

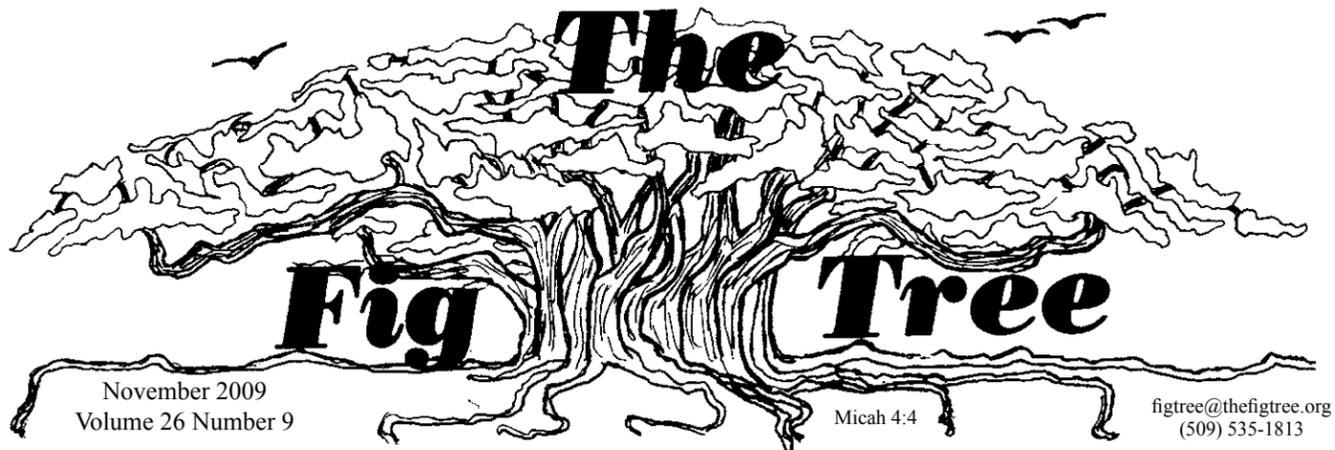
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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest

online in color at www.thefigtree.org

Scouts challenge media images

By Mary Stamp

As coordinator for the Girl Scouts' "uniquely ME!" program in Spokane's schools, Keely Eschenbacher has deepened her awareness of the physical, emotional and intellectual impact of media images of women on teenage girls.

She grew up in Ione in Northeastern Washington in a stable home with two parents who sheltered her from some TV programs. Since then she has had her eyes opened about the experiences of abuse, poverty and negative self-talk generated by the culture, peers, families and media.

A course on gender communication during her study of psychology at Carroll College in Helena, Mont., stirred her awareness of the impact of media messages and ads.

They make women and men feel bad about their appearance, Keely said.

"A teenage girl looks at TV and thinks it shows how life should be or how she should look. Most girls think they do not look good enough," she said. "I used to enjoy looking at magazines, but now I see the negative effect the messages can have on girls.

"Looking at wedding magazines before I was married last October, I



Keely Eschenbacher introduces girls to the climbing wall at the Girl Scout center.

could see how easy it would be to think I needed a \$35,000 wedding dress and a huge wedding. What movies, magazines and books show is often different from life," she said.

Keely, who is earning a master's degree in organizational leadership at Gonzaga University, has worked with the Eastern Washington Northern Idaho Girl Scout Council since September 2007. The council's offices and its community center have been at 1404 N. Ash for five years.

Uniquely ME! began five years ago with a grant from Unilever and its Dove Self-Esteem Fund. Out of 350 U.S. Girl Scout councils, this council was one of 11 to receive grants. In the region, 500 girls participated last year, up from 350 the year before.

The program helps girls from eight to 17 years old "embrace a wider definition of beauty" than they absorb from the culture. The Girl Scout Research Institute has found low self-esteem pervasive among pre-adolescent and adolescent girls in the United States, so they sought to address this "critical national problem."

The Uniquely ME! program fo-
Continued on page 4

Freeway sparks new ministry options for Bethany Presbyterian Church

In a hypothetical 1970s seminary discussion on what a church needs to do to stay vital, the Rev. Paul Rodkey had suggested that churches close every 50 years.

Paul has served 22 years at Bethany Presbyterian, which has been at Third and Freya for 100 years. It replaced its 1909 building with a new one in 1953.

The congregation has known for 15 years that North-South Freeway plans included an off ramp where their church stands. This year they sold the building to the Department of Transportation and held a closing worship service

on Sunday, Oct. 18.

In their Exodus-themed service, they received 10 new members, bringing the membership to 90.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, at 2715 S. Ray, agreed to share their space, which is smaller than Bethany's building, giving Bethany and Emmanuel Metropolitan Community Church a place to go. Emmanuel, which has met at Bethany for seven years, moved on Oct. 4.

During Bethany's 100th celebration July 18, Paul told about the conversation he had at San Francisco Theological Seminary

during the 1970s.

"As we walk away from the 100-year-old church site, we can rethink what kind of church we will be into the future," said Paul, who grew up in Spokane, attending St. Paul's United Methodist and First Presbyterian.

He graduated from Whitworth University and did youth work in Kelso and Tacoma before going to seminary. His first church was in Madera, Calif., before coming to Bethany in 1987.

When asked if he would de-consecrate the ground, Paul said that even though the land will become an off ramp for the North Spokane freeway and a pillar will stand where the sanctuary is, "the ground remains holy."

The congregation will save the funds from the sale until it decides its future path. In January, members will begin conversations on demography, cultural shifts and public service needs.

"We will look for new paradigms, talking with local people and national leaders. Members will do field trips to observe what

Continued on page 9

Many auction items align with Fig Tree's mission

In line with its mission, many silent and live auction items at The Fig Tree's Harvest Soirée Auction on Friday, Nov. 6, will connect people for cultural awareness, special dinners and ministry tours, as well as themed baskets, art and more.

The event is from 6 to 8:30 p.m., at the Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave. It is planned so some can enjoy appetizers and participate in bidding for some silent and live auction items before 7:30 p.m. to accommodate those attending the symphony or other events. Other silent auction tables and live bidding will continue until 8:30 p.m.

Auction donations confirmed before The Fig Tree went to press include dinners with bishops and editors; French, German and Persian dinners; and tickets to Kosher and Japanese dinners, plus gift certificates for various restaurants. The Rev. Happy Watkins will do a ribs-and-chicken barbeque for 50 and is arranging a tour of historic black churches.

There will also be tours of art in cathedrals, Catholic Charities' programs and Sister Paula Turnbull's sculpture studio; a golf outing with the dean of the cathedral and a retired journalism professor, weekend get-aways at nearby camps and outdoor outings.

Items include original art, jewelry, prints, photographs and themed baskets featuring Lubeck sister-city memorabilia, items from Japan and China, music, books, coffee, chocolate and teas and German Christmas items. Farmers' market and fair-trade vendors will also share food and craft items.

"We're pleased to offer items unique to who we are, items that will help connect people personally for dialogue, relationships and community building," said editor Mary Stamp.

For information, call 599-1177 or 535-1813.

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Faith and Order considers basis of opposing views

The Faith and Order Plenary Commission of the World Council of Churches, meeting in October in Greece, modeled a process for considering why some Christians support one position on an issue while other Christians defend the opposing viewpoint.

Reflecting on how churches come to adopt one moral stance while others disagree with that conclusion, they asked: Can Christianity avoid divisions within and among churches over such conflicts? The way Christians and churches approach controversial topics occupied two sessions.

Using four case studies written for the meeting, participants met in discussion groups of men and women from various church traditions. They identified sources of authority, patterns of thought and other influences that lead believers to varied conclusions over moral theology and social ethics.

"Moral discernment" is a new area of study for Faith and Order, growing out of past studies. An experimental aspect of this project is the use of case studies on issues that have caused controversies and threatened division in churches.

The narratives prepared by scholars dealt with proselytism in Russia, economic globalization as evaluated by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, homosexuality in the Anglican communion and disagreements over stem-cell research in Germany.

Each study began with a hypothetical conversation among Christians who disagree on the topic, followed by an academic analysis. The goal of opening discussion in story form was to help participants relate abstract ethical positions to real people living in particular places. Writers represented no set church positions.

In introducing the method, Faith and Order director John Gibaut said the cases were working tools—examples of "how particular communities of Christians engage in moral discernment in relation to particular moral issues."

The goals of the moral discernment study are 1) to find common ground among Christians, 2) to help churches understand how and why they come to different decisions on moral questions and 3) to search together for ways to keep these issues from becoming church-dividing.

Co-chairs of the process—Father Frans Bouwen, a Belgian priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Jerusalem, and the Rev. Rebecca Todd Peters, a Presbyterian minister and chair of religious studies at Elon University in North Carolina—said that for many, engaging in the discussions was "a learning process" that changed minds. Some came expecting to debate the subject of a case rather than exploring the method of taking moral positions. Father Frans said the method is under constant review. Careful training is needed for those planning similar discussions.

For information, visit www.oikoumene.org/crete2009.

NCC Health Task Force offers flu prevention ideas

The National Council of Churches Health Task Force suggests flu prevention guidelines for congregations, ranging from standard hygiene activities to worship practices.

Along with using hand sanitizers, cleaning door knobs and hand rails, and serving wrapped candies, the task force advises against shaking hands or hugging during the "passing of the peace" and recommends using disposable plastic cups for communion, rather than a common cup or dipping the bread into the wine—intinction.

They also suggest that churches post a plan for canceling worship, nursery schools, day-care programs and senior centers during a flu outbreak.

The NCC's check list, "H1N1 and Seasonal Flu Best Practices for Congregations," is at www.health-ministries.org.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

United Nations Association meets Nov. 1

Rather than holding its traditional United Nations Day Dinner on Oct. 24, the Spokane Chapter of the United Nations Association is planning a panel discussion for members and friends at 4 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 1, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave.

Panelists will review concerns the United Nations addresses, including nuclear proliferation, global warming, human rights, land mines and issues of women and children.

Over the summer, the board of

the United Nations Association had proposed disbanding the chapter, but Jo Stowell and Chuck Kerker have gathered interested people to reorganize and carry on the chapter charter.

Those who attend will also discuss future program ideas and scheduling issues to continue a witness that the organization has brought to Spokane.

"We want to hear from those interested in how a UNA chapter can better serve their needs for education and action on critical

issues," said Jo, a past president. "In these times, it is more critical than ever that the United States take an active role in the United Nations and the international community.

"We hope to renew the vision for and re-energize the UNA-Spokane Chapter," she said. "We have done important work in the past and we can do it again. We can be our chapter motto: 'a local voice for global cooperation.'"

For information, call 624-3608 or email jkk2@cdc.gov.

Food and Farm Forum will be on Nov. 14

Connecting the faith community's commitment to feeding the hungry and mobilization around caring for the environment, Wanda Daehlin, of St. Mark's Lutheran Church's Creation Care Committee, wondered why organic, local food is often not available to people on food stamps or other free food programs.

Seeking to ensure both that no one goes hungry and that the earth is sustained for future generations led her to organize the Food and Faith Forum, which will be held

from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 14, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave.

"Everyone is concerned about these issues," said Wanda. "No one wants to see people go without safe, healthy food or for the earth to be destroyed, but there are some obstacles to addressing the issues simultaneously."

With the help of the Creation Care Committee and the Faith and Environment Network, she is bringing together pastors, local food proponents, farmers and

producers to discuss hunger and environmental sustainability.

Keynote speakers for the forum are Peter Illyn of Restoring Eden and the Rev. Craig Goodwin of Millwood Presbyterian Church and Year of Plenty, plus a panel of local farmers and producers.

"We hope participants can bring questions about issues and leave with solutions—avenues for further action," Wanda said.

For information, call 294-3944 or email faithandenvironment@gmail.com.

'How to Do Advocacy' event set for Nov. 21

The Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington State will offer a forum on why people of faith are called to be advocates and learn "How to Do Advocacy" from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 21, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave.

They will hear from local religious leaders, including Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Bishop Martin Wells, state legislators and community advocates, speaking on "Green Faith, Food and Politics."

The Rev. Paul Benz, director of LPPPO, said the event is being timed in conjunction with the Food and Faith Forum the previous week.

The 2009 LPPPO legislative priorities are 1) hunger, poverty

and economic justice, 2) housing and health care; criminal justice, 3) environment and sustainable agriculture, 4) civil and human rights, 5) tax reform and economic investment, 6) sustaining health and human services, and 7) quality K-12 education.

For information, call (206) 464-4133 or 747-6677, or email lppooffice@lcsnw.org.

Interfaith Service planned Thanksgiving Day

The annual Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be held at 10 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 26, at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave.

The Interfaith Council of the Inland Northwest is sponsoring the event on the theme, "Compassion: Voices of Thanksgiving."

Venerable Thubten Chonyi of the Sravasti Abbey near Newport will be the keynote speaker.

There will be music, prayers

and reflections by the Baha'i, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Native American and New Thought faith communities.

Nasreen Shah will speak for the Islamic community, the Rev. Joe Niemiec for the Center for Spiritual Living and Quin YinLin will offer a Sufi blessing.

The annual event raises funds to support Second Harvest of the

Inland Northwest, a network of more than 300 Eastern Washington and North Idaho neighborhood food banks and meal centers, which provide donated food and funding to help feed hungry people in the region.

Those coming to the worship may bring food items or financial gifts.

For information, call 667-0462.

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INTERFAITH

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

10 A.M. THURSDAY, NOV. 26

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A freewill offering will be shared by the sponsors: the Interfaith Council and Second Harvest

For information, call 534-1011

Book Parlor schedules grand re-opening

The Book Parlor has re-opened across the street from a house into its new location at 1425 W. Broadway in the Walnut Corners building. The shop opened there on Sept. 21. Its partners Indaba Coffee, run by The Porch Church, and Katie's Table, a small deli/grocery run by All Saints Lutheran Church, will open soon.

The grand opening of the whole space, known as The Commons, will be at 6 a.m., Monday, Nov. 9, following a time of blessing and celebration for the new venture at 12:30 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 8. For information, call 328-6527 or visit www.TheBookParlor.com.

Food-for-Thought meal opens conversation

The third annual "Food-for-Thought" Dinner and Conversation to break barriers in the society will serve up to 400 people at 5 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 19, at Central United Methodist Church, 518 W. Third. The church is the site for the regular Shalom Ministries "Dining with Dignity" program, headed by Holly Chilinki.

"It's an opportunity for people in homes to converse with people who are homeless to increase their understanding," said Holly, who reported that Shalom Ministries is seeing larger and larger crowds and more new people, particularly at the end of each month. For information, call 445-9019.

Spokane sends 12 on Asian Habitat build

After Habitat International allotted 10 positions for Habitat-Spokane volunteers to help build houses Nov. 5 to 20 in Thailand with the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project throughout the Mekong region in Asia, the group grew to 12.

Openings were designated to recognize affiliates' tithing commitments to international building.

Beyond the primary site at Chiang Mai in northern Thailand, other sites are in China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. The project will enable 82 families to move into safe homes with water and sanitation facilities, said Michone Preston, executive director of Habitat-Spokane.

The tithing is part of Habitat for Humanity's mission of "building housing for all God's people," she said. Unless a donor specifies, Habitat-Spokane contributes 10 cents of every donated dollar to building Habitat homes in developing countries. Spokane is the 13th largest tithing affiliate in the world.

There are no administrative fees, so 100 percent of funds are used to purchase materials in the communities where the homes are built, she explained. Through its tithing, Habitat-Spokane has funded more than 300 homes in such developing countries as Romania, Guatemala and Thailand.

Habitat-Spokane, which recently started its 200th house in Spokane, has been building homes in the Inland Northwest and around the world since 1987.

For information, call 534-2552.

Spokane recalls 1909 workers' Free Speech Fight

Five organizations are celebrating the centennial of the International Workers of the World (IWW) Spokane Free Speech Fight, a significant action of civil disobedience in American history, said Liz Moore, director of the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS).

Speaking to the Need to Know group at All Saints Lutheran Church, Malcolm Haworth, a local historian who has a master's degree in history, said it "counters defeatism sometimes evident among progressives in an assumed-to-be conservative area."

"In 1908, 19 employment agencies on Stevens St. charged transient workers \$1 each for jobs," said Liz. "Workers were fired in two days and had to repeat the process."

"The city council refused to revoke the agencies' licenses and banned the IWW from speaking in the streets. In response, IWW—also known as the Wobblies—began a public-speaking campaign."

"The right of free speech is a critical tool for workers or community members to organize for social change," she said.

Workers came from around the nation to speak about the abuses. On Nov. 2, 1909, they began a street-corner speak-out.

"From 500 to 1,600 speakers were arrested. Many were beaten and injured. They overcrowded the jails, burdening the city's infrastructure," said Malcolm.

In December, 19-year-old or-

ganizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), joined the fight for social justice. She was also arrested.

After her release, she wrote of the police brutality men and women suffered in jail. Publicity when the news went national led Spokane to drop charges against workers and revoke the employment agencies' licenses, Malcolm said.

PJALS, the Spokane Regional Labor Council, the Museum of Arts and Culture and KYRS planned other events.

• The Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture held an Oct. 24 workshop, with labor historian James Foster.

• The "Crosswoods Bob Show" at 1 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 1, on KYRS Radio (89.9 and 92.3 FM) will play music of the movement.

• PJALS will re-enact the speak-out and arrests at noon, Tuesday, Nov. 10, at Stevens St. and Spokane Falls Blvd. People may sign up to speak on historic and current issues will wear period costumes.

For information, call 742-0938.



Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center Benefit Luncheon

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Coalition holds Media Violence Fast

When people hear immigrants denounced on radio talk shows or see violent assaults on immigrants on TV or in movies, are they more likely to be violent?

For the 2009 Media Violence Fast from Oct. 19 to 26, an interfaith coalition asked people to consider the impact of anti-immigrant hate speech in media. Thousands abstained from violence in media for a week.

"We asked people to distance themselves from violence as entertainment and hate speech against immigrants billed as news," said the Rev. Ben Guess, of the United Church of Christ's Office of Communication.

Many media depict violence as an acceptable, logical solution to challenges, said the Rev. Michael Kinnamon, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, adding that Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, and prophets and religious leaders over centuries have made it clear that violence usually brings more violence and rarely leads to solutions.

The anti-violence fast was sponsored by the So We Might See Coalition, supported by Catholic bishops, the Islamic Society, United Methodists, the United Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and several other faith groups.

Participants also signed a petition asking the Federal Communications Commission to open an

inquiry into hate speech in media. For information, visit www.MediaViolenceFast.org or www.nccusa.org.

Presbytery churches join in building Habitat house

Construction began in October for a Habitat for Humanity Presbyterian Build in Spokane. Since the first Habitat-Spokane house was built in 1988, many Presbyterian churches and individuals have been involved with Habitat, but this is the first multi-church "Presbyterian Build." Eleven area Presbyterian churches are already project sponsors and more are expected. For information, email Belmore41@comcast.net.



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Uniquely Me! program counters media images with positive self images

continued from page 1

cuses on mentoring, education and activities to foster self-esteem. By 2006, the program had reached 190,000 girls.

The curriculum has four programs geared to different ages.

Activities led by volunteers from Gonzaga University and Whitworth University help girls recognize their strengths and attributes; handle peer pressure; identify their values and interests; develop positive body images, healthy eating habits, personal hygiene, general wellness and physical fitness; and engage in community service.

Although the three-year grant ended in 2008, the program "was so successful that the local council decided to fund it," Keely said.

The Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media at Gonzaga University helps recruit young women at Gonzaga.

In the fall, Keely trains the volunteers who lead groups at different schools. Groups form by January and run officially 12 weeks, but most continue to the end of the school year.

Uniquely ME! reaches at-risk girls who are not typically in Girl Scouts. It involves girls in Spokane's middle schools—Chase, Garry, Glover, Sacajawea, Salk and Shaw. There are also groups at Finch Elementary School and at Rogers and Ferris high schools. In previous years, there were programs in Plummer, Idaho, and Grand Coulee, plus a weekend retreat in Omak this summer and a new program in Tri Cities.

Some of the Girl Scout troops also use the resources.

Lacking funds to send staff to

outlying communities, the program offers to train rural volunteers to use the curriculum.

"The college women volunteers—often majors in education or psychology—serve as role models and are easy for the teens to relate to," she said.

Alone or with a partner, volunteers lead weekly meetings at the schools. Keely helps facilitate some meetings.

Keely connects with the volunteers when they come to the office to pick up supplies. She asks how their groups are going. Sometimes she hears of abuse and other concerns, and makes referrals for counseling.

"Dove, which produces beauty products, created the program as part of its Campaign for Real Beauty, an effort to communicate that everyone is beautiful in her own way," Keely said.

"Media images of women affect girls," she said, describing the media ideal as a skinny, five-foot-seven, 110-pound, blonde woman.

The program tells girls that everything about them is beautiful and their differences make them beautiful. Dove provides videos showing how movies and ads make normal women look like models with makeup, lighting, camera angles and digital editing, making their bodies look up to two inches thinner.

Keely said they ask girls how they feel about themselves when they start the program: How do they feel about how they look? How do they behave? How well are they doing in school? How do they relate with other girls, with boys and with their families?

They learn about manicures, skin care, makeup and hygiene. They also learn self-defense, rock climbing, dancing, yoga and nutrition.

"Looking good helps them feel good," Keely said.

"We also encourage positive self-talk to break the habit of negative self-talk," she said. "Negative self-talk affects women in work and adulthood."

Most participants attend out of interest and choice, but some are encouraged by school counselors to attend. Most meet after school, except the Ferris and Finch groups that meet during school.

From four to 15 girls are in each group. The girls lead the groups, setting rules to assure they are safe spaces.

Media also affect expectations about relationships.

For example, Keely said her mother did not let her watch the TV show, 'Friends,' because everyone was sleeping with everyone— sending the message that such behavior was okay.

"Girls grow up with that," she said.

"One girl expected she would have a baby by the time she was 16. To dispel that expectation, her 23- and 24-year-old student mentors were role models. They did not have babies," Keely said.

"Girls see news about Britney Spears and think that's how they should be. Middle-school girls are obsessed with celebrities who party and do stupid things. Girls receive mixed messages about what is acceptable."

The program addresses eating disorders, teenage pregnancy,

smoking and suicide. For a few, feeling that they cannot meet expectations might lead to depression or suicide.

Coming from Ione where families in the community helped other families in need, Keely has been surprised that three or four families may share a house, so girls may sleep on a couch or share a room with five others. Some have told of being raped or abused by a relative.

"How can we expect children to learn if they are hungry or abused?" she asked. "It's not abstract that people are living in rough situations. It's people I know."

While women and children are the greatest percent of those in poverty, there are girls in rich homes at risk because of neglect, Keely said.

As she faces frustrations about the girls' lives, considers expectations set up by the media and culture, and realizes how over-

whelming the needs are, Keely, who grew up attending First Congregational United Church of Christ in Metaline Falls and now attends All Saints Lutheran in Spokane, said her faith helps her to know this program is making a difference in the girls' lives.

The girls report doing better with parents, siblings, friends and at school as they gain confidence, take responsibility for their actions, feel pride in their accomplishments, gain self-motivation, accept challenges and begin to feel in control of their lives, Keely said. They report learning not to take negative comments personally.

"If they gain confidence as they learn friendship and coping skills, they can let criticism blow off. I tell them they can't change the past, but can apologize and change their behavior in the future," she said.

For information, call 747-8091 or email keelye@gsewni.org.

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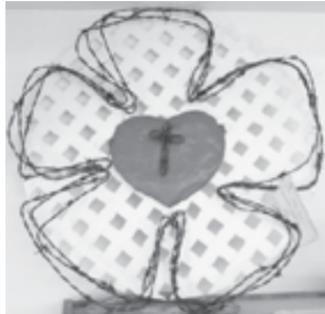
Cheney church uses farmer's barbed wire to raise funds

Several members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Cheney created barbed-wire yard art for a fund-raising contest and sale for the Pastor Relocation Project to fund interviewing and moving a pastor. Thrivent Financial is matching up to \$1,020 for entry fees for the art contest and for sales of barbed-wire yard art pins. Beyond that, funds from sales at the Holiday Bazaar go for the Women of the Church fund.

Marcia Mecklenburg, church council president, said the idea for a barbed wire yard art contest came after she saw a barbed-wire star in her niece's craft book.

"We found some barbed wire and tried it. Then I looked at barbed-wire art on the internet," said Marcia. "I wanted to find a fund-raising project and this seemed like one to involve the church."

Much of the barbed wire do-



Barbed-wire Luther seal

sculptures, which feature different themes—from animals to religious items—will be displayed and sold at Emmanuel Lutheran's Holiday Bazaar from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 7, at the church, 639 Elm St.

Awards will be given for the best sculpture, the first sculpture sold and the sculpture that draws the highest price.

For information, call 235-6300.

nated for the project came from the farm of Gary and Tully Kasparek, but some members used their own. About 20 people made sculptures by mid October. The

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Ganesh Himal celebrates 25th year and helps start a village clinic

Along with inspiring the fair-trade Ganesh Himal Trading Company in Spokane, a post-college trip to Southeast Asia 25 years ago to learn about the culture and trek in the Himalayas in Nepal also sparked a connection that has led Denise Attwood and Ric Conner to help establish a clinic in the village of Baseri Dhading.

An encounter with a Tibetan refugee family selling sweaters in Kathmandu and a desire to help them send their children to school led Denise and Ric to market their sweaters. It soon expanded to dozens of producer groups in Nepal, hundreds of U.S. and Canadian retail outlets, and fair-trade models of business.

An encounter with a 14-year-old girl, Sita Gurung, in Baseri led to the clinic project.

Villagers, who live 8,000 feet above sea level, had to walk from Baseri four to five hours each way to the nearest primary care clinic, losing a day of work. Relying on shaman faith healers also kept them at home until it was too late to be treated.

Most villagers ignored simple health problems, delaying treatment until they were life-threatening. While many adults recover from diarrhea, colds or simple infections, children and the elderly are vulnerable and have high mortality rates, said Denise.

"The first day of our trek, we passed Sita on her way to school," said Denise. "She had never seen white people and hoped she would see us again. She was excited on returning home to find us camped in her mother's yard."

They enjoyed visiting and decided to stay in contact, but postcards they sent each other never arrived. Eight years later—in 1992—Denise was in the Bangkok airport, sitting across from a young woman waiting to board a flight to Kathmandu. They began talking. The woman said she was from Dhading. Denise said she had been there.

"Are you Denise?" Sita asked.

"Are you Sita?" Denise asked.

They told of the intervening years. Sita's mother had encouraged her to go to school. She became a teacher and women's rights advocate in Nepal before she married a merchant marine and moved to Seattle.

Sita divorced and began to study nursing. She wanted to do something for her village. Three years ago, they began dreaming of opening a clinic.

Denise said Sita's brother had died at seven because he ate poi-



Sita Gurung, Denise Attwood, Cameron and Ric Conner.

sonous wild berries. Her 30-year-old sister died because of a severe tooth infection.

"Losing siblings is common," Denise said. "Life is hard without electricity or running water."

Having a local clinic will provide a place where people with burns, broken limbs, gastro-intestinal infections or other ailments can go without waiting so long that they lose their lives.

Sita went to the village, gathered elders and representatives from 10 surrounding villages, and asked what they needed and if they wanted a primary health clinic. They offered to donate the land and labor, but needed money for building materials. They designed it to be like a four-room traditional Nepali house.

"It's their project," Denise said. "In Nepal, people usually have no say in how aid is used. After an aid group does a project and leaves, the people may have nothing to do with it."

"Because they asked for materials, we decided to raise funds for them. The villagers formed a nonprofit, the Deurali Community Service Center," she said.

Denise, Sita, Ric and others asked the Fabric of Life Foundation in Edmonds, Wash., to serve as the nonprofit to receive funds from the United States. They send money to a bank account in Kathmandu. A trusted board member takes the funds to the village.

They have raised \$20,000.

The youngest donor is Conner Green, Denise and Ric's five-year-old nephew, who raised \$72 by selling popcorn balls and bracelets he made. The oldest donor is a 92-year-old man Sita cares for as a home health nurse.

For two years, villagers worked on construction of the clinic. It has two rooms to care for people, an exam room, and a pharmacy/office. They are now working to furnish it, provide a composting toilet and solar power.

"The villagers are resourceful. Some are building furniture," said Denise, who will visit there in January with Sita for the major annual Gurung Festival. It will be the first time she has visited the village in 25 years.

To staff the clinic, they decided to employ one of the Gurung villagers who knows the language.

"We wanted a young woman to be an example to young girls, someone familiar with shaman techniques," Denise said.

A friend from Spokane who lives in Spain donated \$5,000 to train a certified nurse. Nisha Gurung, a 23-year-old woman who had applied for nursing school but lacked the funding, reapplied, was accepted and has started the field-nursing program in Birgunj Medical College.

"A field nurse is able to do minor surgery, deliver babies, treat burns and give primary health

care," Denise said.

In the interim, they will hire a certified medical assistant who can continue on the staff once the field nurse is trained.

The patients will pay on a sliding scale so villagers can support the clinic as they are able.

Denise said the Gurung are descended from Tibetans but practice a mix of Tibetan Buddhism and Indo-Aryan Hinduism. Shamanism is also part of their culture. Shamans dispel evil spirits, less as part of a religious system and more to heal people. They help with psychological problems, not physical problems.

"The people who run the clinic will have to overcome suspicion of western medicine that comes from people waiting so long for treatment that by the time they go they die," she said. "To help bridge the culture, the shaman will also be in the clinic to do traditional healing with western medicine as a complement."

Denise and Ric's fair-trade business grew out of their purchase and use of Tibetan sweaters for their first trek. The producers

asked them to sell the sweaters for them in the United States.

They had other career plans, but found interest in the sweaters and realized the benefit their sales could have on the producers. That convinced them to turn their sideline into their business.

"It was a turning point for us and the producers," she said. "All now earn a fair income and send their children to school. Our goal has been to give producers access to a living wage that would empower them to work and make a living on their own."

There will be information on the clinic and fair trade at the annual Thanksgiving weekend Festival of Fair Trade Friday to Sunday, Nov. 27 to 29 at the Community Building, 35 W. Main.

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Three churches stretch to share space and discern their new ministries

continued from page 1
churches in other cities are doing," he said.

Bethlehem Lutheran, which has about 65 worshipping on a Sunday, held conversations on its future recently, asking "what God was calling us to do next," said the pastor, the Rev. Erik Samuelson.

They seek to make the 1960s building and property more inviting, accessible and welcoming for the community.

Darci Bierman, the daughter of a Bethlehem member, Rose, is Bethany's secretary, so they knew the church was looking for space to rent when Paul stopped in to meet with Erik.

"We had made a commitment to make it clear that everyone is welcome and we wanted to help everyone encounter God in this place," said Erik. "We had been exploring what God was calling us to do with our property, seeking ways to make it usable for the community beyond the preschool that has used three rooms in the education wing for three years.

"One of our guiding principles is that everyone is welcome," he said. "We had no idea this is what God had in mind for us."

In 1951, the former United Lutheran Church decided to plant a church in that area. About 34 adults began meeting in 1954 in the former Betterment Hall, now the Southridge Community Assembly of God Church, across the street to the north. In 1955, Bethlehem Lutheran organized with 50 charter members. They bought the present property in 1956. The building was completed in 1960.

After studying ways to be welcoming, Bethlehem did some renovations, installing new doors, planning a new sign and commissioning a stainless-steel art work by Ken Spiering of Jesus welcoming and teaching children.

"We wanted the art to say what we do here to people driving by on Ray," Erik said. "We also plan to add a contemplative garden and labyrinth."

Erik, who grew up in Everett and graduated from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma in 2001, completed seminary at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley in 2005 and earned another master's in 2006. This is his first parish.

While Bethany will pay rent, he said the congregation considers they are "sharing their space" for an interim period. Bethlehem is also welcoming the 12-step recovery groups and mental-health support groups that met at Bethany, arranging for schedules around AA groups that already meet there.



Dirk Vastrick packs the ark he made for sacred items.

Paul said Bethany will "use the time as a gift to ask questions. Bethany will stay together as a congregation, because we have a message and ministry to the community we want to continue."

Bethany seeks to continue its commitment to the Sheridan neighborhood, he said.

Sheridan Elementary School was also built in 1909. In recent years the church has offered an after-school program.

One ministry is the church's signboard beside the freeway. Paul said it was "an ideal location for sharing messages to stir people to think, to pull them out of blindness and to start conversations.

"We are selling our signboard and look forward to having a new electronic one at Bethlehem," he said. "We will continue our conversation with the community."

The sign has had challenging messages related to wars, terrorism, racism, health care—the many issues of the day. The goal has been to "lift up mature understandings of what the faith community can be."

Examples are: "Each war sows the seeds for the next war." "Who would Jesus exclude from health care?" and Gandhi's "Be the change you want to see in the world."

While some have been distressed by messages, "a vast majority of calls have expressed appreciation for the thought as an opportunity to grow," Paul said. "Some people said they drive out of the way to see the sign."

The Rev. Bill Ailes, retired presbytery executive minister who is serving as interim until January, said at the closing worship that the first two weeks the sign was up, people called asking



Bethany Presbyterian choir sings "O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come" in the final worship at 3rd and Freya.

if he could "do something" about it. First, he suggested they call Paul. Then he would ask what the sign said. Usually he would reply, "It sounds biblical."

Bill said he is impressed by Bethany's radical openness, welcoming black and white, gay and straight, rich and poor.

On practical issues of sharing space, Paul and the lay pastoral leader Emmanuel Metropolitan Community Church, Wayne Schull, will share an office. Paul also is part time campus minister with United Ministries in Higher Education at Eastern Washington University.

Bethlehem Lutheran worships at 9 a.m. and has Bible study in its education wing and fellowship hall while Bethany worships at 11 a.m. followed by education. Emmanuel worships at 5 p.m.

Along with flexibility about use of the space, Wayne said the three churches will look for potential ways they can combine their ministries, such as having a joint youth ministry.

The 40-member Emmanuel is no stranger to moving. It began in 1982 at Glover House, moved to a stone church on Lidgerwood and then to a chapel in the former education wing of Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ at Fourth and Washington. Wayne came in 2004 and became pastoral leader in 2006, having grown up in the church and being primarily involved in music.

On the first Sunday of sharing space, Oct. 25, the three congregations held a joint worship service celebrating Reformation Sunday and Oktoberfest. Because there is not space within the sanctuary to hold everyone, they set up a tent with heaters on the church's lawn.

Dirk Vastrick, one member of Bethany, built an ark and put sacred items in it—the pulpit Bible,

communion set, baptismal bowl, communion table cross and salt for the journey as a reminder that a little faith can change the world.

"There are Exodus tones in taking the ark from Bethany to Bethlehem, and having the joint worship in a tent," said Paul.

The pews, the big cross and other furniture were moved to the North Fork Nez Perce Presbyterian Church at Ahsahka, Idaho, which rebuilt after a fire last December.

To organize the move, Bethany members put green dots on items that would go to North Fork Church, blue dots on items that would go into storage, red dots on items to auction Oct. 28 and

yellow dots on items they would take to Bethlehem.

Beside sorrow, Paul said there is energy and excitement about moving into the future.

"As churches, we easily 'feed the beast' that buildings become, putting money into keeping them warm, cold and repaired rather than for ministries," he said, noting that buildings may lock a congregation in an era and way of doing ministry that has passed.

"Our building was expensive to heat—not green or conducive to technologies," said Paul.

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Celebrating 50 Years

Christian Peacemaking Team delegate learns about Holy Land first hand

By Virginia de Leon

To be an instrument of peace and learn about an area known for war, Jesse Davis, 25, spent two weeks last summer with a Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) in the Holy Land.

Since 1984, the peace ministry has drawn people from the United States, Canada and around the world for "an organized, nonviolent alternative to war and other lethal inter-group conflict."

CPT seeks to protect human rights and stand against violence by "getting in the way"—through demonstrations, relationship-building, developing institutions devoted to nonviolence and training volunteers to intervene peacefully in conflict situations.

"Getting in the way, for me, is about walking in Christ's footsteps by working for holistic peace and striving to undo racism and oppression—not just in areas where it's blatant, but also here in the United States," said Jesse.

His experience in the Holy Land made him more aware of God's presence, he said.

"Anything true, beautiful and just belongs to God," he said. "Whether I am beside a Muslim, Christian or Jew, whether I am witnessing peaceful nonviolent resistance or the joy and love of a family in the face of adversity, I see Jesus."

For Jesse, "getting in the way" included walking in solidarity with Palestinian children on a dusty road between Tuba and At-Tuwani, two ancient West Bank communities of farmers and shepherds in conflict with settlers.

"I learned first-hand of the plight of Palestinian people, who have sought autonomy and self-determination in their homeland for half a century," he said.

To protect themselves from harassment and attacks, Palestinians in both villages asked CPT and other international groups to provide a regular presence. Jesse's delegation received a request to accompany a group of children walking from At-Tuwani to Tuba for a summer camp program.

When they walk to school each day, nearby settlers threaten them. While the Israeli High Court has ordered the military to escort the children safely past the settlers, they rarely come, so the children choose a different route, he said.

Along with members of Operation Dove, an Italian peace and human rights organization, Jesse and 11 CPT delegates joined about 80 Palestinian children walking, singing, beating drums and waving banners. Walking near the back, he saw settlers in the hillsides. Later, he said, they drove up in cars, revving their engines and honking their horns to intimidate the children and activists.



Jesse Davis accompanied children.

Jesse wrote in his blog about his amazement at the courage with which these children, and all Palestinians, live their daily lives: "Every moment of normal life is resistance for them. Today they showed fearlessness in face of violence and oppression. I was privileged to walk alongside them, to school and back."

CPT was established after Ron Sider, an American theologian and founder of Evangelicals for Social Action, issued a challenge at a Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France. He called Christians to devote their lives to organized nonviolence as military armies sacrifice their lives in war.

Since then, members of the three historic peace churches—Mennonite, Church of the Brethren and Quaker—and other churches have worked with peace and human rights workers in Iraq, Colombia and around the globe, sending "violence-reduction teams" to militarized areas and crisis situations.

According to CPT's website, its mission is "unarmed intervention waged by committed peacemakers ready to risk injury and death in bold attempts to transform lethal conflict through the nonviolent power of God's truth and love."

Jesse, who moved to Spokane in 2006, learned about the Christian Peacemaker Teams during college at San Diego's Point Loma Nazarene University, where he majored in sociology and theology.

His roommate had been involved with CPT and encouraged him to go. Jesse wanted to go to Palestine, because of what he read in alternative media and blogs by Palestinians and others who live in the West Bank and Gaza.

Although he grew up attending a Baptist church, he has also attended services at mainline Protestant and non-denominational churches. In college, he said his faith was transformed at the Church of the Nazarene in Mid-City, where his theology professor was pastor. He began "to see the cross as the ultimate symbol of nonviolence."

"Before that, Christianity was about a personal, private relationship with Jesus," he said.

Jesse began to see the church as a body, a community of people called to serve each other and work for social justice. He realized that in addition to prayer and worship, faith was about service.

He volunteered at the Salvation Army and other nonprofits. He also spent time with homeless and marginalized people on the streets and listened to their stories.

After moving to Spokane, where his parents lived and where his grandparents, Howard and Pat Stien, had taught at Whitworth University for nearly 30 years, Jesse volunteered at Cup of Cool Water, a ministry for homeless youth. He also worked at the Service Station, a café and Christian ministry, and as the associate

family services coordinator for Habitat for Humanity.

After he was accepted by CPT in March, he raised \$2,750. He was the youngest member of the delegation. Others were clergy, professors, seminary students and human rights activists from the United States and Scotland.

They flew to Tel Aviv and drove to Jerusalem, where they met for three days with organizations that work for peace and human rights such as the Israeli Committee Against Housing Demolitions and B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.

They spent several days visiting people from the Aida refugee

camp near Bethlehem and one of several dozen Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

"It was disheartening," said Jesse of energy and water shortages, and poor living conditions.

As they joined families for dinner, Jesse and other CPT delegates listened to their stories of homes demolished, loved ones shot and killed, farmers arrested for grazing sheep and the ongoing threat of settlement expansion.

Aware he could go home and leave the conflict, Jesse said: "They don't have a choice."

For information, see www.gettingintheway.blogspot.com, www.cpt.org.

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New street named for Martin Luther King Jr. result of years of effort

By Yvonne Lopez-Morton

When the Spokane City Council voted in mid-September to rename a new downtown street in honor of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. the decision fulfilled efforts of the Rev. Happy Watkins, Ivan Bush and other local civil rights advocates who were determined to establish a lasting, visible legacy in the Inland Northwest for the late faith leader.

The new street, until now referred to as the Riverside Extension, will run from Riverside Ave. through the Riverpoint campus, the site of the Eastern Washington University and Washington State University urban academic centers, as well as the WSU College of Nursing.

Groundbreaking for phase one will be in 2010. Phase two will continue the road under the Hamilton Street Bridge, behind Union Gospel Mission and Second Harvest to Perry St. It passes areas representing education, faith and family, which were King's passions, Happy said.

Happy, who for 23 years has recited from memory King's "I Have a Dream" speech to thousands of students and at numerous events, including an annual march, sees the new Martin Luther King Jr. Way as the culmination of a community vision that started when President Ronald Reagan designated the third Monday in January as the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

"The ultimate measure of success is not where we stand in good times, but where we stand in moments of controversy and challenge," Happy, who is pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, said. "This has been a long haul, but because of people like Ivan, who had a dream that we could have a street named after King, we are at this place."

Ivan, the equal opportunity director for Spokane Public Schools, hopes that Martin Luther King Jr. Way will serve as an agent to move the community closer together so that young and old, people of color and the majority culture will be more considerate of one another.

"Spokane has twice been designated an All American City and that sends a message that we take care of all our citizens and are part of a wider family," Ivan said. "Having this street will be a constant reminder to all of us to rededicate ourselves to care for one another."

The vision for Ivan, Happy and others to name a street for King was planted in 1984 with the first march in downtown Spokane.

"Legislation for a national holiday honoring Rev. King was



To the left of Ivan Bush and the Rev. Happy Watkins is the path for Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

introduced in Congress in 1983, but the official holiday didn't start until 1986. We were two years ahead in Spokane with our first march," he said

Ivan, who was director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center from 1979 to 1985 and director of the East Central Community Center from 1985 to 1992, joined with others to talk with community organizations, educators, citizen groups and elected officials about a street designation and without exception the answer was, "It is time."

He is also grateful for the support he received from higher education.

"All our area colleges wrapped their arms around this initiative," he said.

The dedication of Martin Luther King Jr. Way is still being coordinated with the Mayor's office. In the meantime, Ivan and other community members are looking toward the future and are committed to ensuring that youth voices are included in discussions on how to reinforce King's message.

"When we put out the clarion call for student involvement at this year's march in January, many came forward wanting a role," Ivan said. "We must include youth voices because that will carry on our work for generations."

Efforts to move the initiative to a final vote before the Spokane City Council required countless hours of meetings initiated by Happy, Ivan and others with community leaders, organizations,

elected officials and the city planning department.

The local NAACP, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Family Outreach Center and the Black Ministers Fellowship Union provided fees for the street naming.

"I appreciate that the City Council took this action by a unanimous vote," said City Council President Joe Shogan. "I was heartened by the fact that not one person appeared before the Council to oppose this. It gave me great satisfaction that the right thing has been done."

Joe, who has marched in the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day walk for many years, said the Council's vote has great significance not only for Spokane's black community but also for all minorities in the region.

"What a wonderful decision for Spokane," said Betsy Wilkerson,

a local businesswoman, community leader and member of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Imagine, at a time when there

are so many economic and social challenges and uncertainties, Spokane realized this was the right time and right thing to do. Our patience was tested, but our prayers have been answered," she said.

The location of the street in the center of Spokane's higher education district has not gone unnoticed by black educators in the community who value King's commitment to education.

"The street was named and located with intention and not put in some forgotten place," said Bernice Buchanan, an educator with Spokane Public Schools.

"King's life was about education, and he spoke for everyone, not only the black community," said Bernice, noting that one of her favorite King mottos is "Learn baby, learn, so you can earn baby, earn."

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Do congregations and faiths model business as usual or live faith

As nonprofits and churches seek to be “with it” as professionals and businesses, they can easily slide into a corporate mindset, sloughing off values of faithful living in just, peaceful sustainable relationships.

Ostensibly, corporations model understandings or interpretations of the law, professional ethics and relationship standards that may appear reasoned, acceptable and appropriate, but some practices caused or exacerbated the recession.

Are local, regional and national faith bodies and nonprofits accountable to tenets of faith and mission as they absorb corporate expectations? When they hire secular experts, are those employees accountable to the faith and mission?

Faith institutions are corporations. They need to follow laws. Many have influenced laws to protect against discrimination, inequality, injustices and oppression that toss people into lives of poverty.

While we would like to think faiths and nonprofits put their values first, some

are caving in, thinking they can follow the lead of corporations that are shoving people aside and out of the economy as that economy has fallen into recession/depression that calls for “tough” decisions to be made to make budgets balance.

We tend to fall into the same mentality as the rest of the corporate culture—leaving out women, children, elderly, poor people, people of color, people with unpopular viewpoints and orientations—“the least.”

How many churches in Spokane are facing budget shortfalls? What are the criteria used for making the decisions in the midst of the crunch to uphold professional salaries, provide ever-more-expensive health care, cover costs of energy usage and maintain buildings? Where do mission, caring and justice fit in the budgets?

Do we just fire those who use health insurance, such those who have surgery or pregnant women? Do we challenge the profiteering of health insurance companies—concerned with providing 30 percent

for investors? Do we challenge health insurance companies that deny claims or coverage? Do we assume our national bodies are calling corporations to social responsibility? Do we know how a drop in private insurance coverage will affect our national faith and nonprofit bodies’ pension, investment and endowment plans?

Are we willing to let the gains made for Equal Employment Opportunity, for human rights, women, minorities, family leave, immigrants, health care or people with disabilities erode?

Are we willing to make budget decisions on the same basis as corporations and legislative bodies, hounded by lobbyists, cutting gains in support for the poor, the disabled, the homeless or the indebted? Are we willing to join the cultural bandwagon that says they are of less value or beauty?

Should congregations and national bodies not model an alternative, just economy that recognizes the value of everyone who contributes to creating corporate wealth?

How many times greater than other church workers do our faith bodies pay our national executive leaders? Will the move to cut corporate CEO salaries influence others?

To what extent do we already model an alternative economy? To what extent do those models free faith bodies to challenge the top-dollar-for-the-top-dog corporate cultural expectation? What corporations offer better models than faith and nonprofit corporations?

Do you believe it is possible for the lions and lambs to live together without the one devouring the other?

When have you had a desire to speak out for justice and silenced yourself to save your job?

Just because we are faith and nonprofit bodies may not make us holy, righteous or just. We still need to examine ourselves to see if we are—as the prophet Micah urges us—doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with our God.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Just a few grains of salt can season the world with peace

As Bethany Presbyterian Church celebrated its final worship in the 56-year-old building that housed the 100-year-old congregation, they ceremonially put their sacred items in an ark made by a member. That helped them identify with the Exodus narrative of wandering into the wilderness seeking their new location and ministry.

While they emptied closets, gave away pews and met there one last time, they remained clear on their intent to remain together as a community called to integrity, justice, welcome and inclusion of “all God’s children with no exception.”

We now can dream of what God’s Kingdom should be—God’s beloved community articulated by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Isaiah’s vision of the lamb and lion lying down together.

We know we are part of a long line of people who have set off on a journey. We have thought hard about moving from Third and Freya, but the move of ancestors from

Europe to the New World was harder.

Our role is to continue to be salt, not salt that overpowers the delicate dance of faith, but enough to open and unlock the subtlety of a meal so people can better appreciate it.

We have salt in ourselves. When we work hard, we sweat and the salt in us comes out.

Salt is faith. We need faith in ourselves to be at peace among ourselves. Salt is in each of us. Peace comes from the faith we own and live, the faith that becomes our ethic as we live on our journey.

In Exodus the people complained because of their selfishness and greed. Faith/salt is something we have, but we do not choose to live by it all the time. We think that everything in the Bible is about perfection, but the Bible story is how people, imperfect as they are, follow “the pillar and cloud” into the wilderness despite their tendency to shut down and mess things up.

There is subtlety in our lives as we dream

into God’s Kingdom. Let salt season our world. It takes only a grain of salt to be faithful. Let’s party to celebrate that God has been in this place. This holy place will be with us as we move on. It’s in the marrow of who the congregation is. The stories we tell will be with us and others as subtle seasoning that will be noticed.

In cleaning out my office I found a summer 1983 A.D. magazine, which the Presbyterians and United Church of Christ published together. The cover story was: “Holy Space: Does God Need Buildings?” Usually, we do not question if we will have a building, but where we go and how we arrive is important in community building.

What faith does it take to move a mountain or a building? Just a pinch of salt.

What does it take to stand by marginalized people, people who are not considered good enough? Just a few grains of salt.

What does it take to give hope and grace in this narcissistic society lost in greed? Just a few grains of salt.

Guess who the few grains are! We are! We are powerful and have influence in the world.

We provide a place of acceptance where it does not matter what racial, political or sexual orientation we are. We seek to welcome, love and honor everyone, providing a place where they can feel safe in a world of anger and violence, where they find others interested in doing faith not just talking about faith.

As salt, we are called to live in integrity that transcends the fears of this society. Jesus asks us to season the world delicately, to be at peace among and beyond ourselves, to be counter cultural, seditious, nonviolent, human affirming, environment loving.

Saltiness is a choice on how we will journey forward. What we have been in the past, what we are in the present and what we will be into the future is holy.

We walk by faith, not by sight.

The Rev. Paul Rodkey - Bethany Presbyterian - excerpts from closing sermon

Letter to the Editor

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

We develop our life of faith over time with small steps. Like the woman whose health goal was not to walk a 5-K or even a mile, but to walk to the end of the block and back. For her it was a daunting goal, one she conquered one step at a time. What would happen if we all took 10 minutes a day for prayer, praise and reflection? Or for some, 10 extra minutes? That would make a combined total of 50 more hours of prayer for one’s church each month! 50 more hours of praise! 50 more hours of growing into the people God is calling us to be.

**The Rev. Joyce O’Connor Magee
Manito United Methodist**

As one gets older, it is all the more clear that as the old adage says, “We are what we eat.”

Eating and the preparation of food are topics not far from the heart of the church. One of our two sacraments has to do with a supper table. If we had instituted a third sacrament, as the old joke goes, it may well have been the potluck supper. Eating and the making of food are at the heart of human life. So it is no surprise to find those gathering around communion tables talking about what we eat and how we make it.

**The Rev. Steve Willis
United Church of Christ - Newport**

A church is spiritually healthy when it knows how to deal with anxiety. God can’t be found in the uproar, but only

in the silence or the whisper, as is conveyed in I Kings 19:11. Unfortunately, it’s in the uproar, violence, anxiety, wind, earthquake, and fire when we feel the need for God the most, yet that’s when we can’t find God. What Elijah might not have been able to see was that the real uproar was inside Elijah, not outside. Elijah had to step outside his cave and listen.

Anxiety keeps us hiding in the cave of our own emotions. Our anxiety keeps us from listening to God’s still small voice. How can we be healthy Christians, a healthy church?

- Take a deep breath and stand outside our own emotions.

- Spend more time in listening prayers. What is God whispering to us?

- Remember the unhealthy ways our own families dealt with stress.

There will always be uproar. There will always be wind, earthquake, and fire. They will usually be inside us. We all suffer from anxiety. The trick is to get outside of the cave of our emotions and listen for God’s quiet whisper.

**The Rev. Don Hoffman
Creston Christian (Disciples of Christ)**

What is the “Church?”

A. An organization upholding the values of society.

B. A community service group.

C. A place to learn how to be good and moral

D. A building where people worship

E. None of the above.

I’ve got my hand way up... “Ooh! Ooh! Ooh! Ooh! I know this one. It’s E!”

Now you may think that’s my seminary education on display, but I have to confess that I owe this one to my Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Harstad. Because 35 years ago, she taught me a song.

“I am church! You are church! We are church together! All who follow Jesus all around the world, yes we’re the church together!”

Funny how often we get it wrong though. “A” created the church that held Inquisitions, condemned Copernicus and burned anybody who dared to challenge its authority.

“B” isn’t so bad. It’s good to be a community service group, like the Newport Rotary Club, which has been incredible in their work in Africa digging wells. There’s the PEO, Kiwanis, Lion’s Club, the Scouts. They’re good, but they are not church.

The problem with “C” is that some of the most moral, kind, and good people I know are not Christians. You can learn that elsewhere.

“D” well though a building may be handy, we don’t need one to be a church.

Mrs. Harstad was right. What is the church? The church is the people who follow Jesus. That’s it. No other criteria. At its heart, the only thing that holds the church together is Jesus.

**Pastor Janine Goodrich
American Lutheran Church - Newport**

I have been on a spiritual journey of some intensity the past 10 years or so. Combine that with the realization that our culture has changed dramatically over my lifetime and that makes for interesting if not challenging times in terms of faith and church.

One of the biggest points of transformation for me was realizing that Jesus’ talk about the Kingdom (Realm) of God was to get people to live God’s way here and now. For some time, much emphasis in certain Protestant congregations has been to “get saved” so you can go to heaven when you die.

Salvation and the Realm of God were about the after life.

In recent years my thinking about this has changed dramatically. The focus of the Christian life is living the life of Jesus in this life.

It is about living compassion and God’s justice in this world.

This focus is not about trying to get to heaven when we die, it is about transforming lives and therefore the world, in this life.

The Christian life is not about “practicing” for what happens when we die. The Christian life is all about intentionally living God’s way here and now. It is about shaping our lives, our attitudes and so changing the world.

**The Rev. David Helseth
Englewood Christian Church
Yakima**

KYRS shifts from low-power to full-power

Thin Air Community Radio which owns and operates KYRS-LP at 92.3 & 89.9 FM and streaming at www.kyrs.org, has received a construction grant of \$188,395 from the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration to build a full power, 6,500-watt, non-commercial community radio station.

The new station at 88.1FM will replace KYRS' low-power, 100-watt FM station, providing non-commercial radio service to more than 225,000 people in the region.

Having a full-power station will protect its broadcasting frequency.

For 2008, the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program

Jubilee spreads \$500,000 globally

Now in its 21st year, the Jubilee International Marketplace has sent more than \$500,000 to places where the wages are \$1 a day, bringing fair wages for the products craftspeople create.

The event is from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday, Nov. 13, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 14, at First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar.

Through this alternative Christmas gift event, the church has developed relationships with people from South Africa to Peru, Uganda to Thailand. Gifts include sweaters, jewelry, t-bag art, pottery and Holy Land woodcarvings.

For information, call 323-6702.

Fig Tree editor to speak at international Religion Communication Congress

Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp is among 54 national and world speakers for the once-in-a-decade, multi-faith Religion Communication Congress April 7 to 10 in Chicago.

The event is expected to draw 1,200 communication professionals to learn about advancing tools, power shifts and unique communication ventures like The Fig Tree.

Mary will speak on The Fig Tree as a model of solutions-oriented-peace journalism. For information, visit recongress2010.org.

She and other members of The Fig Tree staff are also available to give mission moments, sermons and programs on The Fig Tree.

For information, call 535-1813.

(PTFP) awarded \$19 million nationwide. These matching grants assist with planning and construction of public telecommunications facilities.

Lupito Flores, station manager, said the grant covers many but not all costs. Additional funding will be needed to build and operate the station, targeted to be on the air by November 2010.

KYRS receives 70 percent of its income from individual donors.

It offers local voices often overlooked by other media, he said. It seeks to involve many sectors of the community in solving community problems, while educating people on different cultures and perspectives.

For information, call 747-3012 or visit kyrs.org.

Calendar of Events

- Oct 30** • **Hope House Celebrity Fashion Show**, Volunteers of America, Doubletree Hotel, 322 N. Spokane Falls Ct., 11 a.m., 624-2378
- Nov 1** • **United Nations Association**, United Nations Day Discussion, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave., 4 p.m.
- Nov 4** • **"The Lives of Others,"** Brian Clayton and Richard McClelland of Gonzaga University, Faith, Film and Philosophy Series of Whitworth University and Gonzaga University, The Magic Lantern Theater, 25 W. Main, 7 p.m.
- **Clergy Workshop on Returning Service Personnel**, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Community Services, Veterans' Outreach Center and ACT Ministries, at St. Anne's Children and Family Center, 25 W. Fifth, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 358-4273
- Nov 5** • **Fig Tree Board**, Manito United Methodist, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.
- **Public Panel Discussion** on Human Transformation in Film papers of Gonzaga and Whitworth Students, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University, 3 to 5 p.m.,
- **"All Things Shining: Putting Light on the Screen,"** Roy Anker, professor of English at Calvin College, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University, 7 p.m., 777-3275
- Nov 6** • **The Fig Tree Harvest Soirée Auction**, Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave., 6 to 8:30 p.m., 599-1177
- **Lecture on "Aristotle Goes to Hollywood:** Popular Film and Moral Persuasion," Daniel McInerney, Baylor University, Jepson School of Business, Gonzaga University, 7 p.m.
- Nov 7** • **Volunteer Orientation** and Training of Spokane Multifaith AIDS Care Teams, Catholic Charities Family Service Center, 12 E. 5th, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., 358-4273
- **NAACP Banquet**, "Bold Dreams and Victories," Virginia Supreme Court Judge John Charles Thomas, Northern Quest Casino, 100 N. Hayford Rd., Airway Heights, 5 p.m., 467-9793
- Nov 7-8** • **Fall Folk Fest**, The Lair, Spokane Community College, 1810 N. Greene, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday, noon to 5 p.m., Sunday, 624-5693
- Nov 10** • **Centennial Re-enactment** of the International Workers of the World Free Speech Movement, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, Stevens and Spokane Falls Blvd., noon, 838-7870
- Nov 14** • **Food and Faith Forum**, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave., 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., 294-3944
- "What Skills Do I Need? Pastoral Abilities" The Ministry Institute, 405 E. Sinto, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 313-5765
- Nov 15** • **Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week** Clothing Drop-off, Central United Methodist, 518 W. Third, 445-9019
- Nov 17** • **Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center Benefit** Luncheon, Davenport Hotel, 11:30 a.m., 455-8722
- **Free Community Thanksgiving Dinners** of the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant in two locations: St. Paul's United Methodist, 1620 N. Monroe, East Central Community Center, 500 S. Stone, 3 to 7 p.m.,
- Nov 18** • **"How Government, Faith Communities and Businesses Can Work Together to Help Homeless Families,"** Greg Morris in Boise, Spokane City Forum, First Presbyterian Church, 318 S. Cedar, 11:45 a.m., 777-1555
- Nov 19** • **"Food for Thought"** Dinner and Conversation, Shalom Ministries, Central United Methodist Church, 518 W. Third, 5 p.m., 445-9019
- Nov 20** • **International Dinner**, Hixson Union Building, Whitworth University, 5:30 p.m., 777-4509
- Nov 21** • **"How to Do Advocacy** Forum, Lutheran Public Policy Office, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th Ave., 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 747-6677
- Nov 26** • **Interfaith Community Thanksgiving Service**, Interfaith Council, Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave., 10 a.m., 667-0462
- Nov 27-29** • **Festival of Fair Trade**, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., 464-7677
- Nov 28** • **Grand Opening Calvary Baptist Soup Kitchen**, 207 E. Third, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., 624-5433
- Dec 1** • **Fig Tree Distribution**, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m.
- Dec 2** • **Fig Tree Board**, Manito United Methodist, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.
- 2nd & 4th Fri** • **Pax Christi**, Gonzaga's Tilford Center, noon

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Shoes and Socks Ministry assures children of at least one good pair

By Brenda Velasco

Alice Hochhalter, who attends Ridgeview Christian Center, has helped thousands of low-income children in Spokane receive new shoes and socks for school since 2001.

"I go to the local school and ask teachers if any of their students need shoes," Alice said. "My goal is for children whose families are going through a tough time to have at least one good pair of shoes."

The Shoes and Socks ministry began after the church's former pastor urged members to use their gifts to help the community.

"We all have gifts," she remembers him saying. "We need to pray to ask how God wants to use us."

Alice, who struggled financially when she was younger, felt a call to help the children of the community.

"My mother had five children and we went through tough times. I remember she would cut cardboard to put in the soles of our worn-out shoes," Alice said. "She said we didn't need to 'keep up with the Joneses,' but needed to live on the income we had."

"I prayed about providing shoes and socks for children and thought it sounded like a good idea," Alice said. "So I went to talk to the pastor. He told me to go for it."

The ministry, which is run through Ridgeview Christian Center at 561 N. Ash, receives money from the community and church donations.

With the economic downturn, money for this ministry has been slower in coming. Alice said she needs more support to keep the Shoe and Sock Ministry going.

"It's important for children to have new shoes," she said. "Many of the families we serve are headed by single mothers who are trying to make ends meet. Even if the community can give a small amount that will help a lot."

She puts in about \$10 to \$20 dollars a month from her own pocket.

Alice, who attended Glad Tidings Assembly of God and St.



Alice Hochhalter started shoe and sock ministry in 2001.

Paul Lutheran before becoming involved at the 200-member Ridgeview Christian Center 15 years ago, said that they need at least \$30 for every child they serve. The ministry works with Payless Shoes, purchasing \$30 gift certificates, which she gives to each

family for each child.

"We used to buy the shoes for them, but it is nicer for them to buy their own shoes," she said. "It is rewarding to see the smiles on the children's faces when we give them the certificate."

Within the last four months the Shoe and Socks Ministry has served only 15 children.

Currently they have about \$500 in their fund, which is down significantly from \$1,500 in previous years.

"Our church has several ministries that grew out of that sermon. It's not what we do for ourselves but what we do for God that matters," Alice said.

The church also serves a weekly meal for the community, serves root beer floats to students at Ridgeview Elementary School a block away at 5610 N. Maple, and has an annual Fall Festival for the neighborhood.

For information, call 326-2913 or email office@ridgeview.cc.

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