

February 2007
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Monthly newspaper covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest

The Fig Tree
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Special report gives taste of Inland Northwest congregations helping with Gulf Coast recovery

Volunteers bring hope

By Mary Stamp

Verna DuBois of Chewelah United Church of Christ was heartened to find every major denomination, faith and organization “was, is and will continue to be along the Gulf Coast working, sweating, praying, pounding, cleaning, sweeping and toting” to clean up the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The Fig Tree recently interviewed several area people who have also gone through Presbyterian, Lutheran and Episcopal congregations.

These volunteers have been overwhelmed by both the devastation they saw and the gratitude they met. They have felt a sense of being part of “something holy.”

Verna was one of five from her church on a 35-member team from 13 congregations in the Pacific Northwest United Church of Christ (UCC) Conference.

Another UCC work team of 18 also went in February 2006. Randy Crowe, director of N-Sid-Sen camp on Lake Coeur d’Alene, led both work teams. In October, he found recovery activity increasing.

*Special report inside
on pages 5 to 8*



Harold Schoessler of Ritzville sits amid a heap of debris taken from a New Orleans home by a February work crew.

Photo by Randy Crowe

AmeriCorps role includes preparing resource directory

The Fig Tree Board recently chose Malcolm Haworth to serve as an AmeriCorps community outreach coordinator in its office in Unity House at Gonzaga University.

He will be responsible for recruiting volunteers, nurturing relationships with congregations and nonprofits, and overseeing updating and preparing the 2007-08 Directory of Congregations and Community Resources, formerly a project of the Interfaith Council.

The Council Board voted at its January meeting to pass on that responsibility to The Fig Tree, a project that fits readily into its mission and which will be prepared in conjunction with a comprehensive online directory.

Malcolm, who earned a master’s degree in history at Eastern Washington University in 2005 and would like to teach, brings skills in organizing, research and community service.

As a student he was active in campus ministry at EWU and Washington State University, and recently volunteered with a political campaign and has done some adjunct teaching.

For information, call 535-1813.

Bishop reminds people of faith:

Inequities spur prophetic witness

Seeing the stark inequities in the Gaza Strip earlier in January, Spokane Bishop William Skylstad told participants at the recent Eastern Washington Legislative Conference those inequities are “at the heart of advocacy.”

“Crossing at the checkpoint was like going from day to night, from luscious green fields to crumbled buildings, from nice cars and tractors to transportation by donkey cart,” he said.

The priest at Our Lady of Sorrows School told what it was to be in a land torn by violence, alienation and hate and to give witness through the school that Muslims, Jews and Christians can get along, respectful of and sensitive to each other’s religions.

Bishop Skylstad also told of going in 1993 to Malawi with Catholic Relief Services after the president for life had been voted out because eight Catholic bishops wrote a 10-page pastoral letter, “Living our Faith.” They were arrested and would have been executed except for intervention by the United Nations.

The bishop then recounted

prophets from Hebrew Scriptures to the New Testament and the advocates of the civil rights movement.

“The prophetic role is something to reflect on, exercise and live into the future,” he said. “It demands vision of what can and should be, like Isaiah 11 envisioning the wolf being the guest of the lamb. We are connected with one another and the world in which we live.”

In today’s culture of deepening divisions and harshness, he called for a revolution in relationships and for prophets to be mystics and contemplatives, looking into the future, aware of God’s presence everywhere and in everyone.

He called for exercising the prophetic role with humility to see beyond symptoms to root causes, with courage to overcome paralyzing fear, with nurture from spiritual traditions, with hope for the future, with an eye to plant seeds for the long haul, with awareness of their faith’s social teachings and with solidarity with all humanity.

“Being aware of the Catho-

lic principles of social teachings—dignity of life, rights with responsibility, the option for the poor and vulnerable; workers rights, solidarity and caring for God’s creation—keeps us from focusing narrowly on only one teaching,” he said.

He uplifted people’s need to be grateful for pains and hard times, joys and blessings, because people learn by passing through difficulties. He also noted advocates’ need to have and balance both the enthusiasm of youth and the wisdom of elders.

“In the United States, we can express our views and influence our culture and society for the good. We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers,” he said setting the faith basis for speakers from the Lutheran Public Policy Office (LPPO), Washington Association of Churches (WAC) and Washington State Catholic Conference (WACC), who discussed priorities for ecumenical advocacy.

Paul Benz, of LPPO and WAC, and Tony Cube, the new legislative director of the WACC, report-

Continued on page 3

Mayor invites reflection

“Note that I’m not black, but I celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday,” said Spokane Mayor Dennis Hession at both a Sunday afternoon commemoration service and a Monday rally and march in Spokane. He was referring to one person’s comment in a newspaper article about people who do and do not celebrate the holiday. One person said he did not celebrate, because he was “not black.”

The mayor celebrates the day because he remembers “the tumultuous 1960s” when King brought a commitment to social justice and nonviolent protest that led to passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965.”

On the 21st anniversary of the holiday, Dennis called people to reflect on the value of King’s contributions to society, calling Americans to uphold the ideals of life, liberty, equality and justice, not limiting the worth of people by color or class.

“He made it clear that government has a role to take care of people and people have a responsibility to change the world through non-violence, even civil disobedience,” he added.

More on Martin Luther King Day on page 12



Mayor Dennis Hession with other speakers at the commemoration service for Martin Luther King Day.

Religion News Briefs

Around the World

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CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111
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Muslims see Islamic law, democracy compatible

Oxford, Ohio (ENI). Muslims believe Islamic law is compatible with democracy and most admire values championed by the United States but question whether Washington is serious about implementing democracy overseas, a poll carried out by The Gallup Organization has found. Covering more than 80 percent of the global Muslim population, the poll showed that a majority of those surveyed believe that Sharia, or Muslim law, and democracy can co-exist in a country and that Islamic law should be at least a source of legislation.

Fewer people generate more income

Utrecht (ENI). Despite declining membership, five Dutch denominations have generated their best-ever result in their annual fund-raising drive, which organizers say generates more money than any other campaign in the Netherlands. "Fewer members, yet more income," was one headline after the publication in mid-January of the 2005 fundraising effort, dubbed "Kerkbalans"—or the "church's bottom line"—to raise money for costs such as salaries and the maintenance of buildings.

Anglican archbishops to lead slavery repentance

London (ENI). The Church of England, in acknowledging its involvement in the slave trade, will take part in an act of repentance by thousands of Anglicans on March 24. Marchers from throughout Britain will meet in London for a procession led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, and his second in command, the Archbishop of York, the Ugandan-born John Sentamu. The march marks 200 years since the abolition of the slave trade in the former British Empire.

Nobel Laureate Maathai challenges churches

Nairobi (ENI). Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai challenged churches to be involved in the campaign against debt burden, saying many loans to developing countries were not only poorly transacted, but are also illegitimate. "We have the numbers and the voice, yet we are quiet," said Maathai, speaking at the World Social Forum in Nairobi. "We pray silently in the safety of our homes, in the safety of our churches, because raising our voices would compromise our safety and comfort."

'End suffering,' Zimbabwe Catholic group says

Harare (ENI). Zimbabwe's Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace expressed outrage at the worsening economic crisis afflicting the southern African nation and has called on President Robert Mugabe's government to act to end "unnecessary human suffering." The group said: "The hardships that people of this country are facing are wholesale, including difficulty accessing the collapsed health delivery system, the disintegrating education system, and paralyzed agriculture, manufacturing and mining, and other sectors of the economy being in the intensive care unit."

Tutu warns war on terror cannot ignore poverty

Nairobi (ENI). Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Desmond Tutu, Anglican Archbishop emeritus of Cape Town, warns it is not possible to win the war on terror as long as conditions that drive people to desperation persist. "There is no way anybody is going to win the war on terror as long as there are conditions in so many parts of the world that drive people to acts of desperation because of poverty, disease and ignorance," said Tutu.

Jerusalem leaders offer to mediate conflict

Jerusalem (ENI). Church leaders in Jerusalem have warned warring Palestinian factions they could trigger civil war. Offering to play a mediating role, they are urging an end to violence in order for them to focus on the true priority of their people— independence. "As leaders in Jerusalem concerned at the situation in the Palestinian Territories we must voice our anxiety for all our people—Christian and Muslim alike—at the deteriorating relations between Fatah and Hamas leaders and the armed forces," they said.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Our Place plans benefit to build laundry center

An Our Place Community Ministries benefit, "What the World Needs Now Is Music, Poetry and Chocolate," connects love and laundry.

"Every day, we serve clients who wash their clothes by hand in their tubs," said Holy Names Sister Ann Pizelo, co-director with Peggy Sammons.

The event at 2 p.m., Sun-

day, Feb. 11, at Salem Lutheran Church, 1428 W. Broadway, will raise funds to remodel Our Place's building for a Laundry Center to provide free or low-cost laundry service to low-income people in West Central Spokane.

The benefit's program includes the Project Joy senior citizens' choir, a reading of the legend of St. Valentine by the Rev. Tom

Soeldner of Salem Lutheran, music by the Rev. Todd Scranton of St. Paul's United Methodist, a biblical reading on love by Sister Irene Knopes of St. Joseph's Catholic, a poetry reading by the Rev. Champ Singleterry of Central Baptist, and music by the Holy Names Music Center Honors Chamber Orchestra.

For information, call 326-7267.

Workshop deals with congregations' 'bite'

"Your Congregation's Culture: What You Don't Know Can Bite You" is the theme for a workshop from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 15, at the Clare Center, 4624 E. Jamieson Rd.

Workshop facilitator Carl Green, director of the Institute for Congregational Leadership (ICL), said, "Congregations have

cultures or boundaries, within which their leaders have the freedom to act. Violate the culture and you can get 'bit,' even if your reasons are well-intentioned or necessary."

The workshop explores the role that culture plays in setting boundaries and shaping permissions given or not given to leaders.

Participants will be introduced to a tool to understand their congregations and clarify their preferences.

Another workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, March 24, will focus on "Legal Liabilities Affecting Religious Organizations."

For information, call 448-4887 or visit corhome.org/events.htm.

Media, ad practices focus of conference

Jean Kilbourne, who has challenged advertising practices related to tobacco, alcohol and images of women, will discuss "Surviving and Thriving" as part of the conference on "Deadly Persuasion: Advertising and Addiction" from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 18, at Spokane Community College.

The Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media, a regional

center for media literacy at Gonzaga University, and the Women's Leadership Conference of the Inland Northwest are sponsors

Jean's book, *Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel*, won the distinguished publication award of the Association for Women in Psychology in 2000. She is also known for the documentaries, *Killing us Softly*, *Slim*

Hopes and *Calling the Shots*.

Sessions will consider how media images affect societal problems—such as violence, sexual abuse of children, rape, sexual harassment, pornography, censorship, teenage pregnancy, addiction and eating disorders—and attitudes that perpetuate sexism and violence.

For information, call 323-3578 or visit www.gonzaga.edu/ce.

Gonzaga students embark on effort to co-exist

Sojourners editor Jim Wallis will speak at 7:30 p.m., Monday, April 30, in Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University as part of Coexist, an effort to foster understanding and respect among diverse, passionately committed, politically active student groups.

The goal is to provide a safe forum for voices to be heard and to create an atmosphere in tune with the university's purpose as a Catholic center for learning, said organizer Anna Gonzales.

"We are gathering students from College Republicans, Young Democrats, Campus Libertarians, JUSTICE Club, John Paul II Society, Women's Studies, HERO-A Gay-Straight Alliance, GU Right to Life, Black Student Union, and La Raza Latina," she said.

In the first phase, group representatives met Feb. 6 to share stories of what it is like for them on campus.

"Each group feels marginalized

and that other groups have more power or influence on campus than they do," Anna explained.

In the second phase, group members will enroll in a "Know Your Neighbor" program, in which they meet face-to-face once a month and converse with someone who is a political opposite, but with whom they have other things in common.

On April 12, they reconvene for dialogue in a safe setting to ask questions about what they do not understand about other groups.

Organizers will compile a booklet with the stories and dialogue to help participants remember the experience.

On April 30, Jim will discuss overcoming differences and finding common ground. He believes

people from different political backgrounds can get along and, if they focus on what matters, can change the world, Anna said.

"We hope to have students think before acting in disrespect, name-calling or being violent, because they know a person in a differing political group," she said. "It puts a face and personal connection behind ideas."

In the 2007-08 school year, the program will continue with a focus on commonalities. There will be a speaker series on human rights, human dignity and poverty—recognizing that such issues shouldn't become mired in political divisions, but divisions should be put aside to talk about those issues.

For information, call 323-4069.

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Stories not in headlines invigorate those doing CROP Hunger Walks

Invigorated by stories from the field that don't make the headlines, Lynn Magnuson returned from the 60th anniversary celebration of Church World Service (CWS) in January in Dallas to begin her spring support for CROP Hunger Walks as Pacific Northwest regional director of CWS/CROP.

Those walks are set for April 21 in Sunnyside, April 29 in Spokane and May 20 in Milton-Freewater and the Upper Valley in the Leavenworth area.

Linda Carter, her staff associate, joined her for the six-day celebration of the ecumenical commitment of the denominations and other partners.

Lynn said that denominations often connect with partners abroad with the assistance of CWS.

In addition to its ongoing work, Church World Service will emphasize 1) Water for Life, which is expanding from providing wells to planning water systems for people, animals and agriculture; 2) Giving Hope, empowerment of children who are heads of households; 3) School Safe Zones, a program in West Africa; 4) Build a Village, helping people in the Balkans return home, and 5) Emergency Response Ready, help-

ing communities prepare for disasters through a new training program.

These are funded by gifts from individuals and churches, Lynn said.

"Improved communications means Africa is becoming smaller. The East, West and South are recognizing common problems, so Church World Service can assist with cross-region forums and training events to help communities learn from each other," she explained.

With 20 active conflicts in the world and 15 non-violent problem areas, there now are more refugees than ever before—10 million people in refugee camps, 8 million of them "warehoused" for more than 5 years. In addition, there are 23.5 million internally displaced people, forced to flee their homes, but still in their own countries.

CWS helps with job training and education so refugees can connect with communities near camps, because few will come to the United States or other countries, Lynn said.

"CWS continues assistance through material aid, peace-building and resettlement programs, such as the Balkan "Build a Village" program. Since 1946, CWS has helped more than 450,000

refugees begin new lives in the United States. Currently CWS and seven participating denominations resettle about 8,000 people each year.

A forum on disasters highlighted Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Gulf Coast and Washington state. Current disaster responses include nine in the United States, four in the Middle East, five in Indonesia, three in Pakistan, four in Sudan and two in Kenya.

For example, in Iraq, 10 percent of the population is displaced and 100,000 people left the country in December.

"In our state, four groups have been formed under CWS' leadership to organize local long-term recovery efforts after the flooding last fall," Lynn said.

"In small groups, we learned more about work in regions through CROP Hunger Walk funding, as well as sharpening our skills. For example, Tammi Mott, the Southern Africa director, demonstrated how literacy training in Angola leads to community changes."

A workshop on security focused on the real threats overseas staff face each day, as humanitarian workers have become targets of violence, she added.

The "Kit Program" needs more kits as

country directors increase their requests to meet the needs of people affected by violence and natural disasters.

"We heard how the Tools and Blanket programs help in times of need, and have stories available as congregations have Tool or Blanket Sundays," Lynn said.

"God Grew Tired of Us" is a new movie telling of three Sudanese "Lost Boys" who spent 15 years on foot and in refugee camps, then came to the United States. Those gathered at Dallas had a special screening of the award-winning film from National Geographic.

Lynn and Linda have many stories to tell of how CWS is making a difference around the world, including through Gulf Coast Interfaith Disaster Response.

For information, call 888-297-2767 or visit www.churchworldservice.org.

The Spokane CROP Hunger Walk Committee will meet at 1:30 p.m., Feb. 11, March 4 and 18, and April 1 and 15 at the Interfaith Hospitality Network, 2515 E. Sprague.

Its Recruiter Rally will be at 7 p.m., Monday, March 5, at Mission Community Presbyterian Church, 2103 E. Mission. Lynn will be at that event to share some of the stories and ideas.

Faiths collaborate on legislative actions

Continued from page 1

ed on bills coming in the current legislative session in Olympia.

Priorities of the Religious Coalition for the Common Good include affordable housing, accessible health care, a living wage, protection of the environment, criminal restoration and justice, and fair taxes.

The coalition includes the WAC, the Jewish Federation, the Intercommunity Center for Peace, Justice and Creation, Friends, Earth Ministry, the Church Council of Greater Seattle and Associated Ministries of Pierce County.

The WAC's Faith Alert Network is a way to learn about issues. The Faith Advocacy Day is Feb. 22 in Olympia for the WSCC, and Feb. 27 in Olympia for the LPPO and WAC.

This session adopts the biennial budget, which Paul says is "a moral document that should reflect the value of our faiths that the state care for 'the least,' the

poor and vulnerable."

Some specific bills they support include: ending the 40-cent co-pay for school breakfasts, restoring food stamps for released felons; promoting agriculture that reduces reliance on pesticides to produce safer, sustainable foods; ending tax exemptions for businesses that do not produce jobs; adopting a windfall oil profits tax; adequately funding human services providers and mental health services; promoting the Basic Health Plan; increasing the Housing Trust Fund and state TANF monthly payments; cap-

ping payday loan interest rates, and eliminating chemical flame retardants in household items.

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Yakima opens Emergency Winter Shelter in a downtown church

During its first month of operation, the Emergency Winter Shelter Project, sponsored by Yakima County Homeless Network and the Department of Community Services, served an average of nine men a night at First Baptist Church from its opening Dec. 18 to Jan. 24. It also served an average of five women and children a night at Vineyard Church, which opened three weeks later.

"The word is spreading quickly and we may soon need to expand to our overflow locations at Note of Joy Church and YWCA," said Lyle K'ang, project manager through the Department of Community Services.

As of Jan. 24, he estimated that they had served a total of 54 different homeless individuals, bringing them off the streets particularly as temperatures approach and drop below 32 degrees.

Most of the guests at the shelters are individuals and families who would have spent the night outside in the cold had the churches not been available.

"They appreciate the shelter, food and rest, and are responsive to the simple guidelines we have in place," he said.

Organizers are accepting more volunteers and food donations.

"Some people have found it rewarding to bring a pot of soup or other cooked meal in the evening, or scrambled eggs or waffles in the morning as a way to contribute," Lyle said in a letter inviting more people to join the 60 volunteers involved and trained.

Monitors, who stay from 7:30 p.m. to 8 a.m., take turns sleeping. Many spend the night and go to work during the day.

"Several of our homeless guests have been through our training and are reliable and responsible as monitors," he said.

Steve Gaulke of Yakima Mental Health and Brian Laverty, a former homeless person who runs "A Sober Breath" and "The Zone" teen center, have been working on this idea for about four years.

In November, the Extreme Winter Weather Project group of 10 sent a letter to 100 churches asking them to offer space for the shelter. With the response of First Baptist and Vineyard, they opened it.

"There are other shelters, but some do not let in people who are intoxicated, as we do. We have rules and expect guests to abide by them," said Lyle. "Our first goal is to meet the immediate need of bringing in people off the streets when it is extremely cold, providing a meal, a comfort kit with toiletries and a cot."

Ten Latter-Day Saints churches



Cots transform First Baptist into an overnight shelter.

Photo provided by Dave Roberts

are helping prepare the comfort kits with toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo and other items.

Larry Connell of the Latter-Day Saints community is working to acquire land for building a permanent shelter by late October 2007, anticipating that with the 10 percent increase in homeless people from 2005 to 2006, there will be a greater rise in 2007.

At that shelter, the "Consortium of Caring" of 40 agencies involved in the Homeless Network will provide training, help people find jobs, prepare resumes, mentor people to keep jobs and assist with budgeting so people can purchase homes.

"Our vision is to end homelessness," said Lyle, who is also in the Yakima Association of Churches.

As a former business owner, he invites businesses and Chamber of Commerce to be involved because it discourages shoppers when there are homeless people on the streets, he said. "We also need to break down the stigmas and show human compassion."

Englewood Christian Church is providing the food for one night a week, said the pastor the Rev. David Helseth.

"This winter an interest in the homeless came together quickly and strongly," he said. "Part of this is around the Point-In-Time survey that took place Jan. 25, but part is just that several people became involved and made it happen for homeless people in Yakima."

The Rev. Dave Roberts of First Baptist heard about the Homeless Network and began attending meetings, where he learned they were seeking a downtown church near the main business district.

"Given that homeless people

have sometimes 'parked' at our front door, our church talked about providing our facility. We had space and felt it was a way we could respond and help people experience Christ's love," he said.

Because the average age of the 110 members is 70 years old, only two of the members of this 113-year-old congregation are overnight hosts. Others donate food and necessities. Volunteers from other churches and the community also help make the shelter possible.

Now that word is out, there have been several nights they had to turn away three or four people, said Dave, who has been pastor there for 10 years.

"The Yakima Herald has done a good job of covering the effort, with an article every week, including a front page article," he said.

The Homeless Network of Yakima County is an association of local organizations whose mission is to advocate for the homeless in the county, to improve the quality of life, increase public awareness of issues, influence public policy and end homelessness.

It seeks to move people beyond shelter into permanent housing and self-sufficiency by looking at a comprehensive range of needs and developing local capacity to meet the needs by linking resources, agencies and individuals.

The network began in December 2003 when Tim Sullivan of United Way of Yakima County and Bill Cobabe of the City of Yakima Neighborhood Development Office met to discuss their concerns.

They called a meeting in January 2004 for the Continuum of Care and local agencies serving the homeless, as part of developing a 10-year homeless prevention

plan for the county. The group meets biweekly. By March 2004, 20 organizations were attending. By December 2005, 40 organizations were members, and had created the county's first 10-year plan to end homelessness.

Meetings are at 3 p.m., first and last Wednesdays, at the Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, 12 S 8th St., in Yakima.

Yakima County, which is partic-

ipating in the community resources 2-1-1 phone-in information and referral line, includes assistance to homeless people.

The January 2006, Point-in-Time Count of homeless people found 1,265 individuals, a 75 percent increase over the count in 2005.

For information, call 574-1528, or email Lyle.Kang@co.yakima.wa.us.



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Faith community makes *the* difference in hurricane recovery

Without work crews from congregations, little would be done

Two work teams from United Church of Christ (UCC) churches in the Northwest would have little impact in the overall, long-term recovery needs in the Gulf Coast area following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, but they are part of the one-by-one effort of teams from across the national United Church of Christ, other denominations, faiths and nonprofits.

Most coordinate with local and regional Interfaith Disaster Response groups formed by Church World Service.

The UCC response, like that of other denominations and faiths, is a coordinated effort of recruiting teams who pay their way or raise funds to support their trips.

In New Orleans, UCC teams are housed at Little Farms, St. Matthew's and Good Shepherd UCC churches in three-week cycles. Each church hosts for two weeks and then has a week off, so there are always two crews.

The churches offer meals, lodging, laundry and clean-up facilities. Volunteers sleep on air mattresses in Sunday school rooms.

The South Central United Church of Christ Conference hired a hurricane disaster recovery coordinator and has long-term volunteers to plan projects.

Beside homes volunteers were mucking out or rebuilding, Sheri Comfort of Chewelah UCC saw banners for Catholic Charities, Evangelical, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran and many other churches.

"It was an impressive statement that church people are doing much of the work. Without our help, little would be done," she said.

The Presbyterians, for example, have five volunteer villages set up by the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. The villages are corrugated plastic tents with space for two or three to sleep on army cots. There are similar shower tents and dining tents, plus a wood building for a kitchen.

Volunteers and staff arrange projects for groups that come from across the nation to D'Iverville,

Some rebuild homes.



Photo left and above provided by Bob Peterson

Some rebuild churches.

Orange Grove, Pearlinton and Gautier, Miss., and to Luling and Houma, La. Area groups and individuals have gone from Bethany, Colbert, First, Hamblen Park, Northwood and Whitworth Presbyterian churches.

Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) has established a long-term recovery plan with a five-year, multi-phase response for the dioceses in Mississippi and Louisiana. It focuses on livelihood and housing recovery, health and psycho-social care, case management and distribution, and other interventions.

The ERD has churches around the nation adopt churches there to pray for them, assist people returning, help Habitat for Humanity build housing and send donations.

Bob Runkle, chair of the Commission for Social Justice and Outreach Ministries for the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane, helps coordinate teams from around the country, including the partnering of his church, St. Luke's Episcopal in Coeur d'Alene, with Trinity Episcopal in Pass Christian, Miss.

The UCC teams have included people from Inland Northwest

churches in Colville, Pullman, Spokane Valley, Ritzville and Spokane, along with western Washington UCC and Methodist churches.

Each day, participants divided into five sub-groups to do projects. They reroofed homes, removed trees and shrubs, hauled homeowners' belongings to the sidewalk for a trash truck to pick up, stripped walls and ceilings to the frames, sprayed them with bleach and installed dry wall.

Workers wore coveralls, goggles, face masks and gloves to protect them from the mold growing in houses that had been under up to eight feet of floodwater.

"I have never worked so hard, sweat so profusely or had such a feeling of accomplishment in my 74 years," Verna DuBois of Chewelah UCC said, likening the experience to the story of an old man asked why he was throwing starfish back into the ocean. "It matters to this one," the man said, flinging a starfish into the water.

"Each house is like a starfish—one house at a time," she said. "The devastation continues for blocks, miles and states. It's vast and in various stages of demolition and repair. It may take

years, even decades."

As she worked on one home, Verna saw a demolition crew with large equipment razing a house across the street; an employee calking windows of a brick duplex nearly restored inside; a truck pouring concrete footings where the razed home of an elderly couple once stood; spray paint marks on two houses across the street indicating a body had been recovered in each.

"As we worked, hopefully we helped restore trust and faith of people of the area as their lives unfold from their loss," she said.

Elsa Jewell was 12 when she went in February with her father, the Rev. Gary Jewell. She said in the midst of all the devastation, "it felt good to do a tiny part of the rebuilding." She helped arrange for her school in Spokane to send some books to a school there.

Harold Schoessler, 87, a retired farmer and member of Zion Philadelphia Congregational Church in Ritzville, was the oldest on the February trip. With skills as a carpenter and construction worker, he energized others as he helped on the roof or climbed ladders to put up siding. He had not seen such devastation since World War

Elsa Jewell hauls shingles. Photo by Linda Crowe

Some tear down homes. Photo by Randy Crowe



II in Germany.

Sheri told of emotional moments—finding photos and a wedding dress.

"The first house we 'cleaned' out—a nice way to say 'gutted'—was in a poor neighborhood, where no one had insurance. There were no dogs barking, children on bikes or other activities. The ground was still toxic with residue from the soup of oils, paints, gas, dead bodies, animals and feces that had covered it for weeks," she said. "The second

Continued on next page



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Volunteers' commitment to their faith and churches strengthens

Continued from previous page
house was in an area with much rebuilding activity."

When Jim Wills, retired for 10 years from resource development at Washington State University and a 30-year member of Pullman's Community Congregational UCC, read of the opportunity, he went right to the church to volunteer.

Carrying a broken antique wooden cabinet from a house the last day, Jim, who appreciates antiques, asked the homeowner if the furniture was from her mother. Her eyes teared. The cabinet was her grandmother's.

Sixteen-year-old high school junior Jody Noreau of Colville found it "awesome" to help: "If I was in need, I would want someone to help me.

"One woman who lost everything felt she lost nothing because she had her four children, her grandson, God and her life. I realized before I went that we do not need things, but I found it amazing that someone who lost everything was so happy with what she had," Jody said. "It strengthened my faith to see people not give up or blame God."

Her mother, Nancy, said she would not have understood Jody's experience if she had not gone. Having begun attending



Jim Wills prepares to haul another wheelbarrow of debris. Photo by Mark Miller

the church a year ago because of her daughter's involvement in the youth group, the experience in New Orleans strengthened her sense of the wider church ties.

Rich and Kay Brightman, members of Colville UCC for three years, were impressed with the denomination's commitment to

rebuild about 200 homes.

The Rev. Chip Laird, associate pastor at Community Congregational UCC in Pullman said the hands-on experience fits his spirituality.

"It was about our connection with one another in the group, with God and with the people we

were helping, letting them know they are not alone," he said. "In the months since the disaster, many have come up against brick walls over and over. Their feelings were still raw as they helped us take and tear everything out of their houses."

Bobbi Virta, a spiritual director in Bellingham, said people still need to tell their stories.

"We need to be there with our hands and our presence," she said. "I witnessed living the Gospel in a real and just way."

When Bobbi asked a police officer what to say when she went home, he said, "You are home. Wherever you go, you will take a piece of this home with you."

She finds that true: "We are brothers and sisters. I realize there is work like this around the world," Bobbi said. "All the world is our home."

The Rev. Linda Crowe of Veradale UCC listened as Debra Joseph, moderator of Central UCC in New Orleans told of praying for help as floodwaters rose up her porch steps. A neighbor in a boat rescued her mother and her. On returning, Debra was overwhelmed with the stench and all there was to do. She told Linda: "I gave each day to God."

Linda commented: "Little did we know that a flooded home could be a holy space."

As many congregations, First Congregational in Colville held a benefit event—jazz festival and southern-cooked meal for 160

people—to raise funds for the four church members who went to New Orleans in October. They raised more than \$1,900. Jody, the Brightmans and local other musicians performed jazz pieces and showed slides from the February trip.

Duane Nightingale of Veradale UCC said engineer co-workers wondered before he left if it would be better to send the cost of the airfare they estimated at \$6,000 for the whole team.

He said \$6,000 would have covered replacing the church's roof, installing new siding and repairing damaged siding, but would not have been enough to repair flood- and wind-damaged homes in the neighborhood. He said the volunteer work was worth three times the cost of the tickets.

"Any time we respond to God's call to help," he said, "there is meaning and value that cannot be measured."

For information, call 208-689-3489.

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Lay ministries director connects team with tasks

When people in Hamblen Park Presbyterian—especially those with relatives in Gulfport, Miss.—began wondering how they could help after Hurricane Katrina, Susan Preuninger, director of lay ministries for four of her 17 years at the church, met with them.

Her role of helping people identify ministries they feel called to do and ways to meet those calls led to a group of 14 going Sept. 20 to 27 to the Orange Grove Presbyterian volunteer village in Gulfport, Miss.

Long-term young adult and adult volunteers coordinate up to 150 volunteers each week through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

"I realize how connected we are and how God can use us anywhere to do things we could not physically do by ourselves—things homeowners were too traumatized from watching neighbors drown and too worn out from the uninsured claims to do," Susan said.

"The homeowners are so grateful that people come and for God sending them," she said. "Without help they face too many decisions. It's hard for them to know what to do next. Knowing people



Volunteer villages are made of corrugated plastic. Photo by Susan Preuninger

care enough to come helps them carry on," Susan said.

One woman had bought a home in June and renovated it. In July, she had surgery. In August Katrina hit. She could not live in the house, but had to make payments on it. She was living in a FEMA trailer beside her house when the Hamblen volunteers arrived.

Volunteers put in sub-floors, fixed bathrooms, framed windows, did electrical work, put in molding, hung doors and repaired steps. Her house still needed carpet, vinyl, kitchen cabinets, wiring light fixtures and painting when the group left.

Hamblen's debriefing at the end of the week reinforced for Susan "how God wants us to work together to do things. There is need in neighborhoods and communities all over the world. God can use all of us to meet the needs."

The experience re-energized her work of finding places and ways for members to serve within the church, in the community or through the wider church.

"I help people identify ways they can use their gifts to answer God's call, rather than just plugging them into a volunteer opportunity I learn about," she said.

For information, call 448-2909.

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WSU students return to Gulf Coast for second spring break of clean-up

About half of 14 Washington State University students who went to New Orleans for spring break in March 2006 with the Common Ministry are among 22 going March 10 to 17 this year.

The students went and are going with a philosophy or spirituality of learning from those they help, said The Rev. Robert Hicks, United Methodist campus minister with the Common Ministry.

"They are going because they have not known the loss the people there have experienced. They go to meet Jesus, to see Christ and to receive from the risen Christ," he said.

Students from colleges and universities throughout the United States spent spring break 2006 there helping muck out homes damaged by floods.

Robert said students have been showing a slide presentation called, "A Life-



Connie Andry with WSU nursing student Marnie Miller-Keas, who discovered that the devastation in the lives of people she met "robbed them of much of the privilege the rest of the United States enjoys."

Photo provided by the Common Ministry

Changing Experience," telling of their exposure to the infinite disaster there.

He led last year's group with Walt and

Jan Miller of Pullman through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. This year they are going to New Orleans through United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Robert was moved by the bonding with a homeowner, Connie Andry, whose family tried to convince her to leave.

"Connie held onto a sense of the community and history of the neighborhood," he said. "She was one of the first ones to return to her neighborhood. She was upset when a neighbor's husband committed suicide in desperation."

Robert saw her tears as students carried out letters and photos, and she watched her life be thrown into a heap. By the fourth day, the house' framework stood like a skeleton. Then she spoke of having hope about rebuilding.

"We did a prayer blessing as we prepared to leave. Connie told of be-

ing transformed, saying goodbye to memories and artifacts, but seeing the possibility for new life," he said. "She thanked God for the outpouring of help from WSU students."

Connie is no stranger to people in need. For years, she has helped homeless people at Catholic Charities. Suddenly, she was on the receiving end of charity.

Connie's brother, a jazz musician, gave the students a tour of the Ninth Ward, explaining what had been there, telling of people and political issues. They also heard about a student team who broke into a school to clean it up, knowing that people moving back needed schools open.

Robert hopes to learn this year more about the social and political tensions and transitions.

For information, call 332-2611.

With help of students and people of faith

Catholic Charities staffer gains hope to rebuild her life, lives of others

Having the young people come to New Orleans from Washington State University restored Connie Andry's personal strength.

"It was like opening a door. I knew I could go forward," she said. "It put life in my home, which had looked like death since Aug. 2005. My neighbors' homes also looked like death."

As a result of her home being restored to what it was before the hurricane, Connie gained hope that she could rebuild her life.

Connie believes the people there would not be as far along in

recovery if the volunteers were not coming.

"We would not have had the strength or people to do it," she said likening the help to the birth of a baby after a death. "It gave us strength to start to rebuild our lives."

The government, she pointed out, was focusing on rebuilding infrastructure, while the volunteers helped people in their personal lives, which "supports bringing back entire cities."

For the first time in her 30 years with Catholic Charities as direc-

tor of homeless programs, she experienced what those she works with experience—homelessness. Even co-workers who did not live in a damaged area or experience a direct loss were overcome with sadness from supporting friends and relatives.

"It was life-changing," Connie said. "One co-worker's brother and sister moved away, so she had to rebuild her life without them."

"We speak of the Katrina syndrome, referring to the memory loss, moving slower and the deep pain we cannot touch since the

trauma," she explained.

"Systems that were once in place are no longer there. So we have learned how to 'make do'," Connie added.

The people she cares for in Catholic Charities' programs, are trying to pull their lives together. Young people come back and have no jobs. Even if they had a job, there is no day care for those with babies. In addition, jobs available do not pay enough to cover the \$800 rent for a one-bedroom apartment.

"Housing has become a hot commodity, because the housing stock has been reduced," she said. "When FEMA came in supporting rents, the rents went way up all over the South. Jobs don't pay enough to cover housing."

So now she said that families who once knew how to survive must relearn in a new system. There are new homeless families who cannot afford rent. The middle class as well as the poor are in shelters.

Connie encounters much depression in clients, but said few recognize it or seek help.

Catholic Charities is work-

ing in collaboration with other churches and community agencies to meet self-recovery needs, reach families in need and provide resources. Catholic Charities' Operation Helping Hand started immediately, bringing people to help gut houses, particularly to enable elderly people to return to their homes.

"We will be part of rebuilding New Orleans for the long haul," Connie said.

Despite disability, woman finds her niche

On disability because of a bad back and arthritis, plus having an allergy to paint and mold, Lorraine Agte of Shadle Park Presbyterian Church wondered how she could help when she went with seven from her church and eight from Northwood Presbyterian for a week in April to the Presbyterian Development Assistance (PDA) Volunteer Village in D'Iverville near Biloxi, Miss.

"I knew there would be something, because God can always use us, despite our limitations," she said.

While others mucked out houses, did mold abatement, plumbing, painting, carpentry or drywall, Lorraine found her niche driving bleach and paint crews to work sites. Others were not willing to drive in a strange city, especially with street signs taken out by the storm, but Lorraine found her way by counting streets on a map.

Lorraine has been on other mission trips—five times to Mexico for building projects, once on a medical mission to Dominican Republic and once to Samoa to

dispense eyeglasses. She also volunteers in the Caritas office, helps host families with the Interfaith Hospitality Network, delivers Meals on Wheels and volunteers in the church office.

Lorraine said people in the Gulf Coast are impressed at how Christians from different denominations are helping with hurricane recovery.

"Church attendance is up because people know help is coming from churches. Their gratitude is overwhelming, because many waited many months for help," she said.

One woman, for example, asked Lorraine if she was working with "the church by the water," because the church had provided their trailer after their house was destroyed.

It was hard for a family member who was overweight and had bad knees to go up eight-inch steps to the trailer and to enter directly from the steps. They needed six-inch steps and a landing. She said her son would buy materials if volunteers would build it.

Lorraine took the request to the village, where volunteers built a landing and delivered it at no charge.

The PDA website, www.pcusa.org/katrina/volunteer/index-villages.htm, describes projects and stories of volunteers and residents. Lorraine added that people who cannot go to the Gulf area are donating cash to help.

For information, call 328-7457.



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Episcopal congregations adopt churches as long-term recovery partners

The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi selected St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Coeur d'Alene as one of 17 "Adopting Congregations" to assist Trinity Episcopal Church in Pass Christian, Miss., with reconstruction.

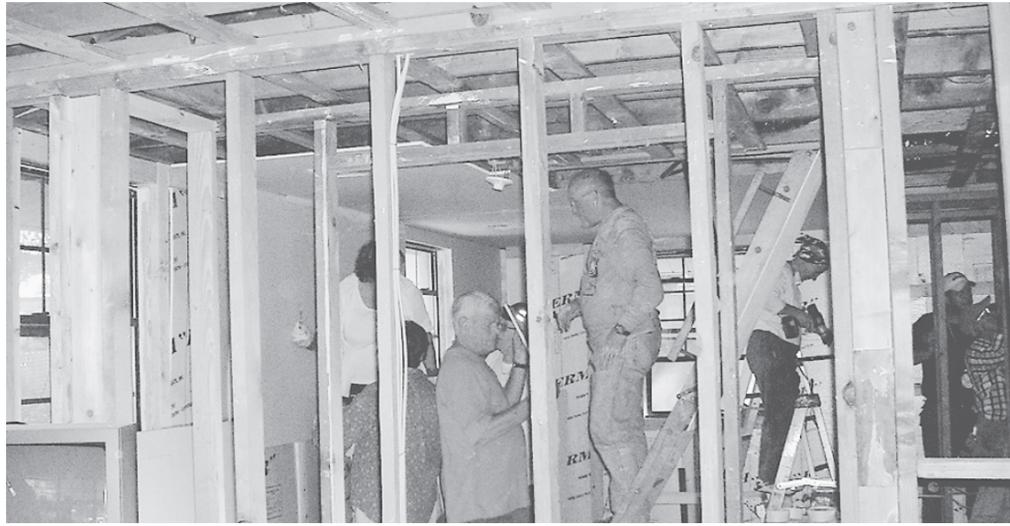
In 1969, Trinity was completely destroyed by Hurricane Camille. Today, some of the church is left, but the parish hall and Christian education building were destroyed.

The main problem will be rebuilding the once 270-household congregation, now down to 75 members. That won't happen until their homes are rebuilt, said Bob Peterson, who went with an initial team from St. Luke's.

That team also included the Rev. Pat Bell and Dave Baxter. They went two weeks after the hurricane to build a storage building, meet church members, take photos and develop plans for other work teams to visit.

When Bob led a second trip Oct. 31 to Nov. 13, five from St. Luke's were among 15 from around the country who went to evaluate needs, talents, materials and tools. For example, his wife, Leah, and Joyce Lovey found that children going back to school needed clothes, so they bought \$2,200 of clothing.

They enclosed the church, ran



Episcopal work team clears out a house.

Photo provided by Bob Peterson

electricity to it and set up trailers as a community meeting space.

St. Luke's has spent more than \$12,000 to purchase the shed and for travel expenses for the trips.

The third trip, sponsored in part by St. Luke's, was for Bob and Marty Gustafson to go to New Orleans, where they worked with the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana, where a college student from St. Luke's spent his fall semester as a volunteer.

Bob Peterson grew up Presbyterian in Coeur d'Alene and left church when he moved. He worked as an electrical engineer

in St. Louis, other areas of the United States and Puerto Rico.

"The experience has solidified my recognition of the value of churches in coordinating activities within and among denominations

to provide a structure and support for volunteers and people needing assistance so they could make "hands-on accomplishments."

On retiring, he and his wife of nine years returned to Coeur

d'Alene, where they have been involved in St. Luke's.

"Pass Christian fit my skills to the needs, so I helped restore electricity to homes," he said.

Many asked him why people should go there to help when about 200,000 people have found jobs elsewhere and may not return to New Orleans.

"We had impact on the lives of about 10 families—helping some find closure if they were not able to rebuild, helping others not physically able to begin the monumental task of rebuilding.

"The experience deepened my faith in people, working along side Unitarians from New England, Mexicans and people from all over the country," he said

For information, call 208-777-0815.

In face of massive devastation, pastor says to show mercy and love

The Rev. Paul Rodkey of Bethany Presbyterian in Spokane said he could see in New Orleans how the rain "literally falls on the just and unjust alike."

Through his involvement with the national Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association, spent 10 days in New Orleans recently for a meeting of that body, a meeting with 10 Presbyterian networks and to help with cleanup, visit devastated areas and hear stories to understand personal plights and justice issues.

"With the problems so massive and nondescript, I don't know where justice is there," Paul said. "When we don't know, we need to show mercy, compassion and love. That's why it's crucial for people to go there to volunteer.

"For 30 years, Americans have been told that government is the

enemy, so we made sure it had less money, we elected some incompetent leaders and we gave tax money through breaks and subsidies to the private sector.

"The disaster shows the result of people devaluing government. It exposed our neglect of government's role."

Now people pay mortgages on uninhabitable homes or concrete slabs. When people rebuild, they must consider if it's worth it, given the diminished value in a neighborhood with no one in four blocks, no public services, and nearby stores closed, he said.

For information, call 534-0066.

Textile artist shares art Talking needed as much as building

Eight days in March and 11 days in May assisting with a Lutheran-Episcopal Hurricane Katrina cleanup program in Biloxi, Miss., reaffirmed for Suzi Hokonson of Spokane that "how we live and what we do matters more than what we believe or what name we call God."

After her mother's Lutheran church in Puyallup sent a group of 20 in March, her mother gave Suzi the funds to go.

Suzi stayed in a Biloxi Lutheran church that sent about 60 people out to do rebuilding and recovery tasks with Habitat for Humanity.

At one house, Suzi talked with the wife while she helped plant roses and do yard work.

"It's important to do the nurturing work of talking with people, as well as the heavy work of building," she said.

While she was there in May, two bus loads of African-American Habitat workers came from the Washington, D.C., area.

"There was no religion or politics going on, just people coming who knew they could be the ones needing help," Suzi said.

"Imagine if Christians were sharing like this everywhere instead of being drawn into Iraq where we are destroying homes," said Suzi, a textile artist, quilt historian and social justice activist.

In May, she took some of her textile art and offered four programs for the non-hammering needs people had. A woman in one program who had lost their son and daughter-in-law talked about what is important in life.

A physician's wife, whose insured \$500,000 house with exquisite woodwork was destroyed by eight feet of water, headed a summer day-camp to help children deal with the trauma.

One afternoon, Suzi helped at the house of George and Linda, who had put a \$40,000 addition on the house before the hurricane. Without insurance, they received \$9,500. College students were working on repairs.

Suzi spent two hours with Linda who "talked and talked." Suzi realized people thought if they did not lose a life, they did not deserve to talk about their struggles.

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The 2007 **Northwest Bach Festival**

Gunther Schuller, Music Director

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Bach - When The Universal Becomes Personal - Festival Guitar Night
Leon Atkinson, John Goulard, Paul Grove, Michael Milbam

Music of Bach including an arrangement for four guitars of the *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3*
St. Augustine Church, 428 W. 19th Avenue at Bernard, Spokane
Free Concert - Suggested Donation \$10

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16 • 8:00PM
Bach's *Magnificat* and Vivaldi's *Dixit Dominus, Rv594*
Gunther Schuller conducts

The Bach Festival Orchestra and Chorus with Janet Brown and Kendra Colton, sopranos; Barbara Rearick, mezzo; Rockland Osgood, tenor; Donald Wilkinson, bass
St. John's Cathedral, Grand Boulevard at 12th Avenue in Spokane
\$25 General Admission \$15 Students

Special Festival Event
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17 4:00PM AND 7:00PM
The Bachtail Hour - Bach With A Twist! "Bachinis", Hors d'oeuvres and Music
Tamara Schupman, soprano; Brent Edstrom Trio; Mark Kroll, harpsichord with selected Goldberg Variations in a "chess match" for harpsichord and jazz trio

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Festival Finale Concert - Lute & Harpsichord
Music of Weiss, J.S. Bach - selections from *Well Tempered Clavier* and Telemann
Olav Chris Henriksen, lute; Mark Kroll, harpsichord

Elizabethan Room, The Davenport Hotel, 10 South Post Street, Spokane
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Church's social justice ministry uses 'two-feet' approach

By Carol Spurling

Francy Pavlas Bose considers that social justice has "two feet."

One foot is direct service, such as donating food to food banks, operating homeless shelters, and other service programs that allow us to "pat ourselves on the back."

The second "foot," the more difficult one, is to reflect on why the needs exist, and then work to change the conditions that have created those needs.

"I believe that if I don't actively work for change, then I'm contributing to the problem," Francy said.

Her commitment to social justice began when she heard a priest at a conference several years ago refer to God's Spirit as a "she."

"When she speaks, things change," the speaker said.

"That 'she' was like a thunderbolt, a whirlwind," Francy said. "For me, it makes such a difference, thinking of the spirit—the word is 'Sophia' in the Bible—as feminine."

Francy has been a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Pullman the 12 years she has lived there. A lifelong Catholic, she has been involved in Sacred Heart's social justice ministry for a decade.

Their ministry has included Lenten series, weekly meetings, participation in events like the CROP Walk, providing soup for the Community Action Center's Soups On! program, as well as regular bulletin notes on themes related to issues of hunger, poverty, the death penalty, workers' rights, environmentalism and other issues.

How has Francy stayed inspired to continue working on problems that have existed for millennia and show no sign of abating?

That "she" caused Francy to think more deeply about what moving faith into action is about.

"I realized that God isn't going to fix the world, but Jesus came to show us we can change things," Francy said, "and the Spirit works with us in the world for change. I—we—don't have to do it alone."

"For me, the sweeping changes in the Catholic Church because of Vatican II in the 1960s couldn't have happened without the Spirit," Francy said. "Through Vatican II decisions, men from an old tradition did some new things, moving people in a new direction. I think the Spirit was definitely at work."

One new direction the Catholic Church has taken is focusing on church members' responsibility to



Francy Pavla Bose

be stewards of God's creation—to be, that is, environmentalists.

"We cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying due attention both to the consequences of such interference in other areas and to the well-being of future generations," she quoted Pope John Paul II as saying in 1990 in "The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility."

Francy noted that the Pope's entire statement on peace and the environment was fairly "in your face" in 1990, but she read it recently and thought it was "amazingly" relevant and necessary today.

In 1992, the United States Catholic Conference issued "Renewing the Earth," a pastoral statement on Catholic social teachings and environmental ethics.

Another more recent example of the Catholic commitment to environmental responsibility is an expansive pastoral letter entitled

"The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good," written by the Catholic bishops of the region and published in 2001. The document is a comprehensive examination of the environmental challenges faced in this region, and an expression of how people of faith can try to meet these challenges in the future.

"Care of creation—instead of dominance of creation—is, for me, one of the major themes in Catholic social teaching," Francy said.

Her long interest in and commitment to the care of creation has deepened in the past few years. She appreciates the widespread attention it is now receiving.

"The environment is not something outside of us, it's part of us," she said. "What we do to the environment, we do to ourselves."

Most recently, Francy worked with Sacred Heart's social justice

Catholic Charities surpasses goal

Catholic Charities of Spokane exceeded its 2006 Christmas Collection goal of \$725,000, receiving \$767,647 as of Jan. 16, the most in its 65-year history.

Before Christmas, receipts were down \$160,000 from 2005, "an amount we could not recover from," said Rob McCann, executive director.

Sensing donors wanted to know more about use of gifts, they sent a letter to more than 32,000 households, clarifying that Catholic Charities is not part of the Diocese bankruptcy or settlement.

Considering the response "a miracle," he added: "Our generous Eastern Washington Catholic and non-Catholic community sent a massive influx of mail and donations, so we surpassed our goal."

Catholic Charities of Spokane also received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator, indicating that it outperforms most charities, affirming that donations help feed, clothe and assist people in desperate need, Rob said.

For information, call 358-4250.

ministry to sponsor an October 2006 showing of Al Gore's documentary film, "An Inconvenient Truth," which focuses on global warming and the need for immediate action in order to prevent future environmental catastrophe.

Eco-Justice Ministries prepared a discussion guide to accom-

pany the film, which is available on-line at www.eco-justice.org/TruthGuide.asp.

"Afterwards, we talked about how we can make a difference, to take the next step," Francy said.

The next step is always the most challenging part, she believes.

For information, call 332-5114.

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Will the churches and faiths speak loudly and long enough?

As the administration takes another turn toward escalating the War in Iraq, church and faith leaders are yet again speaking in opposition, as many have consistently done before and during the conflict.

Will it be "loud enough" and "long enough" to bring an end? Will pastors, rabbis and other religious leaders speak out and teach in their local congregations? Will the lay people speak out in their prayers?

We hear voices from friends and family clearly expressing opposition, people who previously supported the war. Polls say more than 70 percent of Americans oppose the way the war is handled. Certainly we know some of these people. It's time to speak not only to each other, but also to our representatives in Congress.

"It is time, not to send more troops, but

to start bringing our troops home," says the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) after the announcement of the plan to send more troops to Iraq

"The 'surge' as recommended by the president is immoral. What we do not need is an assertion of more military strength. What we need is the strength of basic moral conviction," says the statement, which is at www.nccusa.org/news/070109surgestatement.html.

Leaders of NCC member churches also express opposition to more troops. We have included excerpts of their statements in our Sounding Board column.

NCC leaders expect the "surge" to bring more American and Iraqi deaths. Leaders of faiths have called it immoral. That violence, plus the execution of Saddam Hus-

sein will only breed more violence.

How long will the American public be duped by the politics of fear and terror? How long will it take media to *follow* this popular trend of opposition to the war? How long will it take those who oppose it to state clearly enough the insanity of the policy of manipulation to gain power?

The election and the Iraq Study Group called for a change in policy.

Will we learn the lesson from Vietnam that continuing failed policies does not bolster U.S. international political, economic or social power.

As NCC leaders agree:

- "It is time for moral strength, not military power, to take precedence in the U.S. plan for Iraq.

- "It is time to recognize the failure of a

military policy that is not promoting freedom, ending terrorism, building the Iraqi nation, bringing security to the region or making the world safer.

- "It is time to insist on achievable benchmarks for the Iraqi government and provide reconstruction aid to the Iraqi people.

- "It is time to enter respectful negotiations with countries that can exert influence on Iraq, attending to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and leading the United Nations to enforce restrictions on arms proliferation.

- "It is time to start bringing our troops home, not send more," they said, affirming that more violence means more violence.

Rebuilding homes, businesses and infrastructure will do more to end violence than more troops.

Mary Stamp - editor

Reports about Palestinians and Israelis who want peace are limited

During the last six years, the United States has put little serious, sustained effort into facilitating a peace settlement between Israelis and Palestinians. This could be regarded as behavior unbecoming a democracy with faith values.

Media cover the latest Muslim suicide bombing and an occasional picture of the 30-foot wall being built around the West Bank to keep bombers contained, but little that's more informative. When the prospect of information set within an historical context arises, the quibbling begins.

President Dwight Eisenhower once said that people want peace enough that some day the politicians were going to have to step back and allow them to have it.

President Jimmy Carter is taking heat because of his use of the word "apartheid" in his latest book, "Palestine Peace Not Apartheid." Most media have lost sight of the substance of his book, focusing coverage on whether he should have used that word. His experience in peace negotiations and travel in the area gave him personal contact with officials and activists.

Much peacemaking is happening in public opinion, activist groups in Israel and Palestine and in the Middle East.

According to polls he reports, a majority of Israelis favor withdrawing from Palestinian territory in exchange for peace—land for peace. Among Palestinians, 80 percent favor a two-state peace agreement with Is-

rael. He presents quotes from "two voices, one Palestinian and the other Israeli, with similar assessments of what needs to be done." Both a Palestinian human rights lawyer and a professor who is former deputy speaker of the Israeli Knesset call for two states, using the 1967 borders, with changes made on a "swap basis."

The leaders of Fatah, Hamas and a several small Palestinian groups have adopted the "National Conciliation Document," written by Palestinian militants in prison in Israel. The 18-point document calls for a two-state solution and recognition of Israel. It advocates non-violent solutions to problems.

An Arab League summit of 22 nations

adopted a proposal of Saudi Arabian King Abdullah in 2002, endorsing a two-state solution, acknowledging Israel's right to exist, but the spiral of violence and retaliation continues.

In June 2006, the Pew Center's Global Attitudes Project showed Muslim public opinion about the West increasingly negative because of the Israel-Palestine issue. Other studies show when hope goes up, violence goes down, which was clear after the Oslo Agreement.

War and other forms of violence have yet to deliver a just peace anywhere. Is there anything more important to talk about than war and peace?

Nancy Minard - editorial team

Letter to the Editor

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

In recent weeks, leaders of national churches and faiths have expressed their views on the war in Iraq and sending more troops there. Excerpts are from comments at www.nccusa.org/news/070112otherstatements.html

As Christians, we are called to give witness continually to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, who called us to love our enemies. In July 2006, the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference voted to affirm our denomination's historic and living witness that all war is sin. As disciples of Christ and members of one of the three historic peace churches, we resolved that we cannot ignore the death, destruction, and violence of the war in Iraq.

Jesus' command to "love your enemy" is inconsistent with military action. His words instead move us to peaceful methods, diplomacy, moral suasion, nonviolent sanctions and international cooperation to address violence and aggression.

War demeans and brutalizes all its participants. Military intervention in Iraq has triggered wave after wave of brutal acts of terrorism. The enormous expense of the war is a disastrous drain on resources that are so desperately needed to relieve suffering at home and around the world.

The Church of the Brethren calls members to pray and give witness to the sin of violence, and has petitioned the federal government to seek peace by taking action to bring troops home from Iraq.

Stanley Noffsinger - General Secretary, Church of the Brethren

We continue to believe that a just and sustainable peace in the Middle East and a cessation of Middle-East based terrorism cannot be addressed by military force alone. We urge President Bush to use every diplomatic means possible to bring peace, including dialogue with Syria and Iran, as he has been urged to do by U.S. religious leaders and a wide range of present and past government officials. We also believe that Iraq and terrorism cannot be dealt with

in isolation from the issues related to the Israeli/Palestinian dilemma. We urge our government to use its influence to bring the necessary parties to the table to address how both Israelis and Palestinians can live in recognized and secure nations.

A. Roy Medley - General Secretary, American Baptist Churches USA

In 2005, the Union for Reform Judaism passed a resolution critical of the War in Iraq. We spoke out because the prophetic tradition, so central to American Jewish life, calls on us to address the great moral issues of our day. No issue raises more urgent, challenging moral considerations for our nation than does the war in Iraq. Our resolution calls for beginning to withdraw American troops, developing a clear exit plan and expanding efforts to strengthen and stabilize Iraqi democracy and rebuild the nation's infrastructure.

The plan for additional troops is intended to enhance the stability of Iraq, but we remain skeptical of the assumptions and are concerned the deployment may have a destabilizing effect and delay the process of Iraqis taking on greater responsibility.

Rabbi David Saperstein - Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

The growing violence in Iraq, the enormous suffering experienced by Iraqi and American families who have lost beloved children to death and injury calls for profound lament and repentance, not for stubborn commitment to the unilateralism and militarism that has been the hallmark of our failed policy in Iraq.

The deceptions and arrogance that launched a war bringing Iraq to this place of pain and anguish, and alienating the United States from so many of its friends must be acknowledged as more than strategic mistakes. They must be confessed as immoral justification for a war that failed to meet criteria for a just war and that, as a result, cannot achieve the goals of a just peace.

People of faith must not be naïve. Evil is a part of our world and must be restrained.

The Iraq Study Group's approach requires the humility to acknowledge that we cannot impose our solutions by military force alone, and the courage to take initiatives even with partners we find threatening.

John Thomas - General Minister and President, United Church of Christ

I am deeply saddened by the President's failure to address peacemaking in the context of the whole region. It is a mistake to view Iraq only through the prism of terrorism. Others point out that the road to peace goes through Jerusalem, not Baghdad. To bring peace to the Middle East, not just Iraq, and the land we Christians call holy, there must be a comprehensive regional plan that culminates in a two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians.

Diplomacy, built on a foundation of mutual respect and interest among people of good will, not more troops, can bring an end to this tragic conflict. We continue to pray for our soldiers and their families, as well as for all the people of the Middle East, seeking God's wisdom in the search for peace with justice, for shalom and salaam.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori - Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church

The situation is taking a terrible toll—on Iraqi people and our military personnel, as well as the region, our nation, and the world. The war's costs are measured in lives lost and injured, in sectarian strife, civil insurgency and terrorist attacks, and in the daily struggles of Iraqis to build a decent future for their devastated nation.

Increases in sectarian violence and civil strife make the challenge of securing "responsible transition" more urgent. The search for justice and peace in Iraq requires moral urgency, substantive dialogue and new directions. To meet these challenges, we must move beyond the divisive rhetoric and shrill, shallow debate that distorts reality and reduces the options to "cut and run" versus "stay the course."

Our nation needs more substantive, civil,

non-partisan discussion of ways to plan a responsible transition. Our Conference seeks to contribute to dialogue pursuing justice and peace in Iraq. I appeal in the spirit of the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

Bishop William Skylstad - president U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

We are disappointed by the lack of vision and imagination, that sees more force as the only answer. This is not a time to escalate a failed policy of war but to open a serious, robust diplomatic effort, working with the United Nations. Civil war and ethnic cleansing are reality. Millions of Iraqis are leaving. Iraq is in a shambles.

We fear the plan is for a more ferocious war in neighborhoods occupied by women, children and poor people. The President ruled out cooperation with Iran and Syria.

We urge Congress 1) to oppose the decision to send more troops to Iraq by withholding funds for that, and 2) not to provide any additional money to continue the war this year. Congress should provide funding only to bring U.S. troops home and to aid in rebuilding Iraq.

Jim Winkler - United Methodist General Board of Church and Society

On the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, it is time to bring the U.S. occupation of Iraq to an end. We publicly proclaim our opposition to this occupation and say: "Enough!" We mourn the precious lives already lost with more than 3,000 U.S. service people dead, more than 25,000 maimed, and as many as 700,000 Iraqi civilians dead. This high cost, the result of deception and failed policies, must be faced by our nation's leaders.

We call on our nation's leaders to chart a new direction for our country, with policies rooted in nonviolence, the pursuit of justice, and a commitment to the well-being and dignity of all God's people—from Iraq to the Katrina-devastated communities at home and beyond. **Pax Christi Spokane**

Leadership Spokane recruits for 2008

Since 1982, Leadership Spokane has provided community leadership development to ensure the region has trained, committed leadership working for the common good.

Annually, it selects about 50 people for a 10-month training program. It is recruiting candidates for the Leadership Spokane class of 2008.

"Participants study the community's infrastructure and meet

with the region's civic-minded individuals. The networks they form and relationships that stem from the Leadership Spokane experience benefit them lifelong, professionally and personally," said Linda Finney, director.

Applications, available at www.LeadershipSpokane.org, are due March 30. The program is also recruiting high school sophomores, juniors and seniors for Youth Leadership Spokane.

For information, call 459-4110.

Men's group plans spirituality retreat

The Coeur d'Alene Men's Group is planning its eighth Creation Spirituality Retreat March 16 to 19 at Camp N-Sid-Sen on Lake Coeur d'Alene.

Brother Joseph Kilikevce, a Dominican brother, Sufi and founder of the SHEM Center will be the primary presenter.

Two local women, Quan Yin Lyn Williams and Karolyne Rogers, are also presenters.

The men's group has been sponsoring these retreats since 1993 to develop spirituality and create community, said Richard Kohles, one of the organizers.

"In an atmosphere of prayerful reflection, art-as-meditation, silence, interfaith ritual, song and sacred dance, women and men consider the paths of creation spirituality," he said.

For information, call 208-861-0223 or visit www.kohles.com/retreat2007.

Common Ministry receives award for social justice

The Common Ministry at WSU awarded the Martin Luther King Distinguished Service Award for organizations at a Jan. 15 presentation at Washington State University, Pullman.

Gail Stearns, director, and board representatives received the award for their support for civil rights in words and actions, their advocacy for nonviolent social change, their commitment to service and leadership to move people into the quest for human rights and social justice.

The organization has provided 40 years of service to the Pullman community—often addressing the needs of marginalized groups.

For information call, 332-2611.

Calendar of Events

- Feb 9** • "Do's and Don'ts of Business Partnership and Alliance," AHANA Business and Networking Lunch, Riverview Thai, 1003 E. Trent, noon to 1:30 p.m. - call 838-1881
- Feb 9-10** • "Iron Sharpens Iron" Men's Seminar, Greater Spokane Association of Evangelicals, Fourth Memorial, 2000 N. Standard, 6-9 p.m., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. - call 487-7429
- Feb 11** • CROP Hunger Walk Committee, Interfaith Hospitality, 2515 E. Sprague, 1:30 p.m.
• "What the World Needs Now Is Music, Poetry and Chocolate," Benefit for Our Place Community Ministries, Salem Lutheran, 1428 W. Broadway, 2 p.m. - call 326-7267
- Feb 12** • "United States and Its Relationship to the United Nations," Ted Nitz, international studies director, assistant professor of history at Gonzaga University, United Nations Association-Spokane, Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Fort Wright Dr., 7 p.m.
• "U.S. Health Care - Critical Condition: Your Health Depends on It," Stan Borg, of Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth College, 7 p.m. - call 777-3772
- Feb 12- Mar 23** • "Communities in Crisis on the Gulf Coast," works by Gordon Wilson of Whitworth's art department, Fine Arts Building, Whitworth College, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Feb 13** • Gordon Wilson presentation, Koehler Gallery, 7 p.m.
• Networking for Women, Phase I Auditorium, Riverpoint Campus, 12:05 p.m. - call 358-2234
- Feb 13, 27** • Spokane Citizens for a Living Wage, 35 W. Main, 5 p.m.
- Feb 13, 20, 27** • Fighting the Fires of Hate Exhibit Teacher Workshops, Session 1, 5-8:30 p.m., Noemi Ban, Holocaust survivor, will present Feb. 27 - call 323-3471
- Feb 15** • "Your Congregation's Culture," Institute for Congregational Leadership, Clare Center, 4624 Jamieson, 6:30 p.m. - call 448-4887
• "Health Care in Spokane: Challenges for the 21st Century," panel Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth College, 7:30 p.m. - call 777-3772.
• PeaceWorks, 35 W. Main, 5:30 pm.
- Feb 16** • "Web Evangelism," Walt Wilson, Union Gospel Mission, 1224 E. Trent, 11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. - call 389-2813
- Feb 17** • "Islamic Revivalism—Renewal and Reform: The Contemporary Resurgence of Islam," Mid-Columbia Center for Theological Studies "Great World Religions," Manor at Canyon Lakes, 27th and Ely, Kennewick, 10 a.m. - call 586-5620
- Feb 21** • Developers' Panel, Spokane City Forum, First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 11:45 a.m. - call 777-1555
• Police Accountability Forum, Gonzaga University Law School, 6 p.m. - call 838-7870
- Feb 22** • "Government Accountability and a More Demanding 21st Century Society," Great Decisions Lecture, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth College, 7:30 p.m. - call 777-3270
- Feb 23** • "Evening of Poetry," Oliver de la Paz, professor of creative writing at Western Washington University, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth College, 7:30 p.m. - call 777-3253.
- Feb 24, 27** • Fighting the Fires of Hate Exhibit Teacher Workshops, Session 2, 24th: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and 27th: 5-8:30 p.m.
- Feb 25** • Taize Service, Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th, 7 p.m.
- Feb 26** • "The Religious Art of Cinema," Richard Leonard, S.J., Catholicism for a New Millennium, Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga, 7:30 p.m.
- Feb 27** • Faith Advocacy Day, Gloria dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., call (206) 464-4133 or advocacyday@gmail.com
• Fig Tree Distribution, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m.
• Fig Tree Board, Manito United Methodist, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.
- Feb 28** • "Islam at the Crossroads: Women and Change in Islam," Mid-Columbia Center for Theological Studies "Great World Religions," Manor at Canyon Lakes, 27th and Ely, Kennewick, 10 a.m.
- Mar 1** • Project Hand-Up, Second Harvest, 1234 E. Front Ave., shifts 8 to 11:30 a.m., or 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. - call 252-6242
- Mar 3** • Need to Know, Emmanuel Lutheran, 314 S. Spruce - 848-4409
• Habitat-Spokane work days - call 534-2552
• Colville Peace Vigil - call 675-4554
• Ministers' Fellowship Union - call 624-0522
- 1st Sat** • Pax Christi, St. Joseph's Catholic, 1503 W. Dean, noon
- 2nd, 4th Weds** • NAACP - call 467-9793
- 3rd Mons** • NAACP - call 467-9793
- 1st & 3rd Tues** • Volunteers' Community Night, Second Harvest, 1234 E. Front,

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From Generation to Generation...The Tradition Continues

Temple Beth Shalom

South Perry & 30th

Tickets available at Huppins HiFi, Manito Ship & Copy,
Pawn I (Valley & N. Division), Gonzaga-Crosby Center

\$14 adults, \$7 children (11 and under)

Menu

Assorted Appetizers
Beef Brisket
Potato Knishes
Carrot Tzimmes
Challah (Egg Bread)
Mediterranean Spiced Apples
Apricot Kuchen

Sunday
March 11, 2007
11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Internet Ticket Sales at www.pgiinc.com
For information, call (509) 623-0372



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Community has a role to make sure children will survive and thrive

Support of parents, teachers, pastors and other mentors steered Michael Tate, vice president of equity and diversity at Washington State University since 2004, into higher education. He knows such support made the difference for the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. So he is committed to be present with and nudge young people and urge the state to provide resources so students of color can have more opportunities for higher education.



Michael Tate

Speaking at the Martin Luther King Day commemoration service at Holy Temple Church of God in Christ in Spokane, he said that from his 35 years in higher education, he knows "education is the great emancipator, freeing people, creating options and opportunities to broaden people's lives."

His mentors stirred his curiosity about King, who also grew up in a loving community that supported his pursuit of higher education.

"King was an average student but had mentors who encouraged him at Morehouse College, so he went on to theological studies in Boston, where he learned about non-violent resistance and civil disobedience from Henry David Thoreau, who refused to pay taxes because the United States supported slavery," Michael said.

During graduate studies at Boston University, he went to church one Sunday in Philadelphia and heard from Mordecai Johnson, the president of Howard University, about his meeting Mahatma Gandhi in India, and of Gandhi's efforts to fight the injustice of apartheid in South Africa and colonialism in India with non-violent resistance.

In his growing years, Michael knew that teachers and mentors joined in civil rights actions. He

heard King in 1963 in Detroit when he gave the "I Have a Dream" speech before he gave it for the March on Washington. Michael stood outside the 26,000-seat auditorium with the overflow crowd of 125,000.

"He lit a fire in me, a fire I still have inside. We need unity before we can do anything, but unity without action says little. We need unity to overcome the learning gap," said Michael who worked in higher education for 30 years at Michigan State University.

"My message as an educator is action. We live in a global society. Everyone must learn in order to compete. We must provide community in which children not only survive but thrive, because the poorest class of people in our society are children. Do we have social security for children? We are losing our young people to

drugs, AIDS, ignorance and various 'isms,'" he asserted.

"Not all of us are blessed. Children are not surviving or prospering. We are blessed in this state with a powerful system of higher education. We need a commitment to life-long learning," he said.

He praised the governor's education budget because "education lights our future," he said, pointing out that higher education takes preparation and support, like King and he himself had.

"At my high school of 3,200 students, a man we called 'Grandpa' would tell us: 'Get to class on time. I'm watching.'"

Like that man, Michael believes, everyone has a role to play in making sure children not only survive but also thrive.

He welcomed Wallace Williams, a WSU alum, coming to

him in retirement as an educator and school administrator, saying he wanted to serve. So he formed POMP or Place of Most Potential, a program to prepare young

people not only to thrive but also to prosper in higher education.

"We need action, service and passion," he said.

For information, call 455-8722.

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Diploma in Lay Pastoral Ministry

The program trains, equips, and supports lay people to serve more effectively as commissioned lay pastors, as lay ministers and in other paid and unpaid lay-leadership positions in the Presbyterian Church (USA), as well as in other denominations.

The program can be completed in as little as two years—two weeks during two successive summers—or it can be lengthened, depending



on the student's needs. Students may take all courses to receive the diploma or may take individual courses for their personal growth and enrichment. It is open to interested participants regardless of ministry experience or educational/denominational background.

Program Format

- **Eight foundational courses**
 - Survey of the Old Testament
 - Survey of the New Testament
 - Church History
 - Pastoral Care & Counseling
 - Christian Theology
 - Worship and the Sacraments
 - Polity and Church Leadership
 - Preaching Principles and Practice
- **Two additional educational experiences**
- **Reading assignments**
- **Post-class papers and/or projects**

Program Schedule

Session I: June 11 – 15, 2007

9 a.m. – noon and 2 – 5 p.m.

Session II: June 18 – 22, 2007

9 a.m. – noon and 2 – 5 p.m.

Program Costs

\$250/course plus room and board



WHITWORTH

For More Information, contact:

Michelle Seefried

(509) 777-3275

mseefried@whitworth.edu

Novena of Grace marks its 80th year

The Rev. Tom Lamanna, S.J., and Cindy Reopelle will lead the 80th annual Novena of Grace Saturday, March 10 through Sunday, March 18, at St. Aloysius Catholic Church, 330 E. Boone.

The theme, "Give Us Only Your Love and Your Grace," from Suscipe by St. Ignatius, taps the essence of Ignatian spirituality for

everyday life.

Father Tom, who taught and served in campus ministry at Gonzaga Prep, is novice director for the Jesuit Oregon Province. Cindy, provincial assistant for secondary and middle education for the Oregon Province, spent 24 years teaching at Gonzaga Prep.

For information, call 323-5896.

Forum features panel of developers

Spokane City Forum features a panel with developers Tom Reese, Ron Wells and Rob Brewster who are "transforming downtown into a dynamic urban center." They will speak at the event at 11:45 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 21, at First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar.

For information, call 777-1555.

Share the warmth

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Craven's Coffee and Simply Northwest together with Avista Utilities have created a special coffee and gift line called Share the Warmth. Every purchase supports Project Share, a community-funded organization that helps families in need pay their energy bills. That means that every time you warm up with a cup of Craven's Share the Warmth blend coffee or purchase a gift from Simply Northwest's Share the Warmth selection, you're helping someone stay warm, too.

Share the Warmth Blend coffee is available at local grocery stores.

You can also make donations to Project Share on your energy bill. Donate on your monthly statement by indicating a write-in contribution of \$2, \$5, \$10 or more. The pledge will then appear on your monthly statement as a reminder.

Your donation or monthly pledge helps local families stay warm. A little each month goes a long way.