



The Fig Tree
1323 S. Perry St.
Spokane, WA 99202-3571
DATED MATERIALS

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SPOKANE WA
Permit No. 1044

God's glory ebbs and surges

Photo and verse
by Mary Stamp

God's glory
ebbs and surges
washing our sandy lives
with rebounding waves
of hope.

God's grace
roils and purges
leveling our rippled lives
with reflecting streams
of justice.

God's gift
pools and splurges
stilling our rushing lives
with refreshing flows
of peace.

God's goodness
waits and merges
restoring our misty lives
with renewing waters
of love.

God's grandeur
shines and converges
gathering our scattered lives
on the reconciling shores
of time.



Donating to The Fig Tree

*promotes
understanding*

*encourages
dialogue*

*uncovers
concerns*

*empowers
women and men*

*creates
community*

*enhances
human dignity*

*invites
involvement*

SEE PAGE 2

Messiah Sing-Along will benefit the Anuak

“Why do the nations so furiously rage together?” the Psalmist wrote thousands of years ago (Psalm 2:1) and people still ask today.

In “The Messiah,” Georg Fredric Handel assigned this question to the bass soloist.

For more than 30 years, First Presbyterian Church in Spokane has been presenting Handel’s “Messiah” as a community sing-along with a professional orchestra and soloists.

This year, the Messiah Sing-Along will be a benefit concert to raise funds for the Anuak people of Ethiopia, who experienced genocide last December. It will be held at 7 pm., Sunday, Dec. 5, at the church at 318 S. Cedar. There will be a free-will offering. Steve Goodenberger, music director, will conduct.

The Fig Tree has covered efforts by the local Anuak to raise world awareness and action.

The Anuak Justice Council plans to send a peacekeeping delegation to the refugee camp in Sudan to encourage displaced Anuaks to have patience. They are growing weary and need encouragement that people are working on their behalf, said John Frankhauser of the AJC.

Funds from the concert will aid Anuak people living in and near Gambella, aid refugees in Sudan and Kenya and seek justice as the Anuak Justice Council exposes the genocide and on-going atrocities.

Handel’s “Messiah” includes voices of the prophets and saints, reminding listeners of Christ’s teaching of peace and justice.

For information on the event, call 747-1058.

Presbytery grants funds for projects

Fig Tree draws partners for website

The Fig Tree takes the gifts of media and transforms ink, paper, web space and video into stories that encourage and empower people to act.

“We supplement what people gain in worship and other gatherings with stories of people living their faith and connecting what they do with what they believe,” said editor Mary Stamp, reporting on the Rural-Urban Connections Project and the Interactive Website Project.

Three Gonzaga University public relations students helped The Fig Tree reach out to congregations in the region by sending a postcard to each of about 400 congregations, asking if they “want more local faith-in-action stories?”

The card said The Fig Tree “sparks awareness and understanding across the faith community, reinvigorating people in their lives and ministries.” It also reminded of its role in strengthening “involvement in congregations, communities, society and the world by connecting people throughout the region.”

The goal is to bolster the capabilities of staff and build a network of story-idea gatherers, contributing writers and editors of special area pages or sections.

In a student-organized phona-thon, callers asked for names of contact people, for newsletters, email, websites and links.

Of 225 calls made, 80 people answered and 34 provided names of contact people. Callers also learned of several story ideas. Some are in this issue, and will be in future issues.

Fig Tree staff refined the Interactive Website Project description during November to clarify how it will build on the newspaper’s role as a trusted voice in the region, energizing people and overcoming their isolation through sharing stories of faith-in-action.

“We see the website as a way to multiply our scope, covering more stories and more area geographically,” Mary said. “So we are making contacts, sharing the summary with people in Yakima, Vancouver, Bainbridge Island and Seattle, seeking to draw in more partners in the faith and higher

education communities.

“Often faith and nonprofit communities chase mass media, reshaping their message to the mass media mindset. We have stories to tell that can reshape thinking and lives, if the stories are not remolded into something trendy, sensational or conflict centered,” Mary said.

The Rev. Jim CastroLang, website project coordinator, is meeting with people one-to-one.

Jim said that “the key is for us to build personal connections and relationships on the web. Many websites have teasers, but do not complete the job. We need to use this medium in relational ways.”

The Inland Northwest Presbytery voted on Nov. 20 to grant The Fig Tree \$3,000 for the website and \$1,000 for the rural-urban outreach, joining the Pacific Northwest United Church of Christ which gave the same amounts in September.

Those grants provide a challenge for other regional churches to match those amounts, so these projects can take root.

For information, call 535-1813.