

- A circle at Transitions in Spokane addressed pedestrian safety for nearby school children.

- A circle at St. Matthew Episcopal in Auburn pursues micro-business opportunities for Latinas.

- A circle at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Connell held a forum on building stronger families.

- A circle in Cashmere won the school superintendent's support to include Latino parents in creating anti-bullying programs.

- Twenty-eight justice circles in Tanzania help women overcome personal and cultural barriers with a preschool, leadership skills, micro-businesses and maternal health care.

"Circles can have grassroots, direct service solutions and can raise challenges to bring systemic change," Sr. Linda said. "We mentor women to name issues that keep them impoverished and to gain skills to address those issues."

Beyond the circles, the center collaborates with organizations with different approaches and resources.

Justice Cafés in 30 cities in 12 U.S. states and in six countries are a way for young adults to talk in real time and online about immigration, just economics, labor trafficking, climate change and spiritual contemplation.

After young adults converse face-to-face, they go online to connect with friends from other cafés to build community, Sr. Linda said.

Groups may meet 90 minutes in a coffee shop, on a campus, at a church or in another space. They download resources, such as a video conversation starter on the month's topic. They post pictures on Facebook, where other groups access them and converse.

The Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment has worked with 107 corporations to address numerous social and environmental justice issues, has participated in thousands of dialogues with corporate executives and has filed 100 shareholder resolutions in its 20 years.

"We partner with the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, whose members include faith-based communities—Catholic, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Lutheran and United Church of Christ—and socially responsible investment funds," Sr. Linda said. "We address climate change, sustainable agriculture, water, global supply chains and access to health."

The coalition has succeeded in bringing corporate change on access to HIV/AIDS medicines and ending use of child labor in cocoa fields.

The NWCRI also challenges

the hospitality industry—hotels, airlines and tourism—on human trafficking.

The coalition has also worked with private prison companies, including GEO Group, human rights policies.

Sr. Linda often meets with "people who are unaware they can bring corporate change in environmental sustainability, predatory lending and human rights."

"We make progress by bringing faith to bear in the board rooms," she said.

"Because we are faith-based communities, corporations are eager to be in dialogue so we will not submit a shareholder resolution at their annual meeting," she said. "We seek dialogue with the companies, who are not eager for change, and we have a good track record."

"Dialogue means being in relationships rather than being adversarial. It helps us progress with Fortune 500 corporations," Sr. Linda said. "They know we will be there for the long haul."

She believes corporations appreciate respectful engagement in dialogue to find new solutions.

The idea took hold in the 1970s, when the faith community held corporations accountable by using divestment and boycotts to challenge apartheid in South Africa.

"Faith-based shareholders could make social change by calling corporations to accountability," she said.

"Having partners helps make our vision reality," she said.

Sr. Linda, other staff and volunteers lead workshops and webinars in Catholic, ecumenical, interfaith and secular gatherings on peace and non-violence, spirituality and justice, corporate responsibility, leadership development, simple living, immigration reform, human trafficking, environmental sustainability, legislative advocacy and inter-religious dialogue.

Other programs educate.

- The center holds convocations every four years, bringing national and international speakers, and including workshops, ritual and conversation.

- It publishes a quarterly justice journal, "A Matter of Spirit." The

recent issue explores the water issues that can lead to conflict: access, sanitation, drought, farming and fishing.

- There are 80,000 online downloads of its educational resources each year.

- It has a new 45-page booklet with a four-session curriculum on climate change.

- It proposes state and federal legislation.

Sr. Linda said people often feel overwhelmed with the litany of issues.

"I encourage people to pick one they are passionate about," she said. "All are connected. If we are rooted in spirituality and community, we won't become discouraged, overwhelmed or burned out."

"We need to examine issues as faith communities, so we can care for and transform the earth," she said.

Sponsoring communities are the Adrian Dominican Sisters, the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace, the Oregon Province of Jesuits, the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, U.S. Ontario Province, the Sisters of Providence Mother Joseph Province, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and Tacoma Dominicans.

Affiliates include other Benedictine and Dominican communities, Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sisters of St. Francis, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Sisters of St. Mary of Oregon, the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, the Society of the Sacred Heart, the Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union.

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Providence executive finds ministry in interactions with staff, patients

By Sue Orlowski, SP

Alex Jackson sees his role as chief executive of Sacred Heart Medical Center and Children's Hospital, and Holy Family Hospital as a ministry.

Since beginning at the hospitals in 2013, he has sought to make a difference in the lives of people and health care in the Inland Northwest.

He followed Elaine Couture, who was promoted to chief executive for all Providence Health Care's 11 entities.

"It's a ministry where I can demonstrate through my life, and through interactions with staff and people the institutions serve, that God is real," he said.

"I don't have to be a different person to work here," Alex said. "I work with my heart, as well as my head. That is what Providence Health and Services are to do as we provide accessible, affordable, quality care.

Alex considers health care a ministry of serving people's physical, personal and spiritual needs.

"Our priorities are clear. We place justice, compassion, and service to poor and vulnerable persons first," he said.

"Hospitals are sacred places. It is a privilege to care for people during their best, as well as their darkest moments. We also care for people during the most blessed moments of their lives: the birth of a child, caring for a sick patient and saying goodbye to a loved one," Alex said.

The vision guiding Providence ministries is: "Together, we answer the call of every person we serve: Know me, care for me, ease my way."

This vision helps him guide staff to provide ministry through safe, effective, compassionate, quality care.

Alex starts each day meeting with leaders from both Sacred Heart and Holy Family Hospitals in what he calls "daily safety huddles."

"In these meetings, I bring leaders together from the hospitals to review safety issues and concerns from the day before. The leaders are present in the moment, which enables the team to mobilize people and resources to fix a problem as soon as possible," he said.

Another spin-off from safety huddles is that they create a greater sense of community among hospital leaders.

Alex's servant leadership style of management includes making regular rounds to listen to and solicit feedback from staff, physicians, nurses and patients.

One day on his rounds, he heard concern that a piece of equipment was reaching the end of its usefulness. He asked employees about the operational implications and incorporated that feedback to bring a resolution.

Using both consumer-driven



Alex Jackson sees his CEO role as a ministry.

and professional-staff-driven approaches, Alex knows from the people affected by decisions how they feel so he can identify future changes to be made.

By being present with people, he hopes they will consider him a mentor and friend. Knowing people personally, he hand writes many thank you notes, especially when a person represents the core values in their work, he said.

He believes it makes a difference to compliment staff when they do a good job.

"I am excited to see people grow and come together to complete a job. I invest in people and relationships, bringing people together to solve problems," he said. "When staff are invited to help solve problems as they arise, they are more apt to give input when other issues arise."

When he was leaving St. Vincent Medical Center in Portland, Ore., a staff member said she would pray for him, because he took an interest in people. He felt her prayers helped him through his early days in Spokane.

Alex's Catholic roots and faith motivate him.

"Health care is in a dynamic time because of the Affordable

Care Act (ACA) and the explosion of technology," he said, noting that the ACA has given millions more Americans access to health insurance, increasing demand for services.

To meet that demand, Providence Health and Services invested in three Urgent Care Centers: one in Spokane Valley, one in North Spokane and one down the hill from Sacred Heart Medical Center. Providence also hired more primary care physicians and staff.

Alex also sees more use of Providence services in primary care, specialty care, urgent care, emergency care, inpatient admissions, baby deliveries and other procedures performed.

"Providence continues to innovate to provide greater access to care at lower cost for patients," he said.

Patients can use their computers, smart phones and tablets for private conversations with health care providers through "Health Express." They can also access personal medical records online through the application of "MyChart."

With these services and urgent care centers, fewer patients use

emergency rooms for non-emergency issues.

"These services are considerably less expensive, more convenient and take less time," said Alex, whose passion is "to reveal God's love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable."

He hopes that in Spokane, as in Portland, there will be more positive clinical outcomes, shorter stays, lower infection rates, and greater patient and staff satisfaction. Those savings free more money for charity care, he said.

A Montana native, Alex earned a master's degree in health care administration from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and completed an administrative fellowship at The Cleveland Clinic.

Then he wanted to return to his roots in the Northwest and felt called to work in Catholic health.

Alex is pleased to continue a tradition of caring through a mission- and value-driven institution, founded on the legacy of the Sisters of Providence, who have served the Inland Northwest for nearly 130 years.

Sacred Heart Medical Center was founded by Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, whose statue represents Washington State in the U.S. Capitol and the capitol building in Olympia.

When the first 31-bed hospital was started in 1886, it was on the Spokane River where the INB Performing Arts Center now sits.

At that spot, there are statues representing a Sister of Providence and a worker building that

first hospital.

Sacred Heart has grown to become a major regional medical center with transplant, adult and pediatric trauma centers, and the only Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in Eastern Washington.

Employees still identify their work as a ministry "of revealing God's love for all through the core values of respect, compassion, justice, excellence and stewardship," he said.

Alex believes his attitude and hard work make a difference in his life and in the lives of others.

"Patients feel vulnerable at some point during their care, so empathetic communication is critical, as well as reliable systems, processes, equipment and teamwork," he said.

Inpatient satisfaction scores reached their highest levels ever in 2015 at both facilities, he said.

Managing expenses is another role. Under the ACA, he said, there has been a decrease in payments to all hospitals nationally, including Providence.

"We focus on quality care at a reduced cost for both outpatient and inpatient services," he said.

Reducing infection rates and patient falls means fewer medications, requesting fewer x-rays and shorter hospital stays, he said.

"Being called to provide care with compassion, respect, excellence, justice and stewardship, I feel I'm part of that sacred ministry," he repeated.

For information, call 474-3131 or visit [washington.providence.org](http://www.washington.providence.org).

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Residential program helps mothers and children heal, improve lives

By Deidre Jacobson

Two large residential homes, sitting side by side in Spokane Valley, house up to nine families—single mothers and their children—as they try to improve their lives.

Recovery from substance abuse, domestic violence and trauma are the themes Angela Slabaugh, executive director of Hearth Homes, sees in the lives of the women who reside there.

For children living there, Hearth Homes strives to reduce their Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) score. ACE is a ranking system for negative events—such as abuse, drugs, divorce or incarceration—that affect children’s health and well-being.

“The program does that by providing a healing environment for the mothers,” Angela said.

The transitional program has four phases: connection, engagement, ownership and transformation. The goal is for the women to move through these phases, so they progress from external to internal motivation.

“This might be moving from the goal of ‘getting my child from Child Protective Services’ to ‘having the skills I need to provide a stable home and nurture my child, long term,’” said Angela. “There is a big difference there.”

Much of the work of Hearth Homes is relational, involving staff, mentors and volunteers, as well as the women and children.

It seeks to transform lives by helping young mothers develop life skills, such as parenting, nutrition, self-care, health, communication, conflict resolution, finance, housekeeping and responsible renting. Women can stay for up to two years.

Each resident prepares a meal once per week for the community as they strive to provide a sacred mealtime and a safe place for engaging in community. The women shop for ingredients from the pantry, which is stocked by donations from community partners.

They earn “boutique bucks” through accomplishing goals. With those, they purchase essential and fun items at the Hearth Homes’ boutique.

Angela grew up in Spokane, attending St. Anthony’s Parish with her mother and grandmother, graduating from Eastern Washington University in 2008 with a bachelor’s degree in social work.

“I have always been drawn to people who are hurting, even as a



Angela Slabaugh said painting mural last summer was a way for women to depict their journeys.

child,” said Angela.

While in college, she attended Life Center, and there made a commitment to Christ.

She traveled to New Orleans to earn a master’s degree in social work in 2009 from Tulane University and work in the rural South on literacy and HIV/AIDS issues.

After graduating, she applied for a job at Hearth Homes, which began in 2004 in Spokane Valley, and was offered an unpaid position, which she turned down, feeling it was not yet time to leave New Orleans.

Two years later, Hearth Homes called again to offer another position, living on site with a stipend.

She had asked God for direction and knew this was the path she was meant to follow. After accepting the offer, she learned the executive director had resigned, and there was no house manager.

When arriving for her new job, her heart sank. The property with two homes side-by-side was in disrepair.

“In some ways, God brought me to Hearth Homes for the same experience as the women,” Angela said.

She lived on site and worked 13 months, building the program and remodeling the home as volunteer power and donations allowed.

“This was a huge learning curve for me,” said Angela. “Most of my work in the beginning was putting out fires. I had to have total dependence on God. God faithfully provided for the needs as Hearth Homes grew.”

Married in February to Nathan Slabaugh, whose father is a Brethren in Christ minister, she and Nathan now attend Anthem Friends Church in Hayden, Idaho.

Hearth Homes relies heavily on the Spokane Valley community to provide much of the needs for the transitional program, managing with a small yearly budget.

Their team is continually connecting individuals, groups and congregations with the needs of Hearth Homes.

In 2014, 19 moms and 28 children were served with an average stay of eight months.

“We focus on encouraging the women to make good choices. They tend to blame others for their circumstances and their own decisions. We use intentional wording when a woman relapses, ‘We recognize you are choosing to use drugs again.’”

“**We have moved away** from the live-in model for staff,” Angela said. “Previously staff would live on-site. However, this took up room and had little influence on the choices women made. We want to empower them and demonstrate trust that they are able to facilitate a healthy home environment with our support.”

“The women are empowered to manage their own homes, and the staff and volunteers ‘do life’ with them, which means living in authentic relationship with the women. We aim to create an environment of grace and accountability, not just performance,” she said. “Doing life together is a challenge and can be messy, but we believe it better demonstrates Christ’s love and transforms the hearts of everyone involved.”

There is no requirement for religious participation there.

“We do not want to be one more person telling them to put on a mask. Instead, we plant seeds

and trust they will grow,” she said. “That may take years.”

Last summer, Hearth Homes’ residents painted a wall-size mural depicting their journeys of hope.

Suzanne Ostersmith, an art professor at Gonzaga University and an artist with Partners Through Art, helped them to create a mural that would give them a voice.

On Aug. 12, Spokane Valley’s mayor, city council members and leaders from Spokane Valley United Methodist Church, Spokane Valley Kiwanis, Gethsemane Lutheran, Spokane Valley Church of the Nazarene, Advent Lutheran and others came to Hearth Homes

to honor the women for their art.

The mural shows the women’s experiences along a winding road leading to a tree of transformation.

Angela stresses the value of community among Hearth Homes’ staff, residents and volunteers and with the Spokane Valley.

Volunteer opportunities abound at Hearth Homes, including yard work and garden beds, home repairs, childcare, boutique, mentoring and class instruction.

Hearth Homes relies on support of individual donors and private grants. Just \$5 a month can help provide meals for families throughout their stay.

For information, call 926-6492 or visit www.hearth-homes.org.

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Media education can help us discern our responsibility and media's role

Twitter has announced it will ban threats and abusive behavior by users. The action is in response to critics calling for Twitter to prevent extremists from using it and other social media to recruit and spread violence.

The policy says Twitter "will not tolerate behavior intended to harass, intimidate or use fear to silence another user's voice" while embracing and encouraging "diverse opinions and beliefs."

Meanwhile, cyberbullying apps are used to harass, intimidate and victimize our young people. What's behind those means to disgrace and undermine individuals?

What are the lines drawn for identifying hateful speech or speech that promotes terrorism on the national and world levels, or bullying on the personal or school levels?

In general, we as citizens have responsibility to know about biases of media outlets, how repetition of information makes lies seem true, and how media choices on what they cover and don't cover influence our perspectives of life and the world.

The Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media in Spokane recognizes that media is one of the most powerful influences shaping attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviors of children, families and communities.

All media and citizens must reflect on media content, access and abuse. Faith communities can join in the education process, along with families and schools.

Here are some questions to consider:

How much is any media outlet or technology wittingly or unwittingly the means for transmitting and repeating hate, racism, bigotry, intolerance, division, extremism and violence that feed into the goals of those who would destroy lives, communities, nations and cultures?

How much does coverage of terrorist motivations and tactics promote terrorism?

Looking at campaign coverage we might ask questions about leadership and citizenship in the digital age:

Do we just let those who compete to lead us engage in a frenzy of bullying and hate

spewed out to us through media?

Is leadership a just popularity contest?

Is leadership about spreading lies and vulgarities to appeal to populist sentiments?

Is leadership about dividing people and putting people down?

What kind of citizenship do we seek to nurture? What kind of citizenship do we want for our young people?

Are media using tools available to them thoughtfully, ethically and responsibly?

Do citizens have tools for digital and media literacy to understand ethics, etiquette and security, to access, analyze, evaluate and interpret what is presented in media?

Doctors advise limiting the hours of screen time a day. Beyond time limits, we need to teach responsible choices about media use. We need young people to avoid mindlessly watching media that promote consumerism, violence, competition, sensation, division, distrust and fear. We need them to watch educational programs that teach history, culture and values.

Media can have a positive influence on society if they educate. In the 1960s, media helped challenge racism, promote human rights, question the Vietnam War and investigate corruption. Those stories had the conflict and sensation requisite for news, but also pursued justice and truth.

Recent media reports on historic, record-breaking windstorms, snowstorms, tornadoes, flooding, droughts and firestorms, not only inform us about these extreme events, but also help build awareness of climate change, draw funding and build community, neighbor-helping-neighbor, recovery efforts. Such reporting can keep us from feeling helpless and fearful.

As we follow media coverage, we need to be attuned to digital and media citizenship and literacy. We need to educate people about the influence of media on our lives and our culture, both so that we are critical media consumers, and so media representatives are stewards of their public trust.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Imagine if money used on guns and weapons went to heal and save lives

Essentially, guns harm, kill and destroy, no matter who uses or has them, or whether they are used, because they divert funds.

If they are used by soldiers in defending a country, guns are there to harm and destroy the other side.

If they are used by the police, guns are there to destroy and kill criminals.

If criminals use guns, they may kill or harm whomever is in their way.

It does not matter which side has guns or if both have them, the main purpose of guns is to harm and to kill.

Perhaps some have them for sport, such as target practice or hunting, but statistics show that guns kill people.

According to the survey of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, 406,496 people died as a result of firearms in the United States from 2001 to 2013. This includes all manner of deaths: homicides, accidents and suicides.

In contrast, CNN reported that 3,030 people died in terrorist incidents inside

the U.S. from 2001 to 2013—in 9/11, the 2001 Anthrax attacks and other incidents. With the number of U.S. citizens who died overseas in terrorist acts, the total is 3,380. Media focus on these numbers.

Since 2002, more than 30,000 people have died and more than 80,000 have been injured every year as a result of gun violence. The population most affected by gun violence is youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years old, according to the Office of Justice.

In a *New York Times* article, David Hemenway, director of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center, said, "Generally, if you live in a civilized society, more guns mean more death. There is no evidence that having more guns reduces crime."

According to the Small Arms Survey, the United States has by far the highest level of gun ownership.

According to the Crime Prevention Center, "America has the highest gun homicide rate, and the highest number of guns per

capita." More than 77 percent of homicide victims aged from 15 to 17 died from gun-related injuries.

The figures do not include the impact of the cost of the guns and weapons held by the military, for which the government spends billions of dollars. The safety of the nation does not depend on how good our weapons are or on building more weapons. More military weapons mean more threats to the country's and the world's safety.

According to the The Hill website covering Congress and politics, the U.S. government has a \$400 billion program to create a fleet of F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Jets.

With that money, the country could easily abolish homelessness, fund hospitals and provide quality health care for the nation.

What the U.S. spends on weapons would also be enough to fund school programs for our children, halt the decline of the middle class and relieve hundreds of thousands of student loan debts.

Imagine if the billions of dollars the

government has spent on and set aside to build aircraft and other military weapons was used for scientists to develop cures for cancer, malaria and other diseases.

We would also be able to build more safe houses for former incarcerated people and save millions of lives.

Buying guns and building more military weapons does not increase our safety.

Terrorism is not the greatest national threat, but, rather, economic injustice, which leads to social crises and the fading of the middle class. Social and economic crises make people feel more afraid and threatened, which leads to an increase in crime and violence.

The continuing rise of violence builds more fear, anger and hatred, not less.

That makes many people identify other people as enemies, rather than giving us the opportunity to reach out and discover each other as human beings made in God's image.

Ikani Fakasiieiki - Contributing editor

Letter to the Editor

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

Letters express support, pastors share insights on Pope, acting on faith

Today, I have been paying bills, deciding which worthwhile causes I could support as there are so many requests, and thinking, "I could get a free copy of The Fig Tree at my church." After reading your article, "Everyone deserves a safe home" about Edie Rice-Sauer, the director of Transitions, I changed my mind.

You and your crew are doing a fantastic job with The Fig Tree, keeping us aware of so much that's going on in Spokane. I want you to be able to continue.

Hopefully, my small donation will help.

I plan on speaking of this Sunday at Reardan Presbyterian Church and putting in a plug for this wonderful magazine.

Audrey Wagner

Keep up your fine work, great articles, well written and of real interest!

The Rev. John Hay

Deep in my heart remains a heartfelt gratitude for that wonderful feature of my story in Fig Tree. It has spread worldwide to my network of friends and family.

Eufemia Munn

When I recently celebrated Mass and the sacrament of Reconciliation at Airway Heights, the only topic of conversation was Pope Francis' visit. Catholics and non-Catholics, men and women, inmates and officers, lay and religious—everybody was talking about Pope Francis.

"Pope Francis is the read deal. He is

more Christian than Catholic," said a Protestant volunteer. A Catholic volunteer did not like that statement. I reminded him that Catholics are Christian. The Protestant volunteer was so excited about Pope Francis, you could see it in her face. I was happily surprised to see and hear her excitement, but I was especially happy to hear that others see the presence of the Holy Spirit in our Pope. He is the real deal.

One of the things that makes Pope Francis so real is his understanding of encounter. "I look forward to these days of encounter and dialogue, in which I hope to listen to and share many of the hopes and dreams of the American people," were some of his first words in our country.

He makes room for encounter. He encounters God in people. He lets people encounter God in him. He supports policies and systems that make room for encounter with our brothers and sisters. In this world where our eyes are on our phones, computers and TVs, he invited us to "view (others) as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories."

Father Miguel Meija

Our Lady of Fatima Newsletter

Early Christianity combined two things, a deep sense of the sinfulness of humanity with a wonderful optimism about the power of God. Therefore, it held out the possibility of a genuine transformation of humanity. The Pantheistic religion of the Mediterranean area was, by contrast,

pessimistic. The gods didn't care about people. Our fates were predetermined, and the best most of us could do was accept that fate and live as best we could within it. The tragic hero was one who rebelled against his fate. Oedipus, for example, achieved a kind of nobility, but was nevertheless crushed.

Christians argued that life doesn't have to be that way. We are deeply sinful, our relationship with God is broken, and we cannot by ourselves deliver ourselves to a new way of living. It looks as though we are stuck, just as the Hellenistic world said we were, but, because of what God did in Jesus, we are not stuck in a universe that doesn't notice us unless we rebel against our fate. On the contrary, we are apprehended by the God who notices us in our suffering and cares.

Redemption—freedom from the fate an indifferent universe plans for us—is possible, because God can deliver us from it. This is a possibility not only in a world to come, but also in this world, right now. It is little wonder that message swept the Roman Empire and beyond in fewer than 300 years.

Today, however, that message and the hope that goes with it has been subjected to two critiques. On the one hand are folks who dislike the notion of sin and want to write it out of the Christian understanding of humanity. We make mistakes, but we are not fundamentally sinful. Along with this comes a reluctance to judge anything as truly evil or wrong. It is only wrong from one perspective. So we shouldn't

judge anyone.

On the other side is the belief that we have the Bible and tradition, and we can know God's mind so well that we know what God wants and doesn't want, and can, and should judge up a storm whenever things depart from what we know to be the truth. This view identifies sin clearly, but also vitiates the original Christian insight by identifying sin in others and exempting the one judging from that critique.

The result of these mistakes is that the Gospel at times seems to be a choice between relativism that cannot act against evil, and self-righteous certainty that fails to notice the "mote in its own eye."

Overcoming these mistakes requires us to look back before we look forward. We need to recapture the understanding of the brokenness of all people's relationship with God, and the power of God, not people, to overcome that. We need to recapture a humility through which we can relearn our limitations, and yet dare to act anyway against hatred that is as common now as it was when the Gospel first burst upon the scene, knowing that we who act against hatred are not ourselves pure or free of blemish. It is going to be hard. The times we live in make it hard to think in these terms, but though I have no confidence in myself, I have confidence in God, and because of that I believe we will recapture that original vigor.

The Very Rev. Bill Ellis
Cathedral of St. John Newsletter

GU grant starts high school institute

A \$294,415 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. will establish the Gonzaga University Theology Institute for High School Youth. The grant is part of Lilly Endowment's High School Youth Theology Institutes initiative, which seeks to encourage young people to explore theological traditions, ask questions about moral dimensions of contemporary issues and examine how their faith calls them to lives of service.

Gonzaga is one of 82 schools participating in the initiative. The schools are in 29 states and the District of Columbia. Although some are independent, many reflect the religious heritage of their founding traditions.

Gonzaga's one-week Institute will start in summer 2016 with up to 48 students in 11th and 12th grades.

It will draw on Pope Francis' encyclical, "Laudato Si: On the Care of Our Common Home," and Gonzaga's Jesuit and Catholic tradition, liberal arts foundation, and commitment to sustainability.

The Institute will help future leaders consider complex questions on the stewardship of God's creation.

For information, visit news.gonzaga.edu.

Calendar of Events

- Jan 5-26 • **Passage Meditation Workshop**, Spokane Buddhist Temple, 927 S. Perry St., 7:30 p.m., Tuesdays, easwaran.org
- Jan 7 • **The Fig Tree Benefit and Board**, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., noon benefit, 1 p.m. board, 535-1813
- Jan 7, 21 • **Peace and Justice Action Committee**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- Jan 8-10 • **"Wise Women: Honoring the Feminine Journey,"** Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, Idaho, 208-962-2000, spirit-center.org
- Jan 9 • **Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center Prayer Breakfast**, Spokane Ministers' Fellowship, Nathaniel "Nate" Miles, vice president for Strategic Initiatives for Eli Lilly and Co. Hemmingson Ballroom, Gonzag, 9 to 10:30 a.m., 455-8722
- Jan 13 • **Spokane Regional Law and Justice Meeting**, Spokane Regional Health District, 1101 W. College, noon, Imoore@pjals.org
- **Police Accountability Coalition**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- **Inland NW Death Penalty Abolition Group**, 35 W. Main, Mezzanine conference room, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- **Veterans for Peace**, 35 W. Main, 6:45 p.m., 838-7870
- Jan 14 • **Children's Program Honoring Martin Luther King Jr.'s Works**, Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, North Idaho College, 208-765-3932, idahohumanrights.org
- **"Say No to Oil Trains in Washington,"** public hearing, Centerplace Regional Event Center, 2426 N. Discovery Pl., 5 to 11 p.m., The Land's Council, lackerman@landscouncil.org
- Jan 15 • **Outsiders in a Promised Land**, Dale Soden, author, Auntie's Bookstore, W. Main & S. Washington, 7 p.m., 838-0206
- Jan 16 • **Martin Luther King Jr. Gala**, Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, Human Rights Education Institute, 414 Mullan Rd., Coeur d'Alene, 5 to 8 p.m., 208-765-3932, idahohumanrights.org
- **Walk for Life Northwest**, Riverfront Park, 11 a.m., walkforlifnorthwest.org
- Jan 17 • **Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration**, Morning Star Baptist Church, 3909 W. Rowan, 4 to 6 p.m., 455-8722
- Jan 18 • **Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Rally, March and Resource Fair**, Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 10 a.m., 455-8722
- **NAACP**, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 7 p.m., 209-2425
- Jan 19 • **Spokane Homeless Connect**, Salvation Army Community Center, 223 E. Nora Ave, 325-6851
- **Meet the Neighbors**, Spokane Interfaith Council, Spokane Islamic Center, 6411 E. 2nd Ave., 6 p.m., spokaneifc.org
- **Smart Hiring Workgroup**, Smart Justice Spokane, 5 p.m., 35 W. Main, 838-7870
- Jan 20 • **"Healing the Hearts of Our Children,"** Coffee and Contemplation with Thea Loughery and Sara Compton, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC), 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 9 to 11 a.m., 448-1224, ihrc.net
- Jan 20-Mar 20 • **Selma Photography Exhibit**, Museum of Anthropology, College Hall, Washington State University, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Fridays
- Jan 22-24 • **"Living with Forgiving,"** Weekend Forgiveness Retreat with Charles Finck, IHRC, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 448-1224, ihrc.net
- Jan 21-24 • **Spokane Jewish Cultural Film Festival**, Spokane Area Jewish Family Services, The Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, sajfs.org
- Jan 26 • **Safe & Just Alternatives Advocacy Day** in Olympia, 838-7870
- **"Living Like Pope Francis: The Four Pillars of Catholic Social Teaching,"** Evening Dinner Conference with Mark Shea, IHRC, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 448-1224, ihrc.net
- Jan 28 • **Annual MLK Community Celebration with Jasiri X**, hip-hop artist, CUB Senior Ballroom, Washington State University, Pullman, 7:30 p.m., 509-339-6172, mlk.wsu.edu
- Jan 23 • **St. Lucy's Breakfast**, Shalom Ministries Benefit, Episcopal Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave., 9 a.m., 710-0204
- Jan 30 • **Eastern Washington Legislative Conference**, "Our Responsibility for the Common Good," St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 535-4112
- Feb 3 • **The Fig Tree Mailing and Delivery**, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave, 9 a.m., 535-1813
- Feb 4 • **Fig Tree Benefit and Board**, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., benefit noon, board 1 p.m. 535-1813
- **"Of Pearls and Prodigals: Hearing Jesus' Parables through Jewish Ears,"** Gonzaga Religious Studies presents Amy-Jill Levine, professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Gonzaga University's Hemmingson Center Ballroom, 702 E. Desmet, 5:30 p.m., 313-6782, gonzaga.edu/religious-studies
- **Interfaith Advocacy Day in Olympia**, the United Churches of Olympia, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 206-625-9790
- Feb 6 • **Interfaith Advocacy Day in Yakima**, Mt. Hope Missionary Baptist Church, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., revkbj86@yahoo.com

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Congregations, agencies collaborate in ecumenical outreach to neighborhood

Our Place is a hub for congregations and agencies to collaborate to be sure people in the West Central Spokane neighborhood have food, bus passes, utility assistance, hygiene items, clothing, laundry, housing and more.

Director Tracie Swanson said transportation is key for people, so Our Place has boosted their transportation program from providing two-hour to all-day bus passes, to offering four- to six-months of monthly bus passes for people who are newly employed or in substance abuse treatment.

“Transportation is the link between prosperity and poverty. It’s the means to access jobs, health services and food,” she said. “West Central is a food desert with no grocery stores.”

Half of the clients walk to Our Place at 1509 W. College Ave.

Tracie said every time an individual receives services, it costs \$13.50 beyond the value of donated food, clothing, hygiene and other items.

Of 80 volunteers on the roster, about 20 help each day Our Place is open. Eight are new neighbors at Kendall Yards and the Summit, new housing a block behind it. Many come from the 10 supporting churches.

Tracie gave a tour of Our Place.

A part-time employee supervises the laundry center, which has three washers and four dryers. People sign up to do laundry. Our Place provides detergent.

“In 2008, we asked clients what they needed and learned many did laundry in tubs and sinks,” said Tracie.

Volunteers Ruth and Pete Hinz of St. Joseph Catholic Parish on Dean, help sort and repackage detergent, soaps, hygiene items, diapers and more.

Ruth puts toothbrushes, toothpaste, wet wipes, hand sanitizer, tissue, hand soap, lotion, toilet paper, shampoo, deodorant, lip balm, and hand and toe warmers into plastic bags for homeless men and women. Our Place gave out 1,358 bags in 2014.

Supermarkets give large broken bottles of soap, detergent and other liquids. Ruth pours them into water bottles to give out.

She also prepares layettes with two newborn outfits, baby wipes, receiving blankets, 20 diapers and quilts from the Salem Lutheran Quilters.

In a larger room, people select from boxes of fresh produce on a table. Supermarkets and specialty shops provide day-old bread and bags with food donations.

Our Place distributes food provided by both Second Harvest and Northwest Harvest. The Second Harvest food is for West



Tracie Swanson guides Our Place Community Ministries as it serves West Central neighbors.



Pete and Ruth Hinz of St. Joseph parish volunteer regularly.

Central Spokane residents.

Volunteers prepare boxes with 20 pounds of food from all the food groups, the allotment per person.

People give food generously during the winter, but in summer, the food bank sometimes closes early, because it runs out of food.

“We prepare food packs for homeless people, too,” she said.

Our Place receives fewer canned and boxed goods, because Second Harvest supplies more fresh food. Our Place volunteers teach cooking classes there once a week, so people learn how to cook food they receive.

People in the class cook and eat meals there, and take them home.

In the back hallway, there’s a table with two chairs, where Nolan Wallace and Jim Mullin offer Veterans and Veterans Families Resources. That program, which started in September, is part of a new nonprofit, Veteran Pathways. They are also at New Hope, and they will open other outlets.

“We let veterans take advantage of their rights and services for them,” said Nolan, who came to Spokane from New Orleans to live with his daughter.

“Veterans are often missing in action in America because they do not know what resources are available,” he said.

Further down the hall are

shelves with books for clients.

Across the hallway, a room stores coats from Coats for Kids, sleeping bags, tents, backpacks and blankets for homeless people. They recently gave 427 coats to families, 69 to single men and 77 to single women.

The next room is the clothing bank. Many volunteers make it possible. Some sort clothing in a sorting room at the back, weeding out items that are soiled to sell for 10 cents a pound to Gemtext Recycling, a Northwest-based company recycling textiles. Our Place sends them 700 to 800 pounds a month. With those funds, Our Place buys men’s socks, underwear and T-shirts.

People outside the area can come once a month for clothing. West Central residents can come once a week.

Another room has household necessities, like pots and pans, to help people restart. People released from the City County Jail at night come to Our Place in the morning for clothing, food, bus passes and household items.

In an activity room, volunteers were sorting new clothing, toys and other items for its Christmas Give-A-Way in mid-December. Providence Sister Lilly Mae Emert and Joyce Miller of Whitworth

Community Presbyterian Church were helping with sorting. About 100 people came to pick up gifts for their 500 family members.

The activity room is also used for a cooking class and is where children have a snack and activities while parents select food, clothing, necessities and services.

Tracie grew up in North Idaho, moving to different communities when her father was transferred with work at different bank branches. Her grandparents were married at St. Joseph’s on Dean.

After earning a degree in journalism at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Tracie worked two years with Hawaii Pacific University student and military newspaper before moving to Spokane in 1995. She worked with the Journal of Business in graphics, with Tomlinson Black in marketing and with the Travel Guide Magazine.

In 2005, she volunteered with the YWCA and reconnected with West Central Spokane. In 2009, she came to Our Place as development director. In 2012, when Sr. Ann Pizelo, SNJM, retired, Tracie became director.

“There’s a lot of responsibility, heartache and sadness in this work with people in poverty,” said Tracie.

Many need utility assistance, because the old neighborhood homes have little or no insulation.

“The Holy Names Sisters have done much work with Our Place, helping with finances, as volunteers, on our board and more,” said Tracie, who grew up Catholic.

Our Place began as an

ecumenical ministry. The 10 supporting churches have members and clergy on the board. They are St. Joseph, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Augustine Catholic; Westminster, Knox and Emmanuel Presbyterian; Christ Central, the West Central Episcopal Mission, and Salem Lutheran, and the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

The churches formed Our Place in 1987 after realizing each was besieged with requests for food, clothing and hygiene items. They decided to pool their resources and started Our Place in a house beside Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Peggy Sammons was director for many years and then worked with Sr. Ann.

In 2000, they found their present building. When a final balloon payment was due in 2006, Our Place closed for two weeks. Then a woman gave a bequest for the amount due. Holy Names sisters also helped. The building was remodeled in 2007 and 2008 with Gates and Murdock grants.

“With the economy improving, the number of people we serve has dropped from 18,000 a year in 2012, to 17,000 in 2013, to 15,000 in 2014. These figures include people who come back month to month,” she said.

Work crews from businesses and churches come to paint, maintain and clean the building.

Our Place is in one of the five poorest neighborhoods in the state.

“We’re a safety net, helping people know someone cares and will help,” she said. “We see some people many times, so we know them when they come. The people come in, sit down to visit and have coffee.

Volunteers treat clients with respect and dignity,” she said.

“People in need are kind. They usually take only what they need, not more,” Tracie said.

With its many volunteers and in kind gifts, Our Place runs on an annual budget of \$200,000, raised from individuals, grants, churches and organizations.

Our Place is open from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. It receives donations from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. those days.

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

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