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Monthly newspaper covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest

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Bishop's wife promotes 'greening'

By Mary Stamp

Gloria Waggoner sees her calling as sharing information about organic living practices that have gentle impact and that help protect the earth God created.

Beginning at her home in Paulsen House and at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, she envisions continued promotion of "greening"—earth stewardship—in the 43 churches of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane over the next few years.

She is curator of Paulsen House, where she lives as wife of the Rt. Rev. James Waggoner, Jr., the current bishop of the diocese.

"Before we came, a significant quantity of synthetic chemicals was used each year in the garden and lawn at Paulsen House. In the six years we have been here, we have been using organic methods, so the soil is once again healthy. The plants and lawn are thriving, and the property is now organic," she said.

Gloria likes a paraphrase of Genesis that calls people to admire God's handiwork and work in harmony for the good of humankind.

"To be alive is to make choices,"
Continued on page 12



Gloria Waggoner restored soil at Paulsen House to organic state as one way to have some impact on the global environment.

Benefit breakfast will boost capacity for The Fig Tree

A video presentation, "Our Story Is Your Story," and testimonies by three people on the impact of The Fig Tree on their lives and work will be part of the 2006 Deepening Our Roots Benefit Breakfast for The Fig Tree, beginning at 7:15 a.m., Wednesday, March 8, at the Globe Room of Cataldo Hall on the campus of Gonzaga University.

In addition to celebrating the work of The Fig Tree, funds will be raised to help The Fig Tree expand its ability to reach more people in more congregations in more communities of the Inland Northwest in its print form and of the Northwest on its website.

The Fig Tree is preparing to switch its hosting to a server at Gonzaga University, where it has an office in Unity House, 709 E. DeSmet.

Along with seeking funding, The Fig Tree needs volunteers to do office works and a variety of editorial, web, administrative and program tasks to expand its capacity to serve.

"At the recent World Council of Churches Assembly, I found how unique our model of communication is," said editor Mary Stamp.

For information, call 535-1813.

Assembly invites churches to unite in prayer for transformation



Gathering each day in the worship tent, people from different continents sat side-by-side, singing songs, hearing and reading prayers and scriptures in many different languages.

The message from the 9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, is an invitation to prayer. Message committee moderator Wendy Evans—the only committee moderator who was a youth—explained that the message is neither a report nor a full list of concerns, but it "reflects the heart of the Assembly." She was a delegate from the United Church of Canada.

The committee brought three drafts of the message to decision-making sessions of the assembly, accepting suggestions for revisions each time. The final version of the message was agreed to by consensus on Feb. 23, in the final business session.

This is the text of the official message: "God, in your Grace, Transform the World: Message of the 9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches: An Invitation to Prayer":

Sisters and brothers, we greet you in Christ. As representatives of churches from all the world's regions, we gather in Porto Alegre, Brazil, meeting in the first decade of the third millennium, in the first assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Latin America. We have been invited here to join in a festa da vida, the feast of life. We are praying, reflecting on the scriptures, struggling and rejoicing together in our unity and diversity, and seeking to listen carefully to one another in the spirit of consensus.

Meeting in February 2006, we are made aware by Assembly participants of cries arising daily in their home countries and regions due to disasters, violent conflicts and conditions of oppression and suffering. Yet we are also empowered by God to bear witness to transformation in personal lives, churches, societies and the world as a whole.

Specific challenges and calls to action are being communicated to the churches and the world in the reports and decisions of the Assembly, such as: the quest for Christian unity; our mid-term call to recommitment to the Decade to Overcome Violence (2001-2010); discernment of prophetic and programmatic means to achieve global economic justice; engagement in inter-religious dialogue;

Continued on page 3

During the 9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches Feb. 14 to 23 and at the pre-assembly women's gathering Feb. 11 to 13, Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp heard stories of people, learned about world events given little press in the United States and became informed on actions of churches around the world in response to their situations.

At the gathering, she experienced unity and solidarity among Christians across traditional divisions of Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, "mainline" Protestant, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches.

She found ready agreement among people from diverse cultures and confessions on commitment to economic justice, human rights and overcoming violence.

In this issue, she reports on ecumenical alternatives developed to the economic globalization of international multinational corporations. In coming issues, she will share more stories and insights.

Religion News Briefs

Around the World

Ecumenical News International, PO Box 2100
 CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111
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Brazilian Lutheran is new WCC moderator

Porto Alegre (ENI). The Rev. Walter Altmann, a Lutheran theologian from Porto Alegre and president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brazil, was elected as moderator of the central committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Lutherans say common assembly possible

Porto Alegre, Brazil, 24 (ENI). Lutheran World Federation president, Bishop Mark Hanson, welcomes the WCC's invitation for a common assembly in the next decade with global denominational groups, noting it would involve careful talks to deal with complex issues.

Young leaders decry commercialized education

Porto Alegre (ENI). Young people from developing countries are losing means to be citizens in their own countries because of commercialized education, which stresses producing graduates for "the large machine of the global market," said the Rev. Romeo del Rosario, president of the Union Theological Seminary in the Philippines, at a side meeting at the WCC assembly.

Global church grouping eyes new steps to unity

Porto Alegre (ENI). The WCC urges its 348 member churches to consider a statement, "Called to be the One Church," that it hopes will enable them to take steps towards Christian unity. "Our continuing divisions are real wounds to the body of Christ, and God's mission in the world suffers," the document says.

WCC condemns terrorism and 'war on terror'

Porto Alegre (ENI). The WCC condemned terrorism and urged its members to challenge the "war on terror" and anti-terrorist legislation that violates human rights. "The answer to terrorism is not to respond in kind. This leads to more violence and more terror," said a statement adopted by the assembly.

Eritreans urge WCC to intervene for patriarch

Nairobi (ENI). A group of Eritreans appealed to the WCC to intervene in the detention of Abune Antonios, patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church. They are concerned about the well-being of the patriarch, who was unlawfully removed from his office by the government-controlled church synod.

Hollywood, U.S. military cited for domination

Porto Alegre (ENI). Argentinian Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel told WCC delegates that Hollywood's representation of American cultural life is just as damaging as U.S. military and economic domination. "When the Berlin Wall fell, we thought there would be world cooperation. Instead we have domination by an empire that abuses God's name as it imposes conditions and makes wars," he said.

Uganda worst place in the world to be a child

Porto Alegre (ENI). The world's churches are "missing in action" while 1,000 children die each week in squalid camps in northern Uganda, said Olara Otunnu, former Ugandan foreign minister and UN undersecretary for Children and Armed Conflict from 1997 to 2005. "I hope the assembly will respond."

North and South Koreans pray for unity

Porto Alegre (ENI). North and South Koreans prayed together with world church leaders for the peaceful reunification of their country and urged the WCC, the world's largest grouping of Christian denominations, to give the process a boost.

Christians offer hospitality at Winter Olympics

Turin, Italy (ENI). A group of Italians has launched the "More Than Gold" campaign during the Winter Olympics that involves former Olympians offering hospitality and pastoral care. It is supported by many Christian churches.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Interfaith Council plans concert, events

Interfaith Council plans two musical events in March, a concert of music from the movie, "The Basket," and a program on domestic violence.

The concert, a benefit for the council's programs, begins at 8 p.m., Monday, March 13, at the Met, 901 W. Sprague.

Ann Fennessy and the Spokane Youth Orchestra conducted by Verne Windham will present the concert of music from "The Basket."

The concert also includes a spe-

cial performance of "Disposable Dances," composed by Don Caron for Earth Day, and performed by Ann Fennessy, soprano; Kendall Feeney, piano; Todd DelGuidice, clarinet; Louise Butler, cello, and Steve Croteau, percussion.

North by Northwest Productions is presenting the concert with the Interfaith Council.

"Weaving Our Sisters' Voices," a performance of dance, music and poetry—exploring how women from scriptures relate to contemporary women's lives—will

be presented twice by the council in conjunctions with the Gonzaga Theatre Arts Program.

One performance is 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 22, at West Central Community Center, 1603 N. Belt. The second performance is at 7 p.m., Friday, March 24, at the Spokane Valley Community Center, 10814 E. Broadway.

The council's monthly "Justice through Poetry" gathering will be held at 8 p.m., Friday, March 17, at 1620 N. Monroe.

For information, call 329-1410.

Council holds memorial for genocide victims

A memorial service for genocide victims is planned by the Interfaith Council of the Inland Northwest as part of a nationwide campaign to draw attention to the ongoing genocide in Darfur.

The Muslim, Jewish and Christian interfaith service will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 19, at Country Homes Christian Church, 8415 N. Wall, Spokane.

The council is the local member of the Save Darfur Coalition, which has organized the "Million Voices for Darfur" campaign. More than 150 faith-based, ad-

vocacy and humanitarian aid organizations are taking part in the effort to raise awareness of the genocide and promote actions necessary to end it, said Diana Gibson, the council's advocacy action coordinator.

"The goal of the campaign is to deliver one million handwritten and electronic postcards from Americans to the President and Congress demanding that they undertake a stronger U.S. response to the violence and atrocities plaguing the region," said the Rev. Richard Cizik, vice

president of governmental affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals. "It is a moral imperative for the U.S. government to support a stronger multinational force to protect the civilians of Darfur."

He concluded: "Upon assuming office, President George Bush wrote in the margins of a briefing memo on the Rwandan genocide, 'Not on my watch.' We intend to hold him to that promise."

Postcards will be available at the service and at the council.

For information, call 329-1410.

Two local leaders present Novena of Grace

Fr. Robert Fitts, S.J. and Sr. Celeste Crine, OSF, will lead this year's Novena of Grace, offering nine days of prayer and worship March 11-19 at St. Aloysius Catholic Church, 330 East Boone.

The Novena, a period of concentrated prayer, had its beginning in 1615 in Goa, India, when a crippled boy was cured by the intercession of Francis Xavier.

He was canonized a saint in 1622, with St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus.

Over the years, other miracles attributed to St. Francis Xavier, included in 1833 healing Jesuit Fr. Mastrilli after an accident. That priest established the Novena, which spread around the world.

During the days of prayer, St.

Aloysius Church offers three daily services: 12:15, 3:30 and 5:15 p.m. Sunday services begin at 12:30 p.m. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered 45 minutes before each service.

Fr. Robert, pastor at St. Aloysius Parish, joined the Jesuit order in 1957 and was ordained in 1969. He studied three years at Mt. St. Michael's in Spokane and taught two years at Bellarmine Prep High School in Tacoma. He was also chaplain at Sacred Heart Medical Center and at hospitals in Oregon, Alaska and Missouri.

For several years, he was Superior of the Spokane Jesuit Regis Community for retired priests. He also led Engaged Encounters and Beginning Experience

retreats and served as pastor at Priest River, Priest Lake and on the Spokane and Colville Indian reservations.

Sr. Celeste, a Sister of St. Francis from the Philadelphia Community, brings a background in Franciscan and holistic spirituality.

Believing relationship with God foundational to well-being, she serves as director of spirituality, healing arts and hospitality at St. Joseph Family Center in Spokane.

Her background includes spiritual formation of women in her community, 10 years in spiritual ministry in a parish and 13 years at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Aston, Penn.

For information, call 323-5896.

Holocaust survivor speaks

"Creating Advantage out of Adversity" is Edith Eger's topic at the Spokane City Forum at 11:45 a.m., Thursday, March 9, at First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar.

A survivor of Auschwitz and as a psychologist, author and speaker, Edith draws on her past as she develops her topic.

For information, call 777-1555.



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God, in your grace, transform the world!

Continued from page 1

full inter-generational participation of all women and men, and common statements addressing the churches and the world on public issues.

The theme of this Ninth Assembly is a prayer, "God, in your grace, transform the world". In prayer our hearts are transformed, and so we offer our message as prayer:

God of grace,
together we turn to you in prayer, for it is you who unite us:
you are the one God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—
in whom we believe,
you alone empower us for good,
you send us out across the earth in mission and service
in the name of Christ.

We confess before you and all people:
We have been unworthy servants.
We have misused and abused the creation.
We have wounded one another by divisions everywhere.
We have often failed to take decisive action
against environmental destruction, poverty,
racism, caste-ism, war and genocide.

We are not only victims but also perpetrators of violence.
In all this, we have fallen short as disciples of Jesus Christ
who in his incarnation came to save us and teach us
how to love.

Forgive us, God, and teach us to forgive one another.

God, in your grace, transform the world.



Top: In a symbolic action during worship, a Swiss pastor repairs a broken pot.

Below: Indigenous people from around the world lead one morning worship service.



God, hear the cries of all creation,
the cries of the waters, the air, the land and all living things;
the cries of all who are exploited, marginalized,
abused and victimized,
all who are dispossessed and silenced,
their humanity ignored,
all who suffer from any form of disease, from war
and from the crimes of the arrogant who hide from the truth,
distort memory and deny the possibility of reconciliation.
God, guide all in seats of authority towards decisions
of moral integrity.

God, in your grace, transform the world.

We give thanks for your blessings and signs of hope
that are already present in the world,
in people of all ages and in those who have gone
before us in faith;

in movements to overcome violence in all its forms,
not just for a decade but for always;
in the deep and open dialogues that have begun
both within our own churches and with those
of other faiths in the search for mutual
understanding and respect;

in all those working together for justice and peace—
both in exceptional circumstances and every day.
We thank you for the good news of Jesus Christ,
and the assurance of resurrection.

God, in your grace, transform the world.

By the power and guidance of your Holy Spirit, O God,
may our prayers never be empty words
but an urgent response to your living Word—
in nonviolent direct action for positive change,
in bold, clear, specific acts of solidarity, liberation,
healing and compassion,
readily sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.
Open our hearts to love and to see that all people
are made in your image,
to care for creation and affirm life in all
its wondrous diversity.

Transform us in the offering of ourselves so that we
may be your partners in transformation
to strive for the full, visible unity of the one
Church of Jesus Christ,
to become neighbors to all,
as we await with eager longing the full revelation
of your rule in the coming of a new heaven and a new earth.

God, in your grace, transform the world.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.

For details of decisions, events, programs, people, photos and videos
of the assembly, visit the website, www.wcc-assembly.info, The Fig Tree
website, www.thefigtree.org, and future issues of The Fig Tree.

Eastern Washington CROP Walks set

Two Eastern Washington CROP Walk dates have been set.

The walk in Sunnyside is on Saturday, April 22, and the Spokane walk is on Sunday, April 30.

The Spokane walk begins at noon with entertainment and registration at Martin Centre at Gonzaga University. The walk begins at 1:30 p.m., and follows the Centennial Trail for two miles or 10 kilometers.

For information, call 326-5656 in Spokane or 837-4314 in Sunnyside.



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Sat., March 11 - Sun., March 19

This year's theme is

'A Call to Prayer'

Presenters

Sister Celeste Crine, OSF Rev. Robert Fitts, SJ



Novena Services

12:15 pm Prayer Service (starts 12:30 pm both Sundays)
3:30 pm Benediction Service
5:15 pm Mass Service

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Program ends by 8:45 a.m.**

Celebrating recent stories of faith in action

Our Story Is Your Story

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to build our capacity to share the stories of the region,
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to promote volunteerism and action on behalf of the vulnerable,
to explore alternatives to violence, and
to learn about people who live their faith and values.

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New generation of students accepts traditional beliefs

The Common Ministry at Washington State University is shifting its approach to campus ministry as it recognizes generational differences between the current "millennial generation" and previous generations.

"There are marked differences among the World War II generation, the baby boomers, Generation X and today's millennial generation," said the Rev. Gail Stearns, who has worked at Koinonia House, the ecumenical campus ministry in Pullman since the end of what she considers "the Generation X era."

Understanding dynamics shaping people in a generation helps the ministry gear programs for leadership development.

"The millennial generation is discovering spirituality and exploring religion in new ways," she said. "In fact, they are more interested in both."

Generational identity, Gail pointed out, is more than age. It's more about self-perceived belonging in a generation, shared behaviors, a common location in history and shared experiences of cultural events.

Boomers are those born from 1945 to 1965—from Truman to Kennedy years, including the Korean War.

Xers were born from 1965 to 1985—Johnson to Carter years including the Vietnam War.

The millennials were after 1985—from Reagan to Bush years—including the wars in Iraq, Kosovo and then Iraq again.

Some generalizations about the three generations, Gail said, include:

- Boomers grew up in a time of affluence, the Cold War, "ask not," Pax Americana and "I have a dream."

- Xers grew up during stagflation, the Great Society, Vietnam protests, limits to growth and malaise.

- The millennials grew up during a long booming economy, "kinder, gentler," and family values.

Gail said Tom Beaudoin's book *Virtual Faith* and the book, *Millennials Rising*, by Howe, Strauss and Matson point to other generational differences:

- Xers who were latch key children—who came home and watched TV because both parents worked—consider suffering part of belief. Individualistic, some were into experimentation and the drug culture. Many distrust institutions, including churches. Many accept ambiguity and discover through experience the nature of the divine-human interconnection.



Today's generation is discovering spirituality, said Gail Stearns.

- Among millennials are fewer latch-key children, more home-schooled children, and many involved in sports or dance as team activities. Many are highly scheduled. As the focus of marketing, they feel loved, special and sheltered.

"This high-achieving but stressed generation is confident, team oriented and conventional," Gail said. "So they find belief in groups, accept the content of belief and express faith in social values, hopefulness and tolerance of differences."

"Their lives have been informed by the Columbine shootings, Oklahoma City bombing, war in Kosovo, Princess Di's death, the Clinton impeachment, Rodney King riots and the fall of the Berlin Wall."

About 80 percent want to have a good paying job and good relationships with their parents, Gail added. About 57 percent want to marry, 38 percent want children and 28 percent want to own their own business.

"The same percent look up to their parents. In school, they had curriculum that emphasized teaching to tests, group projects, community service and citizenship," she said. "They did large amounts of homework and watch

four or more hours of TV a day."

Their lives have been surrounded by technology, setting them in a virtual world, she continued.

"It's often hard for them to distinguish between the virtual and real worlds," Gail added. "They communicate immediately through instant messaging, email and cell phones, rather than face-to-face. With cell phones, they are a call away from doing something spontaneous with a friend. Violent video games are part of their experience, too."

Some religious themes of the generations include:

- Xers know suffering, accept ambiguity and consider experience key.

- Millennials are likely to be attracted into churches, accepting the content of belief and seeking leadership as teams.

"Previously, each year we had to 'reinvent the wheel' for the next generation, asking students what they thought we should do, including them as part of the decision team," Gail said.

"The rise in some evangelical churches fits with students' desire to be told what to believe; but students are also curious and often want to grow beyond what they are told. At K-House, we let people question and discover their

own beliefs, rather than telling them what to believe. Several who have been with groups that told them what to believe were lost when they began to question those beliefs. So they came to us and started to ask their questions.

"Many of them do not know who God is," she said. "So our role is to help them deepen their faith at a point when another group said they were losing faith. We have had profound faith discussions with these students."

During a presentation at the 40th anniversary of K-House in the fall, Father Tom Caswell, who recently worked with students at Eastern Washington University while serving St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Cheney, said he found at Newman Center many students who were conservative about church, wanting piety, prayer, individual faith experiences and clarity of beliefs.

The Common Ministry, Gail said, offers a variety of programs to meet students where they are in this new generation.

On Thursdays, Inspire offers dinner, a praise and gospel band, and discussions on basic Christian beliefs for students.

Tuesday theology discussions and Sunday evening Taizé worship responds to students who ask deeper questions or want to slow down and experience the mystery of God, she said.

Pop culture permeates students' thoughts through quotes from movies, theme songs and

video music, said the Rev. Robert Hicks, a United Methodist pastor who serves with Gail as campus minister at WSU.

"Pop culture supplies endless opportunities to connect with students and create metaphor bridges to connect to theology and faith. This generation wants to heal, not burn institutions. They want to enter institutions in order to make the world better. Churches that draw in this generation will be healthy," he commented.

Churches using technology to communicate with students will draw them, too, Gail said.

She added that with technology and noise of iPods, cell phones and videos, the silence in Taizé worship appeals to students.

"It's an exciting time to work with people away from home, seeking answers to: Where is God? What do I do to deal with reality? Maybe God is bigger than I previously believed?"

Taizé services are held Sundays at 7 p.m.—March 5 and 26—at the Community Congregational United Church of Christ, 525 SW Campus Dr. in Pullman. They use an intimate room that has good acoustics for the music.

For information, call 332-2611.

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7 p.m. March 24
Spokane Valley Community Center - 10814 East Broadway
Interfaith Panel and Dialogue
 How our faith communities respond to domestic violence.
 A performance of dance, music and poetry that explores how women from scripture relate to our contemporary lives.
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Spiritus
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The Women's Dream Quest
March 10 - 11 • 7 p.m. Friday - 11 a.m., Saturday
St. John's Cathedral in Spokane
The Women's Dream Quest offers women an opportunity to spend the night in the sacred space of St. John's Cathedral. The evening includes small and large group activities, singing, healing, art, dancing and labyrinth walking.
Facilitator - Judith Tripp, MA, MFT of San Francisco
 Registration Fee: \$50.00
The Rev. Dr. L. William Countryman
Lectures: 'Reconciliation'
7 p.m., Thursday, March 23
at All Saints Episcopal Church in Richland - freewill offering
Lecture: 7 p.m., Friday, March 24
Workshop: 'Living on the Borders of the Holy'
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Saturday, March 25
St. John's Cathedral in Spokane
Spokane events are \$15 for the Friday lecture and \$30 for the Saturday workshop which includes lunch.
For more information and registration forms, call
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Anti-racism training seeks to strengthen community relationships

Travels and extended stays in Germany, India, Sri Lanka, Australia and other countries inspired the Rev. Ann Hinz's commitment to interracial and intercultural connection, which she has put into practice through her involvement with the North Central Washington Coalition to Dismantle Racism.

"My travels led to my interest in other cultures and to my being intrigued by what divides and unites us as people," she said. "I became interested in racism and how it affects our relationships with people, in terms of both power dynamics and underlying prejudices that harm both people of color and white people."

Soon after moving to Quincy, Wash., as pastor of First Presbyterian Church, serving through this January, Ann connected with the grassroots organization, which formed in 2000 and became a nonprofit two years ago.

Ann's global and cultural background spurred her commitment. After high school in Gig Harbor, she attended Washington State University for three years. Then she traveled with a friend through England and Scotland. She met up with her college sweetheart, Marvin Hinz, in Germany. They married in Gibraltar, and then traveled by low-budget bus and train for nine months in Europe, North Africa, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, India and Sri Lanka.

Often they stayed with families of students they had met at WSU, learning about the life and cultures.

Upon returning, Ann completed a bachelor's degree in English and education at Washington State University in 1975.

Their daughter Sonja was born in 1973 and their son Shawn in 1975.

They lived the next three years in Germany while Marvin was in the military, and then two years in Australia, where Ann taught at an elementary school in which half the students were immigrants.

While working in a juvenile court education program and a residential youth drug and alcohol treatment center, she earned a master's degree in education at Western Washington University in Bellingham.

She and Marvin began attending a Presbyterian church and, at 38, she stopped resisting a call she felt to go into ministry. He worked in mediation, while she studied for a master of divinity

degree at Vancouver School of Theology. After graduating in 1992, she accepted a call to a church in Gold Beach, Ore., where she served seven years and started a doctor of ministry program with San Francisco Theological Seminary. Her thesis took her to the next step.

In 1999, she accepted a call to Quincy, where she could explore her thesis about how preaching could help an Anglo congregation build bridges with neighbors in other cultures.

They lived in the church parsonage for a while, but now live in Leavenworth, where Marvin has a counseling practice.

Ann said she was also drawn into anti-racism education because of some of her experiences of not being treated well in her childhood.

"It gives me compassion for other people who are not treated well," she said. "Compassion is what Jesus' ministry is about, and compassion sums up my call."

It led her to examine her own complicity in institutional racism and to recognize her privilege.

Through the North Central Washington Coalition to Dismantle Racism, she has joined with other Anglos and Latinos to offer anti-racism training in Quincy, Wenatchee, Leavenworth, Chelan and Cashmere—communities with growing Latino populations.

Ann said about 300 people of different races and cultures in local churches, schools, clinics, nonprofits, government offices and social services have completed the anti-racism training, using curricula from the Crossroads Institute in Chicago.

Churches involved include Faith Lutheran in Leavenworth, Holy Apostles Catholic, First United Methodist and Grace Lutheran in Wenatchee, and St. Paul Lutheran and First Presbyterian in Quincy.

"Through awareness, we hope people will do things to bring changes in churches, schools, services and businesses," she said.

"Our definition of racism is both indi-

vidual and institutional. We look at how racism impacts institutions, churches, schools, medical practices, anywhere that people of color are treated differently than white people," she said.

The coalition defines racism as an imbalance of power in relationships and we define prejudice as attitudes Latinos or Anglos may have about each other as a result of the power inequity, she said.

"Racism is about both prejudice and power. We deal with hate and hate crimes, as well as expectations, assumptions and fears," Ann continued.

"It's hard for people to recognize how institutions treat people differently. We encounter resistance and anger,"

Ann said, adding that people don't recognize the existence of white privilege and how people of color internalize the institutional racism and individual prejudice. "The attitudes are bred into us."

While the work to dismantle is painful, she also finds it exhilarating.

The one-day or weekend trainings in Spanish and English include time for people to socialize, to share

who they are and to grow in trust through relationships.

The Coalition to Dismantle Racism sees they can reach their goal by educating institutions, organizing and training leadership teams, creating accountability for those teams, networking to foster support and using institutional change to create community change.

The Presbytery of Central Washington and the Synod of Alaska Northwest sponsored a three-day anti-racism training in Quincy in 2002.

Quincy is now about 70 percent Latino and 30 percent Anglo, with a few Asian Americans, Native Americans and African Americans.

"The Latinos are mostly Mexican, but also include people from Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

"Some, who have been in Quincy since the 1950s, are professionals. Some, there for about 20 years, are settled in the community and work in the fruit and vegetable processing plants. Others

are migrant farm workers, moving back and forth between Mexico and Quincy," Ann said.

Ann found that as the Latino population grows the Anglo population declines. Some Anglos who came in the 1950s with irrigation are dying, retiring and moving, or leaving because of fear about gangs and crime, she said.

"Most Latinos go to the Catholic Church or to Pentecostal churches," said Ann, whose church is declining with the population shift.

Since the 1950s when it had about 220 members and 130 in Christian education, the congregation dropped to 90 in 2000 and now has about 71 members. They voted in December to move to half-time ministry, so Ann resigned in January.

A few Latinos attend the Presbyterian church. One Latina joined the church and now serves on the board.

The church also has partnered with the Spanish Assembly of God Church for six summers to sponsor a bi-lingual, bi-cultural vacation Bible school for 50 to 100 children—90 percent Latino. Youth come from a Presbyterian church in Grants Pass, Ore., or Redmond, Wash., to assist with the program.

"For Latinos to see a church as welcoming, it would have to offer bilingual services and include them in leadership positions," she said.

The League of United Latin American Citizens, a 75-year-old Latino social justice and civil rights organization, began meeting at the Presbyterian church in July 2005.

"They see the church as a welcoming place to meet," she said.

Ann, who has also had national Presbyterian training as an anti-racism trainer, is committed to working against racism because she knows what it does to people of all races.

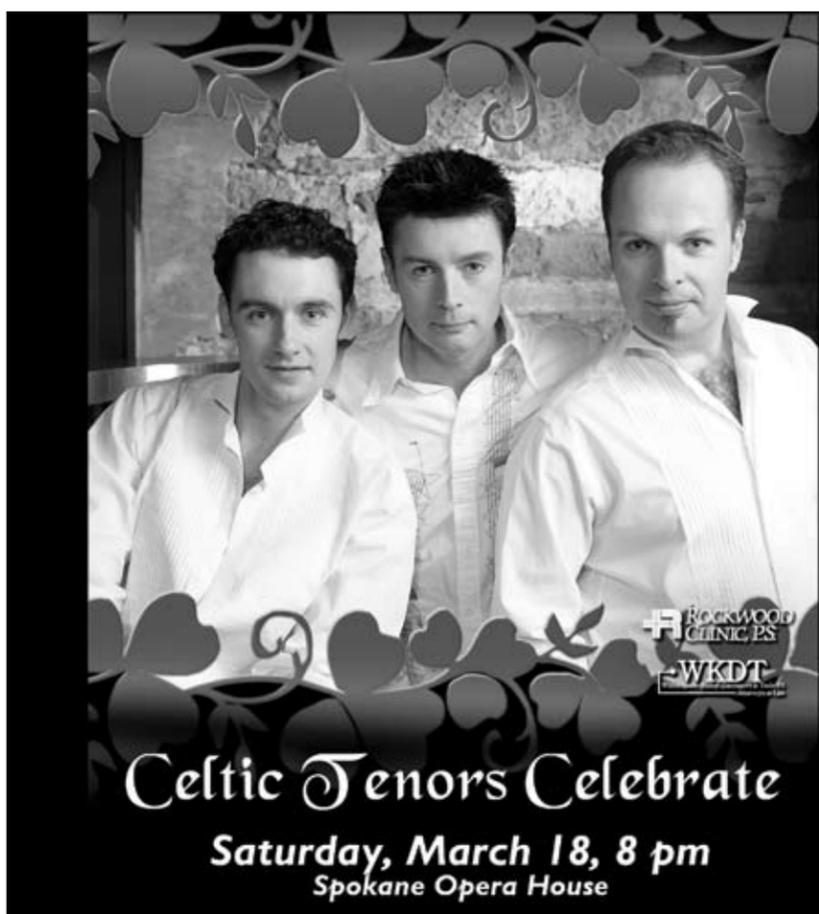
"As a Christian white person with information, I can't pretend racism is not there," she said.

Preaching on the lectionary of suggested scriptures, Ann has raised questions about "God's call to us in the midst of living in a growing Latino community, encouraging people to know that God is with us in the midst of change.

"I preach on the grief process many Anglos experience with the loss of people to death and moving," she said.

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Faith leaders discuss an AGAPE vision of global economic life

"That's what church is all about," sighed an elderly, rural South African woman in relief, as she stood at the entrance of her church and watched people in the church share food and life stories in small groups with the wider neighborhood.

German theologian Andrea Froechtling told that story as part of a mutirão—Portuguese for workshop—on AGAPE at the WCC's assembly.

A document and movement called AGAPE, sparked by the Caribbean Conference of Churches, offers an alternative to the economic globalization of multinational corporations.

"AGAPE," referring to God's unconditional, self-sacrificial love, is the acronym for a WCC document "Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth: A Call to Love and Action."

Prepared through the WCC's Commission for Justice, Peace and Creation under the direction of the Central Committee, it was approved for use in the Feb. 16 plenary on economic justice.

Panelists for the mutirão were among those who worked on preparing it. Along with Andrea, they were Jooseop Keum of Korea; Pamela Brubaker of California, and Ofelia Ortega, of the Christian Institute of Theological Studies in Cuba.

Andrea continued her story, describing what happened to the fruit, maize and sugar cane brought to the altar for the Eucharist service.

The South African woman, whom Andrea met while living there, next said: "If you live a life that shares, then you know what the giver and sustainer of life wants you to do. God is a great sharer of concern, of justice, of all we need for life, and I guess discipleship means we just follow suit."

Andrea, author of *Being the Church Beyond the South-North Divide*, said that sharing what matters most in life goes back to the early life of the church. It goes back to the meaning that sharing of a meal has in many religious and cultural communities.

The AGAPE process proceeds in footprints that already paved the way, she said, listing some of those footprints:

- A meal concluded God's covenant with the Hebrew people, according to the book of Exodus.
- During the exodus, God provided manna for the day, offering an economy of enough for a day on the way through the desert.
- The early Christians lived together in an agape community, sharing all they had with each other.



Andrea Froechtling

• Jesus' stories of the banquet, placing those at the margins at the center stage, provided another model of agape.

"As people of faith, we are storied people. It is by no accident that many stories of our faith tradition are stories of alternatives, of different ways of living in just and caring relationships," Andrea said. "Living alternatives as people of faith means giving birth to the hope that is within us."

The AGAPE process seeks to provide an incarnation of our faith and hope. It is driven by faith in the one who said: "I have come so that all may have life in its fullness."

As an alternative globalization addressing people and earth, AGAPE is based on stories of faith and the challenging, prophetic voice of the Gospel tradition, she said.

"As a process, it needs people to embark on it, people who will embody the hope, people who will confront structures and powers leading to death, people who will live an agape theology of life," Andrea concluded.

Jooseop, executive secretary for Christian World Mission, said churches should take a firm faith stance that gives life to a suffering creation when life is at stake.

"Globalization is a matter of life and death for the majority of people in the southern hemisphere," he said. "It integrates everyone's lives into a single economic system. Its ideological message is that the global marketplace will save the world."

It is a vehicle bringing a form of unity in contrast to religious and cultural plurality, a unity like the Roman Empire brought in Jesus' time, Jooseop said.

"That empire united market and



Jooseop Keum of Korea and Pamela Brubaker of California were among panelists.

culture ostensibly to bring prosperity and peace to all people," he described. "The Roman emperor, claiming to be 'good news,' forced people to be subject to him and worship him. The emperor was bad news for Galilee. Globalization then was for the benefit of Roman citizens, not everyone," said Jooseop, former general secretary for the National Youth Association of the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

"Jesus introduced an alternative, a globalization of the kingdom of God, recognizing that each nation brought new insights to everyone.

The Roman Empire did not allow the existence of small nations. They were subject to the empire. Jesus countered that by teaching that people were subjects of God's kingdom, he said.

Jooseop—who earned a doctoral degree in 2002 in mission and ecumenism from the University of Edinburgh's Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World—added that Paul established the early Church as an alternative community, a globalization from below, an alternative to the empire.

"A message from the early church is that globalization of the church is in opposition to globalization of empire," he said. "It is the call of and to the Christian church throughout history.

"A strong mission-centered, prophetic approach is a call for the churches and the ecumenical movement to translate the traditional concept to churches—preaching, schools, hospitals, strengthening institutions. We forget what we are for—to convert to the church to seek Jesus as an

alternative to the Roman Empire to give those suffering an alternative to the Roman Empire."

He called for returning to the heart of Christian communities, to refocus and shape church life, to do theological critique on globalization, to seek a spiritual base for alternative mission programs, so people share in a sustainable, just approach to development.

A video shown during the mutirão gave background, saying that since the 1970s, large, neo-liberal, globally controlled, multinational corporations and financial institutions have been at the base of an economic globalization that impoverishes people with structural adjustments. The process has created rich and poor countries and has created a widening gap between rich and poor people within countries.

Globalization that means the majority of people suffer while some live "obscenely well" is at the heart of the social justice concern in the WCC and its member churches.

In the Caribbean, unfair trade arrangements affect agriculture, leading farmers to abandon farms that are no longer viable, leaving the land and going to the city,

where they are marginalized.

For Pam, a member of the Church of the Brethren and professor of religion at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, Calif., AGAPE speaks to women abused by economic globalization, struggling for survival with loss of livelihoods.

"Women who care for life search for an alternative economy based on their value of caring," she said. "Neo-classical economics is not natural law. Feminist economics refers to economies that can be sustained and that value caring community.

"The ecumenical movement and churches need to promote caring economies for sustaining

Continued on page 7

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Diverse contexts bring perspectives outside usual economic styles

Continued from page 6

life in the oikos, the household," added Pam, who co-chairs the Sweatshop Action Committee of Progressive Christians Uniting in Los Angeles.

"The method of economic analysis is based on understanding that unpaid, caring labor—giving birth, feeding families, rearing children, caring for the sick, supporting the elderly—has value in the overall economy."

In fact the "caring" sector of the economy makes the overall economy possible.

It maintains life outside the marketplace. There would be no production in the marketplace without this social economy, Pam said.

"Women have a negative experience with an economy rooted in material and the moral devaluation of women's reproduction and caring. The GDP would increase by 30 to 40 percent if this sector of the economy were replaced by paid labor," she said, pointing out that the exclusion and invisibility of this work diminishes the economy of life of those who produce food and prepare meals.

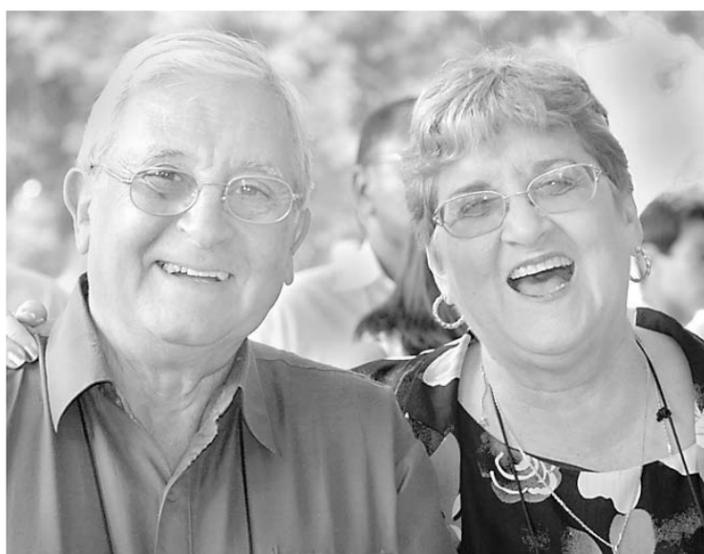
She urges churches to advocate caring communities, so that what can be drudgery can be seen as enriching everyone.

If caring for human life takes precedence over production, she hopes that societies' priority of spending money to destroy life will be called into question.

As an example of caring economy, Pam said, Brazil pays a stipend to poor families, especially single mothers, so their children can go to school. That has improved attendance at school and literacy so people can have decent jobs. It recognizes that unpaid, nonmarket work has a transforming impact on the entire economy.

Ofelia, who was elected at this assembly as one of the eight presidents of the WCC, said, "Women deal with alternatives, contributing their persistence, interpolation (questions), intervention and transformation."

She told of meeting with some Orthodox women at an assembly and hearing them talk about 1 Cor. 12 on using the charisma being about using people's diverse gifts



Argentinean Methodist Bishop Aldo Etchegoyen celebrates with Ofelia Ortega of Cuba her election as a WCC president.

for the common good.

She has also met with women who speak of agriculture for life, not for production and profit.

"There is unity in Latin America and the Caribbean in responding to the free trade agreements. Our churches are involved because they know what free trade has meant for Mexico," she said.

The struggle for water is a lesson of life, she believes. It embodies solidarity and sharing, opposing free-market intrusion, seeking to make a natural resource that should be available for the common good, into a commodity of private business.

Women are also speaking about water as a basic necessity of life and as a human right, an issue that affects the whole world now and in the future as private corporations seek to own water rights.

"In 'water wars' in Bolivia, women helped kick out a private water company, Bechtel, using the four principles—persistence, interpolation, intervention and transformation," Ofelia added.

"Women are at the heart of promoting managing water as a public resource for communities.

"Water is essential for all of life. We use water to cook, clean, bathe. Water is basic to life. Private companies increase rates and claim ownership of water. Women protest. We have found solidarity to access water sources that have always been ours," Ofelia pointed out.

Porto Alegre, for example,

also has moved from a private to public water system because of citizen pressure.

"There is spiritual meaning for rural women struggling for water, resisting privatization, organizing blockades and talking with police," Ofelia said.

Citizens of Cochabamba, Bolivia, organized and expressed their concerns. Months of massive public protests forced out Bechtel—worth more than \$40 billion or about 10 times Bolivia's public expenditures—after it took over the city's public water company and hiked rates up 200 percent, which was way beyond what the city's poor could afford.

Other Latin American communities are also resisting privatization and restoring water as a public utility.

Ofelia recommends that water

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be excluded from free trade agreements and that commercialization of water should end.

"It should be recognized as a social right and human right," she said. "Maintaining a public water system reflects the needs and rights of women, contributing to the society and economy their gift of caring."

The panelists concluded that an alternative economy that recognizes the value of women's contributions is about sharing and

caring—about God's kingdom rather than human empires of nations or corporations.

The AGAPE document calls for eradication of poverty and inequality, just international trade, responsible lending and debt cancellation, sustainable use of land and natural resources, public goods and services, land reform and ecological farming practices, decent jobs and emancipated work, and churches transforming unjust power systems.

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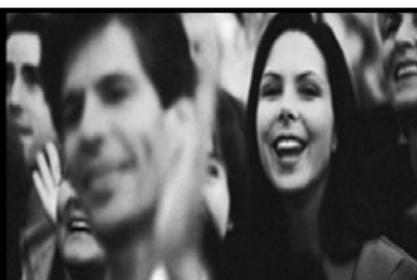
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Despite danger, Iraqi Christian continues ministry with Kurds

As a Christian in Iraq, Yousif Matty welcomes the presence of "internationals," including Americans, both those who support ministries he oversees and troops who are rebuilding infrastructure in Kurdistan.

He came to Spokane in January to take a New Testament survey class at Whitworth College, to speak on behalf of Partners International and to thank several groups: Americans for their support of boys and girls in three Christian primary schools, women coming to Ruth Center, listeners to three Christian radio stations and shoppers in several bookstores he started. He also sought to recruit teachers and others to help.

"I want more than peace in my country," he said, concerned about the potential for chaos. He wants "reconciliation, spiritual reconciliation."

As an Evangelical Christian working among the Kurds, he wants freedom of religion, not to force religion on others, but to express and live in freedom.

Life is dangerous for him as an Iraqi Christian. Many Christians have left. He could seek asylum, because of threats against his safety, threats to kidnap his children, stoning of his house and shots fired at his car. So he travels in different cars and stays different places at night.

"I believe God wants me alive in Iraq," Yousif said. "I do not want to leave. My faith sustains me and is the backbone of my activities."

"It would be easier to leave, but I advise people to stay. We as Christians can help stabilize the country with our message of reconciliation," he affirms. "Even as a minority of minorities, we can help. Jesus Christ gives peace different from the world's peace."

In this visit to the United States, one of many since 1998, he went to North and South Carolina, California, Texas, Tennessee and Pennsylvania, connecting with groups related to Campus Crusade, Open Doors and Servant Group International, as well as Partners International, which has its headquarters at 1117 E. Westview Ct., Spokane.

He believes American churches will need to support Iraqi churches for the next 10 years.

Born in Baghdad, Yousif grew up in Ninevah, graduating in geology from Ninevah College in 1979. Out of college, he was conscripted and served 10 years in the Iraqi army, eight in the Iran-Iraq War in southern Iraq and three months in the first Gulf War.

After completing his service, he worked a year with an oil company, but was drawn more and more



Yousif Matty strives to spread God's peace in his homeland.

into his commitment to Christian service in the no-fly zone.

In 1986, he read a New Testament his brother-in-law gave him. In 1989, he prayed to accept Christ into his life or, as he said, "Christ started his life within me."

Working with the oil company in Kirkuk, he saw Kurds being hurt by the government. He started to help them secretly, sneaking one to three times a month into the no-fly zone to take New Testaments and resources.

"Then one morning, I saw Saddam's army helicopters shell a Kurdish zone. In the afternoon, women and children fled into our zone to hide," said Yousif, who is of Chaldean descent—traditional enemies of the Kurds. "Seeing the massacre touched my heart. I committed to pursue peace."

"Seeing what was happening to people broke through propaganda messages in media and schools, messages claiming Kurds were bad people. We were told that so we would fear contacting them."

He and his family crossed cultural barriers to work for humanitarian concerns. When he met people, he saw they were poor people, not monsters. He decided to help them. Kurds were suspicious of him until they realized he helped their families and children.

"I seek reconciliation regardless of ethnicity. I share faith and Christ through humanitarian assistance for Sunnis, Shiites, Kurds, Arabs and Assyrians," he said.

"At first, only my wife, Alia, knew I was going north. After nine months, a friend said Saddam's security forces reported I was helping Kurds," Yousif said.

Within three days, in August 1992, he, his wife and three children fled north with two suitcases.

His connection with Partners International began through an evangelical couple there.

"There are also Chaldean Catholics and Assyrian Orthodox in Kurdistan, but those are national or ethnic churches, so they have no plans for evangelizing."

"Settling with Kurds, I just wanted to tell the story of Christ and help with humanitarian needs. I had small ideas, but when I connected with international people, ideas grew," Yousif said.

When a German pastor brought a truckload of medicines to help 500 families, Yousif contacted a local hospital and hired a doctor and pharmacist to distribute the medicines, which he kept at his home so they wouldn't be sold "on the market."

"I'm not a pastor, just someone interested in sharing the Good News, helping provide medicine, clothing and food," he said.

He visited a school and saw children with no shoes, so he asked international Christian organizations for shoes. He also asked for wheat, which he ground into flour so families could have at least one meal of bread and water a day.

Soon he was the hands and feet providing aid from Partners International (PI) donors.

He started training programs for women to make cloth or become teachers and for men to learn carpentry or welding. He arranged for them to buy tools and start micro-enterprises.

In one year, Yousif and Alia taught more than 300 people English. Most found jobs.

As programs grew he rented a house for Abundant Life Center. People come to have needs met and join in spiritual activities.

Now the ministry reaches four cities: Dahok, Erbil, Sulmania

and Kirkuk. Churches were established in these cities and three radio stations, supported by PI.

With the support of international friends, they transformed their home schools into three primary schools for 550 children, first through eighth grade. The goal is to add a grade each year.

"The government is happy to see schools and sends their children, even knowing they are using biblically based U.S. curricula," Yousif said. "The Classical School of the Medes, a Christian primary school, is highly regarded by Muslims. About 95 percent of the 550 students are Muslims."

Yousif, who founded Evangelism Kurdistan, works with leaders of four churches with 30 to 200 members. Elders are the pastors; he educates them.

Changes since the war are:

- People can find jobs.
- Salaries are higher, \$400 a month for a doctor instead of \$25, or \$200 a month for a government employee instead of \$3.
- People can buy washing machines, air conditioners, refrigerators and other things that need more electricity. They have electricity just 10 hours a day.
- There is a new democratic system, and even though parties may not understand democracy, it is a beginning.

"In the short term, life is not better than under Saddam Hussein, but I believe the long-term is positive," he said. "For 30 years, we had no human rights, freedom of the press or free speech."

"The Bible is not blacklisted," he said. "The constitution must support my right to believe what I believe."

"I agree with the right of others to believe or not to believe, but we should have freedom to talk and share about our faith," he said.

Above the no-fly zone from 1991 to 2002, Kurds managed

better than Sunnis and Shiites.

Along with providing security, the U.S. Army is helping civilians rebuild. The mayor and Americans seek to develop water and electrical systems. A U.S. general raised funds and troops are building infrastructure, Yousif said. Units also provide clothing, shoes and school supplies for villagers.

"It would not be good for us if Americans left, especially not Kurdistan. There have been no incidents against Americans here in Kurdistan. They help teach in our schools and churches," he said.

Yousif is setting up a radio station in Baghdad to spread the message of reconciliation.

"Every nation and religion needs reconciliation. The focus is going to be about reconciliation," he said. "We are going to share stories of God's reconciling love through Christ."

Yousif believes U.S. media share too little news about Iraq, so there is support for troops to leave. He does not consider that politically, economically or militarily feasible.

"People fear civil war. Many trust the situation with the American presence," he said.

"I encourage any peace process, but even more I encourage spiritual reconciliation of different parties working to negotiate, not for their personal benefits but for humans. By recognizing the needs of different ethnic groups, we can heal," Yousif said.

"Sunnis lost everything and are full of hatred. Our response to them should not be the same. Political leaders should not answer violent incidents with violence, but should establish control and rebuild for everyone," he said.

Partners International works with local people like Yousif who know the language, people, culture and economy.

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Guatemalan partnership enhances understanding of people

Beyond connections through prayer, visits, letters and support in emergencies, the Inland Northwest Presbytery's Guatemala Task Force reminds area churches that people in the Presbyterian association of Maya K'ekchi have lessons for people in the Inland Northwest.

From 30 presbytery congregations, 82 members have joined in 11 delegations to Guatemala; several went more than once.

The Rev. Grant MacLean, pastor at Faith Presbyterian in Hayden Lake, Idaho, first went to Guatemala with a delegation in 2000 and went again in June after a mudslide in Senahú. Jim Hallam, an elder at Hamblen Park Presbyterian Church, Spokane, went in 1999, 2001 and 2003.

Both are on the task force, which was formed five years ago. Grant is chair.

When he went in June, Grant found rain in the Polochic Valley had caused mudslides that "obliterated part of a town, and killed the Presbyterian pastor, Jose Pop.

"Our delegation met and prayed with his widow and children. We brought money we collected in the Presbytery to add to \$15,000 sent by the Presbyterian Disaster Response (PDR)," Grant said.

While Hurricane Stan received press coverage, few in the United States knew of the mudslides.

After that hurricane, the presbytery sent a letter to tell area churches about the destruction. People donated through the PDR, which sent \$30,000.

The presbytery keeps informed about Guatemala through Presbyterian missionaries Roger and Gloria Marriott from Hillsboro, Tenn., who have lived three years in Quetzaltenango, an area hit by the hurricane.

Pastor Alberto Sacul, presbytery executive, said hurricane damage in the Maya K'ekchi area to the north and west was minimal.

The Inland Northwest Presbytery has a covenant relationship with the five Mayan presbyteries that make up the K'ekchi association.

Grant recently preached a sermon series on lessons from visits to K'ekchi churches, such as:

- a sense of community;
 - a sense of hospitality that extends to sharing beyond what they can afford to whatever they have;
 - a sense of spirituality of the earth from indigenous understandings of the stewardship of creation rather than exploitation of it, and
 - a sense of how to walk together rather than competing.
- Six of his 111-member congregation have gone there with

various delegations over the past five years.

"We came back different people," he said. "We realized we have an obligation that goes with the privilege of being North Americans."

He was impressed with the Guatemalan partners' hospitality.

"North Americans give what we can afford, what fits in our budget. When we visited churches and homes in Guatemala, we knew people would miss a meal because they provided lunch for us," he said.

The visits have personalized his thinking about Guatemala.

"I see faces. I know people by name. When I hear of the disasters, it's not just news. I know it's not just a simplistic matter of sending money to help with recovery after the hurricane there.

"I know of the complications. To whom do we send money? For what do we send it? What system of accountability is in place so the partnership is more than sending money so we feel good about ourselves?"

"There are real people there with strengths and weaknesses, just as there are here," said Grant, who has been involved with churches and theology in Latin America since he was in seminary 40 years ago.

Beginning with a Peace Corps experience from 1969 to 1972, doing rural community development in a neighborhood with no water in Caico in Rio Grande du Norte, Brazil, he has felt a solidarity with Latin American people.

Latin American people he has read about and studied under have shaped how he understands himself as a Christian American.

He gathered people to talk

about their needs. Water was an evident need.

So they visited the mayor and researched engineering possibilities to draw water from an uncovered irrigation ditch two miles away.

"The people were unsophisticated, not used to talking with authorities. They expected to take orders," said Grant, who grew up in Chicago and earned a bachelor's degree in psychology at Stanford in 1967.

"The mayor promised to provide water after the election. He had a project to build housing for the district army officers and bankers on the other side of the barrio and arranged to bring water from there, so he put a faucet in."

Grant came to Hayden in 1984 from Mendocino, Calif. He had worked at a family counseling center in Chicago for five years after seminary at McCormick Seminary in Chicago.

Jim, who teaches math at Spokane Falls Community College, has been on the Guatemala Task Force since his first trip there.

Involved in mission with the senior high youth group at Hamblen Park Presbyterian, he has also led five youth mission trips to Mexico and served on Hamblen Park's social concern committee during the civil war in El Salvador. He grew up in Everett, Wash., and moved to Spokane in 1971.

Jim said he carries with him questions about how to take teachings of faith seriously as he sees

people and develops relationships in Guatemala.

Jim, who speaks some Spanish, could see that the people have a basic existence with few material things. On the first visit the delegation visited homes and saw rudimentary tools outside.

"Since then I wonder about our values in the United States and why people always seem to want more," he said.

"There, where the people have

so little, we can see what is important and necessary to have in life," Jim said. "Each time I go, I look at and want to learn about values, so I am not sidetracked by devious things here.

"I know that when the people there supply us with lunch they will go without. I question if I should eat it or leave it for them, but I also know they prepared it with their hearts."

For information, call 924-4148.

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Program Schedule

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Program Faculty

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Consensus process of assembly included diverse views, experiences

Thanks to the Spokesman-Review, I was able to share reports, reflections and glimpses into the World Council of Churches' 9th Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil, on an immediate basis with a wider regional audience than The Fig Tree has.

In that role, I went to more press conferences and associated more with other members of the press than I have at previous assemblies in 1983 at Vancouver, B.C., in 1991 at Canberra, Australia, and in 1998 at Harare, Zimbabwe.

I realized in doing that how many other parts of the assembly I missed and how I could never capture the full story of the assembly—only my experience of it.

Each of more than 4,000 participants had unique experiences, going to different events, encountering different people, hearing different portions of even the same sessions and coming into the experience from different cultural, confessional and personal perspectives.

What a blessing to sit surrounded by

people from Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Australia, the Pacific, the Middle East, Europe and North America.

What a blessing to be among people from the younger to the older Christian traditions, dropping bitterness from historical splits—and to have consensus on issues of faith and life.

At previous assemblies, some segments of the Christian community were there protesting, questioning the concept of unity and questioning syncretism in a gathering of so many diverse viewpoints.

Now many more Christians are at the table in a wider ecumenical forum, striving towards the unity Jesus wanted—with respect for the richness diversity brings.

It's important that more people be aware of the global—as well as the local—cooperation among churches and religions.

In the context of respect for diversity, I was impressed at the care with which statements were developed and improved

in the context of the assembly.

The daily schedule for delegates began and ended with worship that set the spiritual framework through song, prayer, scripture and reflections. Next came Bible studies related to the spiritual base, the life and witness of the church.

Not only were discussions with people from around the world, but the study guide was prepared by people from different parts of the world.

Ten plenary sessions offered an overview of the WCC's work and concerns raised in statements—economic justice, Christian identity and religious plurality, overcoming violence, Latin America, church unity and the assembly theme, "God, in your grace, transform the world."

In addition, there were ecumenical conversations, workshops and displays; meetings of committees, confessions, regions and small groups; informal discussions at mealtimes, on the bus, walking to worship or with roommates

at the hotel. There were countless opportunities to exchange ideas and share stories of personal experiences, church life and public issues.

Statements and decisions emerging from the assembly had more input than the words on the floor of the plenaries.

I wondered how effective consensus decision-making would be in contrast to the parliamentary process of win-lose, majority votes. Consensus was adopted to meet concerns raised by Orthodox members at the Harare assembly.

Some feared consensus would mean watered-down, less prophetic statements.

In fact, the consensus process included more comments and perspectives. It reflected ecumenical dialogue and respect of diverse input the assembly represented. It was refreshing to see so many innuendos and views respected and incorporated—rather than excluded by yes-no votes. Careful leadership made it possible.

Mary Stamp, editor

If God loves each of us, who are we to decide who is not okay?

As we continue to learn of incidents of domestic violence, it seems that what we know is only the tip of the iceberg.

Domestic violence is a reprehensible blotch on family, societal and national life and on the character of our world.

Despite the attention it rightly has, violence in families is only the tip of another iceberg, a basic psychological one.

While reading recently some statistics on domestic violence, I thought of prevalent forms of violence: against children, women, perceived religious and political enemies, gays and enemies in warfare—the gamut from the personal family to the global family.

Reflecting on why people do such things, I recalled the words "I'm OK, You're OK," the title of a book by Thomas Harris, a psychologist advocate of non-directive counseling nearly 40 years ago.

The work deals with four basic attitudes

influencing human behavior: I'm OK-you're OK; I'm OK, you're not OK; you're OK, I'm not OK, and I'm not OK, you're not OK.

If I think I'm OK but you aren't, it doesn't matter how I treat you. I can rough you up or beat you. I can ignore you, I can swindle and cheat you, lie to you, suppress you in any way I find useful to me, neglect your needs or refuse to help you.

That attitude may give oppressors a sense of power and a false self-esteem. However, conflict among persons, agencies, nations, other groups or individuals, in which each side operates on that principle begets more violence. Families feud for generations. Men shoot women's boyfriends, and women kill ex-husbands. Nations go to war. Genocide is committed.

So, who are society's not-okays?

Children who for lack of advantage and the concern of others are reared in poverty

and without health care?

The mentally ill and disabled persons unable to secure proper medical help?

Industrial workers unprotected by enforcement of safety measures?

Struggling small businesses or farmers crushed by the biggies?

Workers who can't earn a living wage even with more than one job?

Seniors trying to make ends meet on limited income and befuddled by new prescription drug plans?

Environmentalists who try to preserve a healthy earth?

People deprived of jobs or housing because of religion, race, gender or sexual orientation?

Women and children sold into slavery for sex and profit?

If these are the not-OKs, who, then are the OKs?

It's interesting that Christians and

other people of good faith can forget the golden rule about treating others in ways we want to be treated. Are we unmindful of the words and actions of Christ, which proved over and over his love and care for everyone—to the point of giving his life for all?

He even found tax collectors, prostitutes and other undesirables okay enough to hob-nob with.

God has shown throughout time that all of us are okay, okay to be loved as far as God is concerned.

When will we arrive at the same conclusion and beget, instead of conflict and violence, the harmony the world hungers for?

If we believe that God loves each of us and wants all to thrive, who are we to decide who is *not okay*?

Bernadine Casey, SNJM
Associate editor

Letter to the Editor

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

Virtually every religion recognizes the value of prayer, meditation, fasting, stewardship, devotional reading and corporate worship. All require discipline. Their alluring replacements place no demand on our time, our pocketbook or our effort.

That being said, one must confess also a natural religious impulse to which we are all subject. I believe that both are given by a God who is generous in self-revelation because we need both. Why, in grace should it be either the church or the mountaintop when it can and should be both? Discipline and delight are each a gift of God. Receive the gifts God gives, for "God gives us all things, lavishly, to enjoy."

The Rev. Dan Berg
Open Door UCC, Deer Park

It is in the common things of simple, ordinary decisions that faith interacts with life. The values and morals that we talk about in worship and Bible study all of a sudden come into play with how we answer the person on the phone, how we treat a customer, how we address a financial issue.

It was in the middle of ordinary life when an angel interrupted Mary's life; it was in the middle of the ordinary when Jesus called four fishermen to leave their nets and follow. A young boy named David was tending sheep when he was called to the house, and Samuel anointed him king of Israel—just like that.

Most of the time it is not as dramatic or exciting, but it is in the humdrum routines of life that God interrupts, or we are re-

minded of applying our faith.

Every day is an opportunity to take our faith and apply it to daily life. The ordinary is no longer ordinary, but holy.

The Rev. David Helseth
Englewood Christian, Yakima

The church needs to understand the issues in domestic violence and be prepared to deal with them whenever called upon. Abusers need to be confronted, victims need safety, and victims need to be empowered.

The task of the church is to create a vision of hope for families in domestic violence. God calls husbands and wives to live together in a covenant relationship that is healthy and supportive and practices shared power.

The Rev. George Abrams
Cheney United Methodist

God is found in the holy ordinary happenings of life. In the daily grind or grace, whichever it might be for you, and wherever it takes you. So often it seems we miss the Divine in our days. Not because God is hiding, but because, I suspect, we are frantically looking for something we don't quite recognize.

There's so much going on—in our minds, our hearts, our lives—it's hard to get the noise outside to quiet down long enough to hear something within the deep silence of our souls.

Life is all about meeting God again for the first time, over and over again. The

only way I know for that to happen is to recognize the God Presence in those people who touch our lives.

The Rev. Tammy Bell
First Congregational UCC, Colville

Having the ability to give is a gift. It is a reality I believe is meant for everyone to undertake with the utmost humility.

A real gift comes from the essence of who we are. It takes a piece out of our heart, our time and our lives; that is, we notice something missing when we give it away. However, a gift given in this manner is sacred and holy and often most remembered—a special card, being with someone at their bedside, holding the chalice for someone at communion, giving a portion of one's income to a homeless shelter or serving a dinner at a local soup kitchen.

The Rev. Anne Barton
St. Paul Episcopal, Kennewick

For the busy, preoccupied disciple, the central question about prayer can become whether or not God is listening to us or, in our darkest moments of doubt, whether God answers prayer at all. If our heart-to-heart relationship with God is not sufficiently profound and mature, we will tend to treat God as a great vendor of graces and mini-miracles, which we demand at the drop of our prayer-coins.

For anyone who honestly attempts to learn from Jesus and follow in his way of service, there is certainly more than enough to pray about! Every hour of the day could

be filled with prayers for those we have met and their needs.

What concerns Jesus is that his disciples see and experience all things as embraced by the loving and saving presence of God. Turning our minds and hearts to God in prayer keeps all that we do in perspective, whether it be saving nations at world summits or doing the dishes. God's love carries it all and gives it all meaning. Our humble and constant prayer must be that our comparatively small efforts truly are one with the mind and heart of the One whom we seek to serve.

The Rev. Michael Savelesky
The Inland Register

We can't live with hatred, anger or hostility inside us. It drives us away from our loved ones and destroys our relationship with those who are most deeply committed to us.

If we are able to turn loose of resentment or regret, then we become freer in our hearts and spirits. Forgiveness heals the soul of the victim. Sometimes it may transform the soul of the perpetrator.

To release our resentments, to give them over to God, doesn't always mean that the tear in the fabric of the interpersonal relationship has been mended. That requires a more proactive effort, grace translated into action. God has come to us, with grace translated into action, through Jesus Christ.

The Rev. John Thomas Bristow
Country Homes Christian

Author speaks on reconnecting with nature

Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, will speak at 7:30 p.m.,

Thursday, March 23, at Mirabeau Park Hotel, Sullivan and Mission in Spokane Valley.

He is speaking for the Environmental Education Association of Washington's annual conference, "Reconnect with Nature: Restore, Renew & Reignite," March 23 to 25. The conference includes presentations, panel discussions and field trips to "reconnect with nature."

In a quote from his book, Richard says, "Healing the broken bond between our young and

nature is in our self-interest, not only because aesthetics or justice demands it, but also because our mental, physical, and spiritual health depend upon it."

As a futurist and journalist, he focuses on family, nature and community. The author of seven books, his most recent, *Last Child in the Woods*, has received praise from nature organizations and the world media.

For information, visit www.thefuturesedge.com and www.eeaw.org or call 340-1028.

Dream quest set

"Women's Dream Quest," an overnight experience of small and large group activities on March 10 to 11, will include singing, healing, art, dancing and labyrinth walking. The event is hosted by St. John's Episcopal Cathedral and runs from 7 p.m. on Friday to 11 a.m. Saturday morning.

Judith Tripp from San Francisco will facilitate the event.

For information, call 838-4277.

16 groups plan Women's Day

Spokane's celebration of International Women's Day will be held at 4 p.m., Wednesday, March 8, at the Spokane Women's Club, 9th and Walnut.

The focus is on "Women in Decision-Making: Meeting Challenges, Creating Change."

Sixteen local organizations are collaborating to organize the event.

For information, call 455-3952.

Forgiveness is topic of events

Radical Forgiveness is the topic of a lecture and workshop by Colin Tipping, author, minister and speaker, to be presented Friday and Saturday, March 10 and 11, at Unity Church, 2900 S. Bernard.

The Friday lecture at 7 p.m. is on "Empowerment through Radical Forgiveness."

The Saturday workshop, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., will include learning techniques of radical forgiveness that enable living a full life, according to Clare Austen, Unity minister.

"Colin Tipping has a following in this area, and we are excited that he is bringing his empowering message here," she added.

For information, call 838-6518.

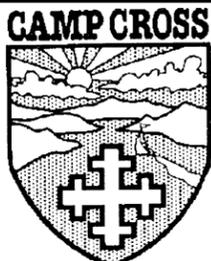
Calendar of Events

- Mar 1**
 - "Philosophical Implications for Creation and Design Arising out of Contemporary Big Bang Cosmology," Barbieri Courtroom, Gonzaga School of Law, 7 p.m.
 - Festival of Shalom, Christian stewardship of the earth, HUB, Whitworth, 7 p.m.
- Mar 2**
 - Bethany Hoang, "Aiding Abused and Oppressed People," Weyerhaeuser Robinson Theatre, Whitworth, 7 p.m.
- Mar 4**
 - El Otro Norte: Raza, Race and Resistance in the Pacific Northwest, NACCS Pacific Northwest Regional Conference and the National Northwest Research Symposium, Smith/CUE Bldg, WSU, Pullman, 8:45 a.m.
 - Citizens for a Living Wage, 35 W. Main, 2 p.m.
 - Door of Hope benefit concert for Truth Ministries, 714 S. Pines, Spokane Valley, 7 p.m.
- Mar 3-5**
 - Holy Imagination Retreat with Matthew Fox and John Kilikevice, N-Sid-Sen - call (208) 687-5255
- Mar 8**
 - Fig Tree benefit breakfast, Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga, 7:15 a.m.
- Mar 9**
 - "Creating Advantage out of Adversity, Edith Eger, Spokane City Forum, First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 11:45 a.m.
- Mar 10-11**
 - Women's Dream Quest, St. John's Cathedral, 7 p.m. to 11 a.m. the next morning
 - Colin Tipping, Radical Forgiveness, Unity Church, 7 p.m., 9 a.m.
- Mar 11-19**
 - Novena of Grace, St. Aloysius Catholic Church, 330 E. Boone, 12:15, 3:30 and 5:15 p.m., 12:30 p.m., Sundays
- Mar 12**
 - Kosher Dinner, Temple Beth Shalom, S. Perry and 30th, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Mar 13**
 - Interfaith Council Benefit Concert, The Met, 8 p.m.
- Mar 17**
 - Justice through Poetry, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 1620 North Monroe, 8 p.m.
- Mar 17-19**
 - Praying with Prophets, Monastery of St. Gertrude - (208) 962-3224
- Mar 18**
 - Native American Friendship Dance, Northern Quest Casino, Airway Heights, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Mar 19**
 - Holy Names Music Center students' recital, 3 p.m., McNalley Recital Hall, 3910 W. Custer Dr.
 - Memorial Service for Victims of Genocide in Darfur, Country Homes Christian, 8415 N. Wall, 3 p.m.
- Mar 22**
 - "Loose Change: A 9/11 Documentary," WSU, 6:30 p.m.
 - "Weaving Our Sisters' Voices," drama, West Central Community Center, 1603 North Belt, 7 p.m.
- Mar 23-24**
 - Reconciliation, Rev. D.L. Wm. Countryman, All Saints Episcopal Church, Richland, 7 p.m.; Friday, St. John's Cathedral, Spokane, 7 p.m.
- Mar 23-25**
 - Richard Louv, Environmental Education Association Annual Conference, Mirabeau Park Hotel, 7:30 p.m.
- Mar 24**
 - "Weaving Our Sisters' Voices," drama, Spokane Valley Community Center, 10814 East Broadway, 7 p.m.
- Mar 25**
 - "Living on the Borders of the Holy," workshop, St. John's Cathedral, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Mar 28**
 - Institute for Action Against Hate film, "Shake Hands with the Devil: The Journey of Romeo Dalairé," Gonzaga School of Law's Barbieri Courtroom, 6:30 p.m.
- Mar 31-Apr 2**
 - "A Gift of Forgiveness," Monastery of St. Gertrude - (208) 922-3224
- Apr 5**
 - Fig Tree distribution, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m.
- Apr 6**
 - Fig Tree Board, Manito United Methodist, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.
- Tues-Sat**
 - Habitat-Spokane work days - call 534-2552
- Fridays**
 - Colville Peace Vigil - call 675-4554
- 1st Sat**
 - Ministers' Fellowship Union - call 624-0522
- Sundays**
 - Taizé service, Community Congregational, 525 NE Campus, Pullman, 7 p.m. (in March on the 5th and 26th)
- 2nd,4th Weds**
 - Pax Christi, St. Joseph's Catholic, 1503 W. Dean, noon

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Common household agents enrich soil to produce healthy food

Continued on page 12

she said. "I hope we will make decisions that have a gentle impact on the global environment and exhibit consideration for all."

So she encourages choices that reflect stewardship of the environment and mutual well-being through recycling, reusing, renewing, restoring and using only nontoxic responses.

Gloria believes that education is the first step in changing from "exposing ourselves, our children and our pets to toxic substances in our everyday lives" to adopting "a more thoughtful way of living."

"Allowing nature to work by encouraging beneficial insects, building healthy soil with compost and organic nutrients, plus using earth- and people-friendly products inside and outside our homes, we come to realize that there is no need to use toxic substances," she said.

"Just following directions in use of synthetic chemicals does not necessarily make them safe," she said.

"If we spray chemicals on the yard, we track them into the house, the school or office, where they can remain, in some cases up to two or more years in the carpet and on toys.

"It's an invisible invasion everywhere," she said.

Her love of stewardship grew from her love of gardening, learned from her great-grandmother, who had a formal rose garden using white marble mulch.

Born in Virginia, Gloria grew up in Ohio, West Virginia and Virginia. Her husband, Jim, grew up in southern Ohio, she said, telling of their pilgrimage to the Northwest. They met and married while both were music majors at Marshall University in Huntington, W. Va.

After Jim chose to enter ministry, he served parishes for 21 years in West Virginia. Gloria worked at home rearing their two sons. In 2000, Jim was elected the eighth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane.

Gloria began gardening while their two sons were small, at a time when there was little information about chemicals people were using.

With small children, she questioned using chemicals inside or outside her home. Early on, a friend showed her how to make compost and build soil, starting her 30-year pursuit of organic gardening and living.

"We have been given a great gift in the form of this planet, the earth," she said. "With that comes a responsibility to care for it. There is no off-site dumping ground. The earth is a self-con-



Gloria Waggoner introduces products in Rosa Gallica.

tained entity, and we need to be thoughtful in how we use its resources."

Gloria described some of the earth stewardship efforts at the cathedral and in the diocese.

In October, she led a discussion on "Stewardship of the Environment" at the cathedral, looking at what it means in people's lives and practice.

"We have done an inventory of our practices to see how we can better promote stewardship," Gloria said.

"The cathedral is expanding its recycling and has stopped using styrofoam cups and plates," she said. "Styrofoam is toxic in its production, use and disposal, so we are now using cups, saucers, dishes and mugs," she said.

Gloria offered information about how churches can become more "green" at a booth at the Annual Diocesan Convention in October.

In the spring, she plans to work with an intergenerational group at St. John's Cathedral to put in an organic vegetable, herb and flower garden in a field on cathedral property near Paulsen House. She and other members will teach composting and organic gardening. An Environmental Fair is planned for spring.

Gloria will also teach about letting beneficial insects live so they can do their jobs, rather than killing all insects with pesticides.

For example, she said that even a dish-detergent-and-vegetable-oil

mixture that deters aphids on roses affects helpful insects—ladybugs, lacewings and praying mantis. She recommends spraying aphids off with water, allowing the beneficial insects to do their job.

As she develops programs at the cathedral, she shares them around the diocese. She knows some churches have begun or are continuing earth stewardship programs.

Gloria's resources offer suggestions for chemical alternatives:

- A 5 percent solution of apple cider vinegar kills weeds. If sprayed, she advises taking care not to hit surrounding plants.
- Growing integrated lawns of clover, violets and grass suited to the area is a good conservation practice. Clover and violets provide critical early spring food for pollinators and give an early flush of color.
- An early spring application of corn gluten—a natural by-product of corn processing—provides a safe pre-emergent weed-and-feed for lawns. In the fall, a second

application of corn gluten or an all-over light application of compost will build healthy soil, which supports a healthy, safe lawn.

Unlike synthetic chemical weed-and-feed products that destroy the living part of the soil, she said, corn gluten is safe and builds the soil. It is available at several local feed stores.

Healthy soil is key to fewer problems in gardens and lawns, she said, listing some other options:

- Healthy soil promotes healthy grass and plants, which, in turn, wards off diseases and pests. Pests bypass them and go to sick ones.
- Alfalfa pellets are another natural feed for gardens and lawns if correctly applied.
- Fine bark mulch breaks into compost and is a natural way to conserve moisture and discourage weeds.
- Planting compatible plants by each other draws pollinators.
- Organically grown dandelions are another early spring food for pollinators, and their early greens can be cooked. For those wishing to kill them, she suggests digging them out, using a "carefully directed squirt" of vinegar or a specially designed garden flame thrower for eliminating weeds between sidewalk cracks.
- For house cleaning, she recommends vinegar, baking soda, lemon juice or ecologically safe products found in grocery stores.
- Orange-oil-based cleaners discourage insects and have some

antiseptic properties.

• Beeswax and olive oil make bases for furniture polishes.

Gloria finds people responsive and interested.

"We are turning a corner. More ecological, safe and organic products are available. An internet search on organic gardening brings much information," she said.

"Information is the key word," she continued. "We need to know there are resources that are easier and safer to use. Even so-called 'organic pesticides and herbicides' need to be carefully researched, because they are not all safe or organic."

Gloria cooks with organic herbs from the Paulsen House herb, rose and perennial garden. She also grows beans, peas, lettuce and tomatoes. She harvests rose petals, herbs and perennial flowers for potpourri.

"We should be concerned about pesticides on and in the food we eat, not only in produce but also in meat," she said, mentioning some local grocers and farmers' markets as sources for organic foods.

Another offshoot of her interest in organics and natural products is Rosa Gallica, a lifestyle boutique she has opened in a basement room of Paulsen House.

Rosa Gallica, the name of her favorite rose bush, offers recycled products, fair-trade items such as organic chocolate, specialty items, handicrafts and organic coffee.

For information, call 624-3191 email gloriaw@spokanediocese.org.

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