

38TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Stories inside

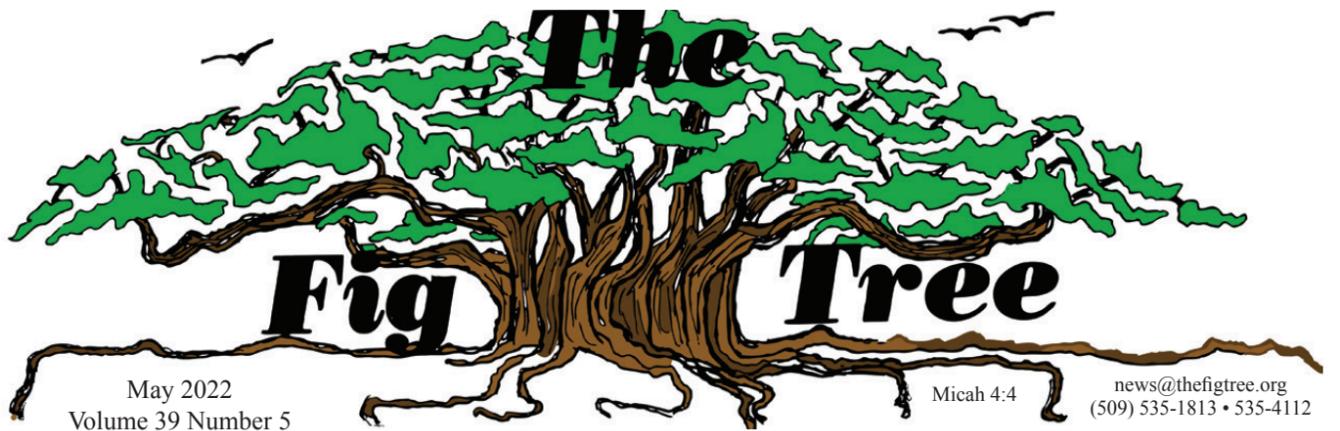
Former Spokane pastor leads virtual visits to Guatemala - p. 5

Professor challenges 'militant masculinity' - p. 9

Quilters donate 4,670 quilts - p. 10

Parishioners' border visit is life-changing - p. 13

CALENDAR ON PAGE 15 FEATURES 60 EVENTS



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

# Diversity is key on and off campus

By Mary Stamp

As chief diversity officer (CDO) in charge of Gonzaga University's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Robin Kelley believes that an atmosphere of diversity, equity and inclusion is important for faculty, staff and students to experience not only on campus but also in the community.

So community members are invited to campus programs, such as events of the Center for Hate Studies, and Robin meets with people in the community, NAACP Spokane and area tribes.

"I want both the campus and community to be welcoming," said Robin.

"Gonzaga is less diverse, so that requires more relationship building to be influential and collaboration to create buy-in," she commented.

Robin's job is to promote diversity as part of what the university community is and part of its commitment to social justice and service.

Gonzaga was already committed to improving its diversity, equity and inclusion environment before Robin came in July 2020 as associate chief diversity



Robin Kelley guides Gonzaga's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.

officer. She has worked with Raymond Reyes, who was associate vice president and chief diversity officer for 22 of his 33 years at Gonzaga.

Robin became CDO in April 2021. Raymond is now associate vice president for cultural initiatives, so they continue to collaborate.

Her responsibilities span the departments as she helps the university include diversity, equity and inclusion in its strategic plan.

She developed and now works with Gonzaga's Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which advises the president, provosts, academic deans, student affairs and the Gonzaga Council.

To increase and retain diversity among students, faculty and staff, Robin said, it's important to recognize that racism occurs both on campus and in the community—such as the desecration of a Black Lives Matter exhibit, racist stickers on campus, Zoom bombing of a Black Student Union meeting and nationwide incidents toward Asians, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

In announcing her appointment, GU President Thane McCulloh

*Continued on page 4*

## Spokane's Yom Hashoah Committee announces winners of art contest

For the 2022 Yom Hashoah art and essay contests, middle and high school students prepared entries on the theme, "Why Holocaust Education?"

In April, the Committee for the Spokane Community Observance of the Holocaust chose the art contest winners. Their pieces will be on display during May in the Liberty Park Public Library at 402 S. Pittsburg.

Students were asked to read history, view videos and gather survivors' stories to learn about the Holocaust from 1933 to 1945, when Adolf Hitler and the

Nazi Party cultivated fear and hatred of "non-Aryans" to rally the German people to war.

The goal of Nazis was to rid the world of people they considered inferior or a threat—Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, Communists, homosexuals, people with disabilities and particularly Jews. They exterminated 11 million people, including 6 million Jews—two-thirds of Europe's and one-third of the world's Jewish population, said the contest prompt.

Study of the Holocaust provides an opportunity to learn

how hatred and intolerance can progress to genocide. The contest raised awareness in area schools.

Along with their art pieces, students wrote comments on lessons they learned about the Holocaust.

First place winners were Najahna Smith, senior at On Track Academy, and Hayden Brewer, seventh grader at the Virtual Academy.

Second place winners were Anna Francesca Quintero-Casteneda, sophomore at University High School, and Teagan Schroeder, eighth grader at Salk Middle School.

Third place winners were Ethan Smith, senior at University High School, and Zariya Alexander, eighth grader at Salk Middle School.

Honorable mention awards went to Garrett Collins and Yaretzy Juarez-Rodriguez, eighth graders at Salk Middle School; Fauge Bedow and Stephanie Thornton, juniors at East Valley High School, and

*Continued on page 6*

## House of Charities relocates, plans to build new 24/7 shelter

Catholic Charities has proposed to the City of Spokane and Spokane County a way to help address homelessness for single adults called House of Charity 2.0 (HOC 2.0). It relocates House of Charity and builds a new state-of-the-art facility for a larger low-barrier shelter outside the downtown core.

It would expand 24/7 shelter services to men and women and support vulnerable people in a facility on a site already secured outside downtown.

**The idea is to create** a new comprehensive homeless shelter solution in a new location, not related to the city's proposed shelter on Trent Ave.

The HOC 2.0 project has been in discussion with the City of Spokane since November 2021.

**The project continues** Catholic Charities' principles of more than 50 years: "Every person is made in the image and likeness of God and demands basic dignity, respect and compassion. Anyone experiencing homelessness should be able to eat, sleep and go to the bathroom indoors in a safe, welcoming space. The space should include behavioral health services people need to stabilize their lives and so they can be placed on a path to permanent supportive housing," said Sarah Yerden, director of marketing and communication.

**HOC 2.0 will offer models** for people to move on the stability continuum and will have a potential capacity up to 250 to 300 people, depending on the identified community need and architectural design.

While HOC 2.0 will be low-barrier, clients ready to move forward will have access to other services, including mental health counseling and care, substance abuse counseling, medical respite, permanent housing services, vocational training,

*Continued on page 8*

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## Religion News Briefs

### Around the World

World Council of Churches News, PO Box 2100  
 CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111  
 Fax: +41-22 788 7244 www.oikoumene.org

#### Orthodox theologian praises human rights witness

Orthodox theologian and human rights lawyer Natallia Vasilevich prefers to speak of the role of Christians rather than the role of churches in Belarusian society because, in the current context, institutional churches often fail to stand up for human rights, while individual Christians at the grassroots are bringing a prophetic voice with seeds of hope.

“Many Christians are more motivated, taking the consequences when they join the democratic movement for fair elections, human rights, justice and peace,” said Natallia, moderator of the ecumenical group Christian Vision, which unites Belarusian theologians, clerics and active laity of Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Anglican and Evangelical churches that promote human dignity and rights, rule of law, justice, peace and Christian witness in social and political life.

Given the high oppression by the Belarusian government, even small voices make a big impact, she said, adding: “People can go to prison just for saying a few words, so Christians in the human rights movement in Belarus bear a lot of burden and are ready to sacrifice.”

“They may not be visible as Christians, but it’s important to give them this vocality because the small signs should be promoted,” Natallia said, telling of some recent actions. An Orthodox priest from Minsk stood with flowers at a railway station a day after the war started and was imprisoned for 13 days. Another priest was imprisoned for posting profile pictures on Facebook with the Ukrainian flag. Another, who had a sticker on his car that read “Forgive us, Ukraine,” was imprisoned.

“In this shrunken public space, it’s difficult for churches to witness,” said Natallia. “Orthodox women, mothers came together to pray to the Mother of God at a Minsk icon in the Orthodox cathedral. While entering, they were filmed. After the service, four were taken to the police station and asked why they were praying to the Mother of God against the war.

Even if the message of institutional churches is unable to be strong, the message of individual Christians is shining, she said, showing Christians have a moral motivation inspired by the gospel. “They do not fear. They try to be messengers of justice and peace in Belarusian society,” she said. Too often, she sees religious leaders, trying to suppress priests and parishioners who protest. Some are allied with the oppressive government, manipulating religion to silence the prophetic voice.

Who needs the solidarity of the world? “Christians do. At grassroots levels, they find their voice to speak as the voice of the churches and the voice of the gospel in the society,” said Natallia, who believes these Christians can make a change, not only for society but also for the churches, so they renew their commitment, mission and responsibility for justice and peace in a political crisis and in the whole world.”

Therein lies the hope, she said: “Small signs of hope, but hope is a seed which grows. It starts to grow and bear fruits,” she said. “I hope that this will help us in this crisis because Belarusian society shares responsibility for the invasion because much military activity comes from our land.”

Many Christians in Belarus now are not focused on their own problems but on doing their best for Ukraine, she added.

## REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

### Fig Tree builds support for new directory

As The Fig Tree appeals for the last \$7,696 to meet its Spring Benefits goal, it faced increased costs for publishing the annual, comprehensive Resource Directory for 2022-23.

As a result, they chose to work with TPC Holdings in Lewiston, which prints the newspaper, even though pages will be three-eighths of an inch shorter, requiring adjustments to some ad sizes. However, all pages will be color.

“We will do saddle-stitch binding—using staples. It’s

much less expensive than perfect binding,” said Mary Stamp, The Fig Tree editor.

“We appreciate the flexibility of TPC Holdings to accept working on this project so near our deadline. We are pleased because of our ongoing relationship with TPC Holdings,” said Mary.

Malcolm Haworth, directory editor, is working to cut and consolidate listings to save space and prepare a more concise, user friendly directory.

“We expected costs would be

up for the printing and paper, so we are increasing advertising and seeking more individuals and agencies to be community partners,” he said. “We have \$36,000 of our \$48,000 ad goal and \$10,000 of \$20,000 from community partners confirmed.”

He urges people to send listings and ad copy as early as possible before May 31, so he can complete pages and send them to the printer in June.

For information, call 535-4112 or email mary@thefigtree.org.

### Center for Hate Studies receiving nominees

The Gonzaga University Center for the Study of Hate is accepting nominations for the Eva Lassman “Take Action Against Hate” (TAAH) Awards through July 31.

Anyone may nominate an individual or organization countering hatred in the local, national or global community by addressing racism, religious bigotry, sexism or hatred toward the LGBTQ community.

Nomination forms are at gonzaga.edu/academics/centers-institutes/institute-for-hate-studies under Eva Lassman Awards.

For more than 10 years, in honor of the life and memory of Spokane Holocaust survivor and educator Eva Lassman, the Gonzaga Institute for Hate Studies, now called the Center for the Study of Hate, has presented the two annual awards.

Winners of the 2022 TAAH

awards will be recognized at a ceremony in Spokane, on Saturday, Nov. 5.

Criteria for the award are demonstrating a commitment to both action and awareness, and the outcomes and impact of the individual’s or organization’s work, said Rachele Strawther, chair of the Eva Lassman TAAH Award Committee.

For information, email strawther@gonzaga.edu.

### Second Harvest restarts The Kitchen

For one in eight people, putting a meal on the table can be a challenge, and a nutritious meal is even more of a challenge, said Melissa Johnson, a nutrition educator on staff at Second Harvest.

“Second Harvest doesn’t just feed people. We work to feed them well,” she said. “This means providing as many fresh, whole foods as possible. It also means teaching them how to cook with ingredients and shar-

ing simple recipes so they can take their nutritional health into their own hands.”

After a pause in the pandemic, Second Harvest’s Kitchen reopened on-site cooking classes to teach healthy eating, she said.

Its “nutrition ambassadors” donate time to help with cooking classes. They also prepare and hand out nutritious food samples and recipes at Mobile Markets.

“With community support,

Second Harvest makes nutrition part of the solution to hunger in our community,” said Melissa, reflecting how food is a shared experience that connects people and how nutrition education gives families in need access to nutritious meals.

Melissa said people like new recipes and trying cuisine from different cultures.

For information, call 534-6678 or visit 2-harvest.org.

### World Relief expects no more Afghans

World Relief Spokane has received all scheduled arrivals from the U.S. Afghan Placement and Assistance Program from the crisis in Afghanistan that began in September 2021. No more Afghan arrivals are scheduled.

“We are aware the crisis in Afghanistan is not over, and there is still need for aid and assistance,”

said Justin Li, communications coordinator. “If more refugees arrive from Afghanistan, we are ready to serve them.”

As for Ukraine, there are still many unknowns, he said.

Other World Relief offices have received Ukrainian refugees, but World Relief Spokane has not received any yet.

Ukrainians living in Spokane can apply via the Lautenberg program to bring family members, Justin explained. This is not a refugee program and is limited to certain religious minorities that faced persecution under the Soviet Union.

For information, email jli@wr.org.

### PJALS announces 2022 benefit speaker

The virtual Annual Benefit for the Peace and Justice Action

League of Spokane (PJALS) begins at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 25, on Zoom.

“Solidarity: Building a Just Future for All of Us” is the theme. Presentations will share how PJALS involves people in peace and justice action to expose and transform systems of hate, violence, exclusion and oppression to build a just future.

Keynote speaker Alfredo Carlos, interim director of Chicano Studies at Eastern Washington University and founder and director of the Foundation for Economic Democracy, will discuss community, democratic ownership of businesses, land and housing.

For information, call 838-7870 or visit pjals.org.

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**Transitions helps single mothers improve lives**

As part of a statewide GiveBIG fundraising campaign that began April 19 and ends in a giving event May 3 to 4, Transitions will match \$15,000 in gifts from Providence and an anonymous donor for its programs like Transitional Living Center?

In 2021, the center served 23 moms with 51 children, women like Miesha, a single mother of two who sought to overcome her challenges and abuse in her background. She was ready to move forward with her life.

At the Transitional Living Center, a temporary housing facility for mothers with children, staff help mothers overcome barriers and achieve their goals in job search, children's educations, permanent housing, food access and other services.

With support, Miesha found permanent housing after 13 months. Now, her family has a stable place to live, and she is studying to be a dental assistant with Transitions financial aid.

For information, call 994-9580 or visit [help4women.org](http://help4women.org).

**Women Helping Women Fund marks 30th year**

Women Helping Women Fund is hosting their 30th anniversary celebration from 3 to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, with an "Iconic Night" at the Fox, 1001 W. Sprague Ave.

*Notorious RBJ* authors Irin Carmon, a journalist with New York magazine and CNN, and Shana Knizhnik, a lawyer and author from Philadelphia, will speak on their book on Ruth Bader Ginsberg's life from becoming a lawyer to serving on the U.S. Supreme Court from 1993 to 2020.

The event includes discussion of issues affecting women and children in Spokane, information on organizations and a performance of Spokane Symphony musicians.

For information, call 328-8285 or visit [whwspokane.org/an-iconic-night](http://whwspokane.org/an-iconic-night).

**United Way co-sponsors learning event**

As part of its Excelerate Success program, United Way, along with Better Health Together, Providence and Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund, offer an annual community learning session and virtual conversation at noon, Wednesday, May 18, with Resmaa Menakem, author of *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*.

Resmaa, a healer, coach, therapist and social worker, founded the Cultural Somatics Institute to help people heal from racialized trauma. His new book, *The Quaking of America*, surveys the deteriorating political climate.

For information, call 952-0936 or email [andreym@unit-edwayspokane.org](mailto:andreym@unit-edwayspokane.org).

**'The River as Muse' features Northwest artist**

Northwest artist LR Montgomery will have his oil paintings featured at a First Friday Art Walk event, "The River as Muse," an evening of friends, food and art celebrating Spokane Riverkeeper from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 6, in the Community Building Lobby at 35 W. Main Ave.

LR's work shows his affection for the Spokane River, tributaries and shoreline and is available to view and purchase.

"The river is a creative force that keeps me coming back to paint its beauty and magic," he said.

"Spokane Riverkeeper believes his art provides a direct connection to magnificence of the Spokane River," said Spokane Riverkeeper Jerry White, adding that advocates will talk on efforts to protect the river's ecological health.

For information, call 389-3155 or email [katie@spokanriverkeeper.org](mailto:katie@spokanriverkeeper.org).

**Film, speakers discuss returning salmon**

"Returning Salmon to the Spokane River Basin: Welcome Home!" is the title of a short film to be presented at the Magic Lantern Theater at 6 p.m. on Thursday, May 12.

Spokane and Coeur d'Alene Tribal biologists and Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) leaders will respond to questions about bringing salmon home.

Salmon once ran along the Spokane River and tributaries like Hangman Creek to spawn and restart the life cycle. Dams and other environmental impacts block their natural path, which affects the indigenous communities that have relied on salmon and aquatic ecology to sustain them.

With the help of leaders in five UCUT tribes, plus the Spokane and Coeur d'Alene Tribes, salmon might be able to return and recover, said Spokane Riverkeeper Jerry White.

For information, visit [spokanriverkeeper.org](http://spokanriverkeeper.org).

**APIC Spokane plans events during May**

"Amplify and Diversify" is the theme for APIC Spokane's Asian/Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (A/AA&NH/PI) Heritage Month activities in May in Spokane.

APIC Spokane is organizing a graduation celebration, workshops, film screenings and art events from May 1 to 27.

APIC Spokane and Pacific Islander Community Association of Washington will host an Asian, Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Student Graduation for college, university and high school students from 6 to 8 p.m., Sunday, May 1, at the Hemmingson Ballroom at Gonzaga.

The Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) and APIC will hold a meeting on "Asian Americans 101: Com-

plexity and Diversity" with Pui-Yan Lam and Ryann Louie speaking at 6 p.m., Wednesday, May 11, at Niche Coworking at 25 W Main Ave.

A panel on "Uncovering the Umbrella Term: AAPI" begins at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 4, on Zoom at [bit.ly/UncoveringAAPI](http://bit.ly/UncoveringAAPI)

A "Hidden in Plain Sight: A Visual Anthology on the Complexities of Asian Identities" exhibit with photos from Margaret Albaugh's "Indivisible" and Frances Grace Mortel's multimedia installation, "Diaspora Recipes," will be on display from 9 a.m., Monday, May 2, to 4 p.m., Friday, May 27, at Terrain Gallery, 628 N. Monroe. There is a satellite program at the Eastern Washington University Women's and Gender Education (WAGE) Center in Monroe 207 in Cheney.

An opening reception for the exhibit is from 5:30 to 9 p.m., Friday, May 6, and a closing reception from 5 to 8 p.m., Friday, May 27, both at Terrain Gallery.

At noon, Monday, May 16, there will be a screening of "Diaspora Recipes" and panel discussion at the EWU WAGE Center.

At 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 18, there is a program on "Asian Americans 101: The Complexity and Diversity of Asian American Experiences" at the Spokane Valley Library.

A presentation on "Asian College Connections on Asian American Achievements, Familial Pressure and the Model Minority Myth" will be held at 6 p.m., Thursday, May 19, online.

For information, call 339-4861 or visit [apicspokane.org/heritagemonth2022](http://apicspokane.org/heritagemonth2022).

**Institute renamed, but mission is same**

Gonzaga University (GU), which formalized the interdisciplinary field of hate studies in 1997, marks its 25th year by announcing a new name: the Gonzaga Center for the Study of Hate.

The name change is part of structural changes in GU interdisciplinary studies and research.

The name doesn't change the mission of what was formerly called the Gonzaga Institute of Hate Studies.

"We continue to support research and education on the human capacity to dehumanize people as 'other' and processes to counter that capacity," said Kristine Hoover, professor of organizational leadership and director since 2016, citing national and global support for the center.

"Consistent with GU's commitment to courageous conversations, productive discomfort, and other diversity initiatives, the advisory and editorial boards will not back away or back down from discomfort that studying hate may create," she said.

"Expanding awareness of oppression and marginalization is the first step in moving toward safer, more inclusive communities," she said. "The center fo-

cuses on the antecedents of hate so we can better address root causes and encourage effective strategies to counter it."

Kristine and others have an endowment and develop courses on justice issues that connect with the community.

The upcoming "Americans and the Holocaust: A Traveling Exhibition for Libraries," made possible by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the American Library Association, is an opportunity for the center to develop programming in partnership with GU's Foley Library, which will host the exhibit beginning Friday, Aug. 26.

In 2021, Kristine published "Countering Hate: Leadership

Cases for Nonviolent Action," a handbook for "how ordinary people can do extraordinary things to build just communities and stand against hate." The book recounts nonviolent strategies by people across the country.

"It explores how those of us who believe in equity and justice stand up against exclusion, intolerance and violent forms of oppression without resorting to exclusion, intolerance and violence ourselves," she said.

Kristine affirmed commitment to the center's next 25 years.

For information, call 313-3665 or visit [gonzaga.edu/academics/centers-institutes/institute-for-hate-studies](http://gonzaga.edu/academics/centers-institutes/institute-for-hate-studies).

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# Gonzaga engages campus, community in diversity, equity, inclusion

*Continued from page 1*  
said that “racism is real and incidents do occur, creating an environment that instills fear, frustration and fatigue among BIPOC students and community members.” Aware of structural biases as a predominantly white institution and “the systemic racism that exists within our community and nation,” he said, “it is imperative to create a truly diverse, inclusive and anti-racist campus culture and community.”

**Robin, who grew up** in Buffalo, NY, comes to Gonzaga with more than 22 years in higher education administration roles in diversity. She was associate vice provost of equity and equal opportunity at North Carolina State University, director of the Office of Equal Opportunity at Iowa State University and assistant director of equity, diversity and inclusion after being assistant director of employee relations at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo.

She also founded and has done independent consulting for Kelley Consulting Firm with nonprofits in New York, North Carolina and Washington, D.C.

Robin’s degrees include a bachelor’s in economics and finance, a master’s from SUNY-Buffalo and a doctorate from Iowa State University, both in higher education administration.

Her initial task at Gonzaga has been to help develop the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2027.

**To gather data for it**, she has met with students, leaders, faculty and staff in town hall gatherings, and will continue to gather feedback on a webpage survey through early summer.

She said Gonzaga’s Catholic, Jesuit, humanistic traditions are at the root of its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and in tune with her Baptist roots. Gonzaga’s efforts include starting Women and Gender Studies in 1991, a Native American Studies minor in 2010, critical race and studies classes in 2019 and then the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

**The strategic plan will** develop goals and strategies for equitable access and inclusive learning in a diverse community. It addresses recruitment, retention and success of faculty and students; the campus climate and relationships; teaching and service; training and development, and assessment and accountability.

“During my first year, I have offered an “Academy for Inclusion, Excellence and Leadership” to build awareness, knowledge and skills to confront overt racial and cultural bias and micro-aggression,” Robin said. For it, 36 faculty, staff and

graduate students met in three groups in person and online.

In addition, 80 percent of all new students and 84 percent of faculty and staff participated in and completed sessions on diversity, she said.

**Another effort is** an underrepresented minority post-doctoral fellowship program for recent doctoral graduates who need additional development as teachers to prepare them for tenure track to assure retention, she added.

Robin also has overseen racial equity climate surveys of undergraduates and staff.

**“We hope to find** what students, staff and faculty think of the campus climate, what we do well, where there are gaps and what we need to do to create an inclusive climate,” she said, adding that they are also asked about the climate in the surrounding community, “so inclusion does not end when they step off campus.

“That’s also important if we want to understand why people stay and why people leave,” she said. “I meet with faculty members who are leaving to gain anecdotal information.”

**The racial and cultural** “diversity” figure is 29 percent of students and 11.5 percent of faculty. It includes international and domestic nonwhite students. Gonzaga offers several cultural

clubs: the Asian American Pacific Islander Club, a LGBTQ Club, International Student Affairs, the Tribal Relations Group and a Black Student Union for students.

**Gonzaga groups** for employees include the IMPACT Affinity Group for Allies on Campus; the International and Transnational Faculty and Staff Affinity Group formed in 2021; Colleagues of Color formed two years ago, and a group called –Productive Discomfort, Robin said.

“Inclusion in classrooms is about both the environment and the pedagogy,” she pointed out.

Robin said her work is about improving and transforming lives by dismantling structures, systems, policies and practices, infrastructures, policies and programs so things will change.

“I do not want students to recount that they persisted with their studies, in spite of something in the climate or how they were treated,” she said, quoting Maya Angelou: “You may not remember what was said or done, but you remember how it made you feel.”

“I do not want alumni or faculty to say they stayed despite how they were treated. I want people to feel they belong. I want people to feel they are heard. I want people to know their feelings are respected,” Robin said.

**She hopes the climate**, planning, programs, curricula and opportunities will encourage people to be mindful and feel they belong. She wants people to learn, live and work in a community where human differences are appreciated and thrive, so Gonzaga prepares students for living and working in an increasingly diverse world.

For information, call 313-5873 or email [kelleyr2@gonzaga.edu](mailto:kelleyr2@gonzaga.edu).

**Apply to Free Summer Youth Program**



In West Central Spokane, River City Youth Ops creates opportunities for youth enrichment through community engagement, job training & education. Youth (ages 12-18) may apply at: [youthops.org](http://youthops.org)

## UCUT members hand carve canoes at MAC

Through the end of May, the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) is hand carving two traditional dugout canoes from cedar logs at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture’s (MAC) outdoor amphitheater. The carving began on April 21.

Visitors may watch and learn about the tools, techniques and historical significance of the canoes. UCUT members will share about recent canoe voyages on area rivers, said Marc Gauthier, UCUT wildlife program manager.

The canoes will become part of the MAC’s permanent collection.

“Canoe carving is rarely done with museums,” said Tisa Matheson, American Indian Collection curator at the MAC and a

Nez Perce member.

The canoe carving coincides with the MAC exhibit, “Awakenings: Traditional Canoes and Bringing the Salmon Home,” on display through August 2022.

The exhibit explores the history and recent revival of the annual Columbia River Canoe Journey and First Salmon Ceremony, from buying old growth cedar logs and carving dugout canoes to the annual launch and landing at Kettle Falls, Tisa said.

Tribal elders have been working to bring canoe building back into their cultures and salmon back to the Columbia River. Canoes were essential for the Tribes’ survival and their connection to the rivers, she added.

When the carving is completed this summer, one canoe will be launched into an area river. It will be available for future programs on the importance of salmon to tribes and the revitalization of traditional water transportation.

For information, call 842-2943 or 363-5325.



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# Former Spokane pastor presents climate issues in virtual visit to Guatemala

By Emma Maple - Intern

A virtual visit to Guatemala may help individuals reconnect with their own community roots, as well as expand their understanding of what exists beyond their borders.

The Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) has a history of partnership with the Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA).

On April 20, CEDEPCA hosted a “Virtual Journey to Guatemala: Confronting Climate Change with Actions of Hope.”

The Presbytery of the Inland Northwest, which has a long-time partnership with Guatemalan churches, invited participation. They will be hosting a pastors trip to Guatemala in January 2023.

**This event is the 11th** virtual visit CEDEPCA has held the past two years. The Zoom visits have focused on such topics as migration, deportation, gender equity and COVID-19.

The virtual visits are in English but are open to people around the globe. According to Betsy Moe, a mission coworker with Presbyterian Church (USA) and an intercultural encounters facilitator with CEDEPCA, the visits usually have around 100 participants.

**As part of her role**, she lives in Guatemala with her husband, Eric, and two children.

Betsy has long loved Central America—specifically Guatemala. Her love for it began in 1993, when she spent a semester in Central America, including more than a month in Guatemala as part of her studies at Whitworth University.

“This trip opened my eyes to the painful history of U.S. involvement there,” Betsy said. “This knowledge haunted me for years and affected how I saw faith and politics.”

After she graduated in 1995 with an English major and Spanish minor, she was ordained as a Presbyterian pastor. She worked as a pastor for five years in Denver and then 12 years at Hamblen Park Presbyterian Church in Spokane.

**In 2019, she participated** in a mission trip to Guatemala with Hamblen Park.

“The trip reminded me how important it is for U.S. Christians to know their country’s history in international politics so they may make faithful, informed decisions about our international relations,” she said.

When Betsy came back, she saw the PC (USA) mission coworker position in Guatemala was open.



Betsy Moe lives in Guatemala with husband, Eric.

Photo courtesy of Betsy Moe

“When I traveled, I felt part of me come alive,” she said. “I wanted to know more and to enter into global justice issues more deeply.”

Although she began working with CEDEPCA in 2020, because of COVID, Betsy and her family did not move to Guatemala until January 2022.

**The virtual visits** to Guatemala were a direct result of COVID’s shutdowns.

“For four months, there weren’t even flights going to Guatemala,” Betsy said. “The Intercultural Encounters Team had to start thinking differently. We wanted to maintain the relationships already established with churches, presbyteries and university groups in North America. We wanted to support them and let them know that we were committed during the pandemic to keep them connected.”

The PC (USA) decided to offer the virtual journeys so people could still “come to Guatemala” in some sense.

“The response we received from people in the U.S. was surprising,” Betsy said. “Many expressed joy at being able to ‘go’ to Guatemala from their own living room.”

**“Many people could never** come to Guatemala in the first place because of mobility issues, work schedules or limited finances,” Betsy said. “Virtual journeys have been a way to expand the reach of Intercultural Encounters. We’re reaching people who may still come to Guatemala in the future, and people who will never set foot in Guatemala but care about it and want to learn about global issues.”

The virtual visits attempt to make people feel like they are travelling. For example, Betsy said use of a drone gives the impression of flying over the

country or videos taken from a car that simulate driving along a bumpy road.

When participants go to breakout rooms, Betsy often frames them as “imagine you’re on a bus, and you’re sitting with a seat partner that you’ve never met before.”

**“During the pandemic**, it’s been so easy to become accustomed to the four walls of our homes. A virtual journey to Guatemala helps people open their eyes to what’s going on in the world, and how people around the world are connected and working together for justice. It’s not only refreshing, but it also helps reframe our view of who we are, wherever we are and our own role in our local community,” Betsy said.

**The breakout rooms** are also a chance for people to meet people from different parts of North America.

“The Zoom participants might be in a breakout room with one person from Arizona and another from New York. They discover what the others are thinking, and how they’re seeing and experiencing the virtual journey,” Betsy said.

These visits are just one tier of CEDEPCA’s four areas of work:

- Women’s ministry and gender education trains women and men to think critically to form more just and equitable relationships.

- Disaster ministry includes humanitarian aid and psychological support before and after a disaster.

“Guatemala is such a vulnerable place, especially related to climate change,” Betsy explained. “In this region, volcanoes erupt, earthquakes shake the land and hurricanes strike. We must be ready all the time for a disaster.”

- Intercultural Encounters, the branch Betsy serves in, operates as a “bridge between North America and the issues Guatemalans are facing.”

- Biblical and theological education, which includes training for pastors and community leaders in a contextual reading of scripture, may be the most important branch of our work,” according to Betsy.

“CEDEPCA functions as a seminary in Guatemala,” she described. “Our partner is an ecumenical organization representing several different Christian churches, not one denomination, as many U.S. seminaries are.”

**The goal of the recent** CEDEPCA virtual journey was to “give voices to Central Americans who are dealing with the effects of climate change,” said Betsy.

The virtual visit included an 11-minute video with testimonies of Guatemalan farmers on the effects climate change has had on them for years, and what their lands look like now. Participants also learned steps Guatemalans are taking to counter the effects of climate change.

“Central Americans are innovative people,” Betsy said.

“I hope North Americans are inspired by learning that even

these people who are suffering are doing something about climate change. They’re not just standing by and watching. It’s powerful to see. If they are doing something with the few resources they have, certainly we can do something in the United States,” she said.

**Virtual visits** to Guatemala also incorporate theological reflection on the topic. The April visit included a 20-minute talk by Karla Koll, a professor at the Latin American Biblical University in Costa Rica.

Her talk centered on the problem that arises when people believe God is going to do away with the earth as it is and create a new one, so they unsustainably use the earth’s resources, or give up on mitigating climate change.

“Religious fundamentalism in Central America has had a long history and influences how people think,” Betsy said. “CEDEPCA is teaching a new way of looking at Scripture and what Scripture says about the end of the world, about suffering and about caring for creation.”

**This organization** approaches issues like climate change differently than a secular organization would.

“A secular organization might say, ‘The climate is changing, so we should do X, Y, and Z to change the situation.’”

CEDEPCA says, “Let’s change the theological mindset.”

“I love that CEDEPCA sees the root,” Betsy said. “The real root cause is that religious fundamentalism sometimes leads to people throwing their hands up in the face of suffering.”

For information, visit [www.cedepca.org/en](http://www.cedepca.org/en).

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# Art contest is a way to invite students to study impact of the Holocaust

*Continued from page 1*

Rachel Barney, senior at Central Valley High School.

The Fig Tree is covering details on the first, second and third place winners.

**Erin Bangle, art teacher** at On Track Academy, said in her 20 years of teaching, Najhana's stained glass window is one of her favorites.

While Najhana was working on it, she started talking with a classmate about "why we have to keep studying about the Holocaust," Erin said.

The classmate knew little about it, so Najhana, who Erin said is usually quiet, told what she was learning.

"The two worked on their stained-glass panels, discussing the Holocaust and why we must never forget it," she said.

**In her comments, Najhana,** who named her piece "Faded," said Holocaust education is important because, as time goes by, people forget the horrible acts that happened.

She hears false comparisons today, such as, "I don't want to clean my room. This is like Nazi Germany!" Some people liken mandating immunizations or masks to Nazi Germany. Some want to ban books, but say they oppose Nazism, Najhana said, concerned that many people today don't know what Nazism is, while survivors who can give first-hand testimony are dying and won't be here much longer.

**Her piece grew from** the meaning of "Birkenau" in the name of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

"Birkenau is German for birch grove. Some believe they planted the fast-growing birch trees to hide the camp," she said, explaining that "when people see birch trees, they see beauty, strength, hope and peace, opposites of what the Nazis hid behind the trees. The birch trees in my piece begin as bright and colorful and fade to clear.

"At the left side of my piece, the textures in the clear glass tell the story as people's memories and knowledge of what happened behind those trees are faded."



**Najhana Smith**

ing," Najhana said. "The smoke-stack fades from memory behind the trees and the hint of the wire on the walls trail through. We must study the Holocaust, so no one forgets and repeats the mistakes."

**Describing her first-place** piece, Hayden said she focused on children during the Holocaust and the theme, "I'm Still Here," from a 2013 documentary telling of the Holocaust through diaries of Jewish teens.

In the middle section with cracks in the background is a child's hand raised in a closed fist and the message, "I'm Still Here."

On the lower left is an almost empty cupboard with one slice of bread, the amount of food people in concentration camps were allowed in a day.

The lower right depicts the hands of a child and parent being separated, as many children were torn from families and never saw them again.

The top left has a Nazi flag with cracks in it, "signifying the corrupt minds of the Nazis," Hayden said.

**The top right shows** a Star of David patch Jews had to wear so people could identify they were Jews.

It also shows an arm with numbers, 62034. Concentration camps tattooed numbers on arms of those imprisoned. The "620" in the number comes from Arik Cohen, a Holocaust speaker at Hayden's school, who told students that 6/20 was the day his



**Hayden Brewer**

grandparents were married, the day they reunited after the war and the date his father was born.

In the piece, Hayden used the theme of cracks to say that the Holocaust was filled with horrible moments that made people's lives crack, and in some cases fall apart.

**For her piece,** "I Am With You," Anna Francesca looked at historical photos of children and young people in concentration camps, then painted their distraught faces behind barbed wire.

"I imagined that it could have been me," she said, telling of feeling both horror and empathy, and then feeling solidarity to prevent it from ever happening again.

*Continued on page 7*



**Najhana's stained glass is titled "Faded."**



**Hayden named her piece "I'm Still Here" after 2013 film.**

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# Teens learn why it's important for schools to have Holocaust education

*Continued from page 6*

She wanted viewers to share her experience of being beside “the innocent child prisoners” so they could be moved to empathy for the victims and stand in solidarity against violence and hate.”

In “Never Again,” Teagan said, “the Holocaust is a horrific stain on humanity and if we do not teach it in school, younger generations may not learn from the mistakes of the past. We must never forget the many victims and survivors of the Holocaust.”

Her piece has names of victims and survivors on a wall of bricks and includes drawings of “brave people who were in the Holocaust.” She wonders “how so many people could do such horrible things.”

Ethan also wondered why people didn't stop Nazis when they dehumanized people, and why they turned a blind eye. He called his piece “Blind to Humanity.”

“When I hear that some people want to prevent children from learning about history, it feels the same as turning a blind eye. It is wrong,” he said.

He made his piece to show “how bad it was and can get, how people should be aware of everything around them and call it out when something they know is wrong is happening.”

Ethan urges people never to turn a blind eye to evil—whether it's near or far. To show both the



Teagan Schroeder



Anna Francesca Quintero-

inhumanity and the complicity of ignoring it, he depicts a Nazi soldier facing away from a mother who is losing her child. He shows a mirror representing the mother's world shattering as she loses her baby and the collapse of humanity that began for Jews with Kristallnacht—losing everything and everyone they loved. A second theme is families and children forcibly separated before being sent to incinerators or shot.

Ethan wants people to see the sad, sickening truth of what happened and to learn from the past, so they do not repeat it.

“Actively learning history keeps people from turning a blind eye and collects us together to stand against it happening again,” he said.

“Stand Together as One”

is the name of Zariya's piece, which shows 10 hands of different skin tones. Hanging from each wrist is a bracelet with a symbol of a different religion.

“The hands in unity form a heart embracing the world. The background symbolizes hatred fading into hope and unity,” she said. “We need to continue fighting for one another and standing up for each other despite our differences.”

“As long as the world keeps spinning and as long as people continue to have a voice, the Holocaust should be remembered to prevent hatred and devastation from repeating,” Zariya said. “Humanity is evolving so we have no excuse that our actions can't evolve with us.”

For information, call 747-3304 or visit [spokanetbs.org](http://spokanetbs.org).



Teagan uplifts victims in “Never Again.”



Anna Francesca's piece is “I Am with You.” Photos are courtesy of Spokane's Yom Hashoah Committee

## Agency offers text app for clients in recovery

The Recovery Services program of Community-Minded Enterprises (CME) has a new tool, an enhanced text communication application that helps clients at Recovery Café Spokane maintain sobriety.

Founded in 2017, the Recovery Café helps people in recovery reduce relapses, realize their potential and reclaim their lives.

Christine McMackin, manager of Recovery Café Spokane, said members can access assistance 24 hours a day with a few clicks on a smartphone.

CME added the app for recovery clients with a \$50,000 grant from Coordinated Care's Community Investment Fund.

“Technology in behavioral health offers innovative opportunities to remove barriers for treatment, enhance convenience and complement traditional therapy models,” said Beth Johnson,

CEO of Coordinated Care. “An app addressing those matters can impact equity and engagement in one's health.”

Quiq, a digital customer service company in Bozeman, Mont., developed the platform working with CME on an app for parents with young children to access resources and support at the start of the pandemic.

“That app helps CME connect with parents and caregivers, guiding them to educational materials, activities and resources when in-person opportunities are hard to access,” said Jan Thoemke, CME's interim CEO.

The recovery app uses artificial intelligence so clients can connect with a CME staff member and find resources based on answers they give.

Because of its growth, the Café relocated Feb. 1 to CME's new 7,000-square-foot Recovery

Services building at 622 E. 2nd Ave.

It is now also home to other CME programs: State Opioid Response, Substance Abuse Block Grant, Child Care Assistance Program and Foundational Community Support.

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## Goodwill brings digital equity

Inland Northwest and other Northwest Goodwill agencies are partnering to bring digital equity to Washington with a pilot program called Goodwill® Connect.

The state digital inclusion system will bring digital literacy, access and training to 39 counties with funds from the Washington State Department of Commerce's Broadband Office.

Goodwill hired 17 digital navigators to give tech support in basic digital skills and connect callers with online information on jobs, housing, social services and state resources.

They train on how to turn on a computer, use a mouse, set up a cloud account and navigate the internet. They can point callers

to other digital skills and jobs.

Goodwill® Connect reaches people at risk of digital exclusion in rural areas, low-income neighborhoods, communities of color, tribal communities, seniors, people with disabilities and non-English speakers.

Tech support is available on the Digital Resource Hotline, 844-492-6663, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays to Fridays, and at goodwillconnect.com.

The program, which ends June 30, will provide 1,350 people with Chromebooks and internet access, plus connection to Goodwill for job training, case management and wrap-around services.

For information, call 444-4383 or visit goodwill.org.

## New plans announced for House of Charity

*Continued from page 1*  
case management and peer support counseling on-site with 24/7 security that patrols half a mile around the area.

HOC 2.0 will have apartment-style suites for specialized hospice care for homeless people for end-of-life journeys.

Catholic Charities will work with the city and transportation providers to set transportation routes for clients to access services, including transportation to and from hospitals to ensure vulnerable, medically fragile patrons can access medical care.

The House of Charity (HOC) facility at 32 W. Pacific Ave. will remain in its current location. It will continue to provide support

services to Catholic Charities clients and nearby housing residents with opportunities to meet community needs.

It will no longer sleep or feed people experiencing homelessness. The first floor will be used for staff to assist permanent supportive housing units in the area.

The upstairs sleeping space may be contracted for more shelter space by emergency management groups during inclement weather, fire/smoke season and future contagious disease events.

It could be activated as needed by emergency management groups, as a medical isolation and quarantine space, in a pandemic or norovirus outbreaks.

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# Professor links ‘militant masculinity’ with rise of Christian nationalism

By Gary Jewell / Dale Soden

Kristin Kobes Du Mez from Calvin University recently spoke at Whitworth University how the history of militant masculinity relates to the rise of Christian nationalism within the largely white evangelical church.

That’s the focus of her book, *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*.

Kristin detailed numerous examples featured in her book of the way many evangelicals have gravitated to strong white men and to a message of patriotism supported by a particular reading of the Bible.

**Speaking to 200 on April 11**, she suggested that many commentators across the country have wondered why so many evangelicals (roughly 80 percent) supported Donald Trump in 2020 when on the face of it his personal life and many of his policies might seem at odds with Christianity.

Kristin contends, however, that evangelicals support Trump because he embodies the core values of the majority of evangelicals. Her assertion of this has made her a frequent commentator in major media circles across the country.

Her journey to something of a celebrity status has been an unlikely one. Born in northwestern Iowa, she grew up in a conservative religious culture shaped by the Christian Reformed Church. Her father was a theology and biblical studies professor at Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa, where Kristin attended as an undergraduate.

**Her interest in studying American culture** arose the year when she studied in Germany as an exchange student. She came back wanting to know more about her own culture, so she decided to major in history.

Kristin remembers how her colleagues at Dordt challenged one another to think critically about their own assumptions and the world around them.

After graduating from Dordt, she went to graduate school at the University of Notre Dame and studied under a leading historian of American religion, George Marsden. Her studies



**Kristin Kobes Du Mez**  
Photo by Deborah Hoag

of American history included specialties in women’s history and religious history.

**In a class on gender history**, she shifted her focus. A book by Kathleen Brown introduced her to the significance of gender in history and from that point, Kristin took a keen interest in the intersection of gender, religion and American culture.

After graduate school she spent time at Williams College and the Five College Women’s Studies Research Center at Mt. Holyoke, before teaching at Calvin.

**Kristin’s first book**, *A New Gospel for Women: Katherine Bushnell and the Challenge of Christian Feminism*, centered on the life of Katherine Bushnell, a 19th century Methodist and social activist. The biography, published in 2015, focused on the relationship between Christianity and feminism in American Protestantism.

That project launched Kristin on exploring the history of masculinity in American culture.

After she gave a lecture on Theodore Roosevelt, two students approached her suggesting she read John Eldredge’s 2001 book, *Wild at Heart*. After reading that, she began to explore masculinity in a more contemporary context.

*Wild at Heart* provided a window into the importance of gendered issues in American evangelical culture.

**From her research** on the intersection of gender, religion and politics in recent U.S. history,

Kristin wrote *Jesus and John Wayne* in 2020. It is an analysis of the culture through the lens of Evangelical leaders like Billy Graham, James Dobson, Bill Gothard and Jerry Falwell.

The consequence of much of that history, Kristin said, is the election of Trump who, while not constrained by Christian virtue, was seen to champion certain “muscular Christian values and concerns.”

**Kristin pointed out** that the American understanding of masculinity, prior to the early 20th century, tended to promote virtues of restraint and gentlemanliness. This understanding started to shift with Roosevelt and his projection of manly strength, she said.

After Theodore Roosevelt’s influence and the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in 1942, notions of faith, whiteness, militancy and masculinity were given a stronger cultural voice, she said.

The NAE allowed for Christian Bible colleges, bookstores, publishers, programs and magazines to speak with much more consolidated power to the broader culture, Kristin explained.

**The cultural fears** of communism, the strong assured voice of preachers like Billy Graham, and “manly Christian military officers like Oliver North promoted in Christian bookstores found cul-

tural influence for continuing to define what Christian masculinity was to look like,” she added.

**About 15 years ago** when she started the research, Kristin began to wonder if maybe she was focusing on a fringe issue. She said much of what she was discovering seemed extreme and disturbing. So she put the work aside. In 2016 she took out that research and decided to write the book, because several scandals in evangelical communities led her to realize that it wasn’t “fringe.” She published it in 2020.

After her Spokane lecture, she responded to several questions.

**When asked how her book** has been received by the evangelical community, Kristin reported that there are always critics, but by far the vast majority—99 percent of those who reach out to her—are grateful, saying, “You are describing the story of my life.”

When she has received criticisms, it has often been to the effect, “You should be kinder”—meaning less critical of powerful evangelical leaders.

Her reaction as a Christian and as an academic historian is “to first get the history right. It is the Christian historian’s job to be loving toward her subject, but this kindness extends to victims as well.”

After the publication of *Jesus and John Wayne*, one reviewer suggested there was a lack of

“robust economic examination” in this book. This was a point she would have wanted to explore, had there been the time and space.

One questioner, noting that Kristin’s work is a thorough, factual examination on “masculinity” of a conservative interpretation of a particular group—white evangelicals—in a particular historical time, asked, “What is the biblical view of masculinity?”

Her response was, “Perhaps we should look at the “fruits of the Spirit as described in Galatians 5: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, gentleness and self-control.”

**Another asked if** she had hope after writing the book, she paused for a moment and replied, “I have more hope now than when I finished the book, given the response to it among so many evangelicals. I see change happening at the individual level, but not so much on the institutional level.”

A final note in her book, *Jesus and John Wayne*, reminds the reader that “What was once done, can be undone.”

For information, email [kkd3@calvin.edu](mailto:kkd3@calvin.edu) or see [kristindumez.com](http://kristindumez.com).

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# Church's quilters make and donate thousands of quilts and more

By Anna Crigger - Intern

Linda Harris and Arline Whitney, members of Opportunity Presbyterian Church (OPC) in Spokane Valley, have spent countless hours designing, sewing, cutting and threading to create quilts for local groups and individuals.

Between 2003 and 2022, OPC Quilters have made and donated 4,690 quilts.

They have donated to such organizations as the YMCA Project Warm Up, Deaconess Hospital NICU, Spokane Police Chaplains, Valley Partners, Spokane Veterans' Home, Family Promise, Victims Service Unit in Post Falls, Crosswalk and Partners with Families and Children.

In addition, they give quilts to deacons to take to shut-ins.

Quilting donations have been given to victims of the 2020 Malden fire and to teachers and bus drivers impacted by the 2017 shooting at Freeman High School.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, 45 quilts were donated to the children of OPC.

"I love thinking about where our creations go and hope people have as much joy using them as I had fun making them," Arline said. "Giving this beautiful fabric a new home to be loved is what makes me happy."

Both Linda and Arline regularly attend OPC and are members of the church's quilting group, OPC Quilters.



Arline Whitney, top, and Linda Harris have stitched many quilts with their church.

Photo courtesy of OPC Quilters

Linda, who is the OPC Quilters coordinator, started the quilting group in 2003.

She enjoys experimenting with various donated sewing supplies and fabrics to create something new.

"It's reminiscent of when I was learning how to sew," she said.

"I view my work with OPC Quilters as a mission project because we are reaching out to people in the community," Linda said. "Our goal is to keep what we make in the community."

Arline researched OPC when she moved to Spokane in 2007 and "saw that they had a quilt group," she said.

During her first Sunday at OPC, she met one of the quilters and quickly felt a sense of community.

"I knew it was meant to be a place for me," she said.

Arline found the quilting group was "a wonderful way to get acquainted with the women of the church."

Through quilting, she could learn about them as she listened to them talk about their families and history.

Linda and Arline have both developed friendships through the OPC quilting group. For many it is a "support group." They support one another at church and when they have surgeries, experience difficulties and celebrate successes.

"We work with eight to 12 women and one man on third Thursdays of the months of September through May," Arline said. "The man who sews for us is paralyzed from the waist down. He uses a sewing machine with a push on/off switch."

In addition to quilts, members of the group create homemade table runners, tote bags, placemats, bowl cozies, aprons and more.

Using donated materials such as drapery material and zippers, "we have created tote bags we give to the Valley Center so people can use them to haul their food," Linda said.

"We gave out more than 100 tote bags there before Christmas," Arline said.

Since 2014, the group has also donated \$20,000 from quilt sales at the church's annual fall bazaars to the church for the Children's Christmas Toy Store.

They earned that much because the bazaars draw people from the wider community, as

well as church members.

OPC uses the money to purchase new toys for children. This year they served more than 300 children.

The school district selects parents to come and pay 20 percent of the retail price for new toys for their children.

OPC Quilters rely on the community for donations of fabric, thread, buttons and more to create new quilting projects. Individuals, The Quilting Bee and YMCA Project Warm Up have donated fabric and sewing supplies to OPC Quilters.

"When people donate fabric to the YMCA, we use it to make the quilts," Arline said. "We then donate completed quilts back to the YMCA's Project Warm Up."

She said they use scraps from projects to make sure fabric and supplies are used and not wasted.

For example, OPC Quilters share fabric and supplies with other "quilt groups that use materials a little differently than we do," she said.

They also share with Peace Lutheran Church in Otis Orchards, which takes some materials the OPC group doesn't use.

For information, call 924-9750.

## Totem Journey builds awareness

Lummi tribal members, the House of Tears Carvers and the intertribal nonprofit Se'Si'Le invite the region's faith communities to witness the Snake River to Salish Sea Spirit of the Waters Totem Pole Journey as it visits in Washington, Oregon and Idaho in May.

The journey, one of 12 in the last 20 years, will include ceremony, art, science, spirituality and cross-cultural collaboration to support the movement to restore the free flow of the Lower Snake River and the health of its salmon and orca.

Events begin Thursday, May 5, in Bellingham and end May 20 in Tacoma. Eastern Oregon and Washington stops include 1) 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, May 11, at the Longhouse in Celilo Falls; 2) Thursday to Saturday, May 12 to 14, at the Whole Protectors Exhibit at Tomastlikt Center in Pendleton, and 3) from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday, May 16, at Hell's Gate State Park, in Lewiston/Clarkston.

"As people of faith, we are called to be leaders of integrity and conscience. We have a moral responsibility to support this indigenous-led movement to protect their salmon and orca relations, and hold the U.S. government accountable to treaty promises with Native nations," said Sr. Jessica Zimmerle, program and outreach director with Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light.

For information, call 206-632-2426 or email [emoffice@earthministry.org](mailto:emoffice@earthministry.org).

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# Family Promise of North Idaho promotes housing stability with shelter

By Kaye Hult

In 2008, when Cindy Wood moved to Coeur d'Alene from Bozeman, Mont., to be executive director of the newly formed Family Promise of North Idaho (FPNI), its goal was to do a good job of sheltering families with children.

"Now, it's about housing stability. Shelter is just one piece of that," said Cindy, who volunteered two years with Family Promise in Bozeman before coming to Idaho.

On March 31, the anniversary of her move, Cindy reflected on her 14 years at FBNI, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other changes.

In its offices and day center on the lower level of St. Luke's Episcopal at Wallace and 5th, FPNI offers a safety net of food, shelter and support services for homeless children and families.

**That safety net allows** Family Promise guests to focus on finding work and affordable housing, knowing their families are safe while they deal with temporary difficulties. About 80 percent of families find housing.

"Things were tight in the housing crisis of 2008, when we opened," Cindy said. "They are tighter now. In some ways, going forward right now seems dismal, but people are finding ways."

The nonprofit provides a hospitality network of hosting and supporting congregations. Host congregations provide temporary housing and meals to guest families on a weekly basis at no cost.

With support and accommodations provided, parents can focus on rebuilding their lives.

Family Promise of North Idaho offers counseling, job search assistance and other services at their professionally staffed day center with supplemental support by trained volunteers.

"Those who work with guests meet their needs with a spirit of warmth and compassion," Cindy said.

**"At the beginning** of COVID, it was harrowing when everything was shutting down," she recalled. "My plan B was that we could stay in the day center at the church. Then St. Luke's and other churches closed.

"We housed families in motels for two to four weeks at a time. Volunteers dropped off meals. We worried about exposure to COVID and keeping volunteers and guest families safe. It was hard to connect families with resources."

One family was at the day



Cindy Wood reflects on 14 years with Family Promise.

center for a case management meeting when a realtor called saying, "I have 15 minutes to give in half an hour when I can offer a contactless meeting when no one else is in the office."

Key pick-up would be scheduled in a similar fashion. That stress was typical, Cindy said.

**The national Family Promise** in 2021 introduced FPNI to the Prevention Program for families given a three-day eviction notice.

"We called landlords and worked with families, asking how much money they could raise to avoid being evicted to prevent them from becoming homeless," she said.

Cindy said it reduced trauma and pressure for families from "the tyranny of the moment" when facing eviction.

"Families we have worked with in the Prevention Program have had better success gaining jobs and education," she said.

**Shelter families continue** with aftercare, working on goals for at least three months, meeting guidelines and having financial incentives when they graduate. Prevention families, with expanded case manager assistance, receive at least six months of aftercare, depending on the funding source.

"We returned to the rotation program with host and support congregations in June 2021," said Cindy, noting that national support increased efficiency.

**Now a board led team** is investigating expanding FPNI's reach by having a static site, along with using churches.

This model shortens the time families are sheltered by offering immediate incentives to reach goals, adding to the number of families that can be sheltered at

one time, she said.

**Cindy sees networking** hosts and volunteers as "the secret sauce," because "for guests, there's a transformational component to walking through doors of a congregation, and being welcomed and embraced as worthy by those who don't even know them. Churches are a place of hospitality.

"Our hospitality gives a face to people rooting for guests," she said. "Guests experience generosity as people provide food. They know volunteers leave their own beds, come to be hosts and sleep in roll-away beds in the church just like them."

**"Volunteers are a blessing.** In the midst of FPNI's growing pains, they see needs and act on them. They offer ideas we may want to think about," she added.

One regular volunteer who helps with transportation ensures the FPNI vans are running. There are many opportunities for volunteers to use their skills.

Two volunteers told Cindy new mattresses were needed for the roll-away beds the families use. Mattresses had last been replaced in 2015.

Jill Dougherty procured \$250 as seed money from Advent Lutheran Church in Spokane. She found other gifts from Coldwell Banker and from Dougherty and Associates CPAs.

Dan LaVine, a member of Trinity Lutheran, and co-owner of the Coeur d'Alene company, National Mattress and Furniture, thought they could purchase mattresses locally for less."

He had a thicker prototype made with extra padding in the middle. It was hypoallergenic, waterproof, easy to sanitize and had stronger stitching. They were less expensive and "made locally with love," Cindy said.

In March, they brought new mattresses to the church to bless.

Another Trinity Lutheran volunteer, Bob Rehnberg, checks the beds when Trinity hosts. He makes sure springs work, screws are in place and beds are rotated.

Charity Imagined, a resource agency in Coeur d'Alene, helps FPNI with major expenses for guests, such as replacing someone's dentures or financing dental work, services that help guests to move ahead with their goals.

**Cindy quoted** a Family Promise director who said, "People don't become homeless because of lack of money, but because of a lack of relationships. One of our goals is to help them rebuild a network of relationships."

Families gain strength through the network of congregations and businesses.

Cindy said she felt called to Family Promise North Idaho. "When the pandemic came,

it all came to a head. Everything we'd been fighting for in providing help for families in crisis became active," she said. "I gained confidence over the years and was prepared for such a time as this.

**"When I become** discouraged, I remind myself that the best thing we can do is love our guests where they're at," she said. "Our goal is to provide the help people need without becoming so caught up in programs that we forget the power of love. The pandemic accentuated that. We couldn't do programs. All we had was love.

"It's incredible the opportunities that have come to our families," she said. "I believe it's by God's grace."

For information, call 208-777-4190 or visit [familypromiseni.org](http://familypromiseni.org).

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# Tri-Cities Immigrant Coalition help congregations resettle Afghans

Shalom United Church of Christ in Richland has found a niche to support and welcome Afghan refugees since October.

“Our church chose not to sponsor a family because we recognized there was a need to coordinate donations,” said Marsha Stipe of the Mission and Social Action Committee and the Tri-Cities Immigrant Coalition.

Shalom’s church secretary, Lauralee Sorenson, developed a spreadsheet of items and services to match people in the church and community with Afghan refugees with those needs.

Services offered and needed include furniture, bedding, household items, clothing, gift certificates, English tutoring, training to use the bus, or transporting to buy coats, grocery shop or go to a prayer service.

“Having the spreadsheet has allowed us to match items and services to needs without stockpiling items at the church or giv-



Marsha Stipe converses with Afghan woman. Photo courtesy of Marsha Stipe

ing unneeded items to families,” said Marsha. “Our members work with families as they need it, rather than focusing on one family.”

People can email or call the church office for information. Potential donations are entered onto the spreadsheet and then matched with families’ needs.

The first four families came to

Richland in September, followed by seven families on Nov. 16 and four by Dec. 20. Two individuals came in February.

The families range in size from one man to a family of 12—a mother, father and 10 children. While the children range in age from newborns to 18 years, most are young children.

To date, 17 Afghan families

consisting of 75 individuals have arrived in the Tri-Cities through World Relief, which had cut back its capacity and staff under the previous federal administration.

World Relief resettled a total 16 families in 2020 and since then has resettled more than 100 refugee families from many countries. Marsha said they have been hiring staff.

In addition, through its Mission and Social Action Committee, Shalom UCC donated \$500 to the Family Learning Center for English Workbooks and Oxford picture dictionaries.

“These items make a difference for the new families in learning English, but are difficult for them to afford,” she said. “The people receiving these books were thrilled and thankful. Each book has a bookplate noting Shalom’s contribution.”

Shalom UCC works with Tri-Cities Afghan Resettlement, started by Sabiha Khan, a member of the Islamic Center of Tri Cities.

Originally, Sabiha planned to collect donations. Then Shalom suggested it would manage the exchange of goods and services.

“Our members started by deliv-

ering furniture and items to newly arrived families,” Marsha said.

Marsha has become acquainted with families by going on home visits with Sabiha, who is from Pakistan and speaks some Urdu. Over tea, they discover a family’s needs.

One need Marsha discovered was for large bowls in which women can mix the big, round flat bread they eat at every meal. The church had big bowls it wasn’t using and donated them.

The Altrusa organization donated \$50 gift cards for each person. Marsha delivers the cards.

When families first arrive in the Tri-Cities, they stay in a hotel. One family was in a hotel for a month and did not have food, so the gift cards helped them buy food.

With a large Ukrainian population in the Tri-Cities and plans to resettle 100,000 Ukrainians in the U.S., primarily reuniting families, Marsha is aware and concerned that attention may shift as media focus shifts from Afghani to Ukrainian refugees.

For information, call 541-720-0131 or email tricitiesimmigrantcoalition@gmail.com.

## Food for All offers variety of summer programs

The Catholic Charities Eastern Washington (CCEW) Food For All recently announced its summer farmers’ market programs.

- Through the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Food for All works with Aging and Long-Term Care of Eastern Washington to distribute \$80-vouchers for Spokane County low-income seniors to use to buy fresh fruits, vegetables and honey.

More than \$200,000 in vouchers will be given to more than 2,500 through a drawing in June.

- The Kids Eating Right Nutrition and Exercise for Life (KERNEL) Program is open to any child.

Participants receive a \$2 coupon to buy fresh fruits and vegetables in the farmer’s market after they do an activity.

Each market chooses from

50 activities, including learning about bugs, pollinators, composting and eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables for health.

- For Market Gleaning, Food for All partners with Spokane Edible Tree Project. Volunteers pick up produce after a farmers’ market. Food For All delivers it to 25 CCEW low-income housing sites and eight food pantries.

- The Spokane County Farm to Food Pantry works with food pantries to buy produce and proteins from local farmers for the pantries.

- Food for All installs garden beds and provides plants and seeds at Head Start programs and housing sites. It has a curriculum and supports Head Start healthy eating and produce sampling.

- It also helps with the SNAP (Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners) Market Match at farm-

er’s markets, which replaced Fresh Bucks.

For information, call 459-6163.

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## Events coincide May 14 at Riverfront Park

The annual Asian Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (ANHPI) Heritage Day will be held from 1 to 8 p.m., Saturday, May 14 at Riverfront Park, coinciding with the Family Fun Fair.

The ANHPI event includes such cultural activities as music, demonstrations, dance, food trucks with various Asian cuisine and a historical exhibit on Spokane’s ANHPI community.

The Family Fun Fair, a parenting expo for awareness on children’s services, offers resources for emergency services, homelessness, food banks, domestic violence, parenting sup-

port, summer activities and family friendly businesses. There will be a vaccination clinic in the Central Pavilion Sky Room.

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# Mother’s Day Champagne Brunch

Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, after a two-year hiatus, will again be celebrating Mother’s Day with a Champagne Brunch **May 8, 2022, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

All-you-can-eat buffet, with carving stations, made-to-order omelets, extravagant dessert table, beverages available for purchase and a special gift for Mom.

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# Five days at border were 'life-changing' for two in team from St. Als

By Catherine Ferguson SNJM

"Life-changing" was how Pat and Mary Jo Sweeney described their five-day sojourn from March 14 to 19 to the U.S./Mexican border near Nogales and Douglas, Arizona.

They were part of a delegation of seven from St. Aloysius Catholic Parish in Spokane, which had been planning the opportunity for two and a half years. The others on the team were George Waldref, Rita Amberg Waldref, Mary Ann Shine, Kathy Dauer and Tom Dauer.

The first borderlands trip occurred in 2019, with another planned for 2023.

Pat and Mary Jo moved to Spokane from the Seattle area about four years ago, after Pat retired from work as an accountant for a telecom. Mary Jo had worked part-time as a para-educator. They were drawn to St. Aloysius by its Jesuit affiliation and its social justice programs.

The Sweeneys met while attending Seattle University, where both were influenced by their Jesuit education. That education involves a "transformational" learning model, drawing on one's past and new learnings, reflecting on the experience, with action and evaluation following from the learning.

As a couple, they became active in Seattle area parishes, volunteering in youth and music ministry and other areas of leadership.

Their interest in social justice grew out of Jesuit values of caring for each person as a child of God and taking responsible action on moral issues. Friendships with Maryknoll priests who had served in developing nations further impacted their concern for people living in poverty.

Today they have three grown daughters, one who lives in Spokane, and eight grandchildren. A grandniece previously worked in Guatemala and El Salvador.

When the opportunity for a visit to the borderlands presented itself prior to COVID, they began planning to go. This year it became possible.

As she began the journey, Mary Jo questioned: "How do you prepare for a journey that is guaranteed to break your heart?"

She and Pat knew what they hoped to learn from the journey, especially given their understanding of the contrast between the Gospel of Jesus and what they had read about the situation of immigrants and asylum seekers at the southern border of the U.S.

Two School Sisters of Notre Dame, Sister Lucy Nigh and Sis-



Mary Jo and Pat Sweeney learned about borderlands.

Photo courtesy of St. Aloysius Parish

ter Judy Bourg, who were their hostesses in Douglas, Ariz., developed the Mission Awareness Program (MAP) as a comprehensive program that addresses what their group sought for an experience.

It is a program for those who want to understand first-hand why migrants decide to cross the Mexico/U.S. border, to meet those who live and work on the border, to understand stories of migrants who crossed or planned to cross the border, to meet people involved in immigration ministry, and to promote dialogue and advocacy on immigration reform.

"Even though we were a day late arriving because of airline cancellations, we filled already packed days with visits to shelters on both sides of the border, projects for providing people a sustainable livelihood and talking with many people who served the migrants, migrants themselves and a border patrol agent. We even had a little time for reflection on our experiences each day," said Mary Jo.

These days brought them face to face with realities they had read about, but which can lose their urgency and immediacy over time.

They came to know in concrete ways what an enemy poverty and violence are for people who are desperate to find a way

for themselves and their children to survive. Migrants dare to travel long distances, prepared to risk their lives climbing over a dangerous wall, only to face the dangers of crossing the desert.

They also heard about the violence of gangs and cartels, which drove so many north and then continued to plague them when they were refused entry and sent back to the Mexican border towns.

"No migrant can travel and cross the border without having to pay the cartels for their passage at some time in their journey—sometimes more than once," explained Mary Jo.

They heard that El Chapo's cartel controlled the area that they visited.

"Even though he is in prison, little goes on in that part of Sonora that cartel members don't know about and influence," said Mary Jo. "Thankfully, the cartel seems to leave the shelters alone

so the sisters and volunteers can minister to the people."

Several incidents in their days there stood out in their memories as Pat and Mary Jo spoke about the experience.

One day, they traveled with a group called the Green Valley Samaritans to leave water in the desert at places where migrants were known to travel. At one point they came across a 24-year-old man who was alone, lost and hungry. He asked them to call the border patrol so he could turn himself in.

With Sister Judy translating, they spoke with him. They learned that despite having traveled over 2,000 miles from Oaxaca, he had lost hope and was giving up. Sister Judy discouraged them from pressing him for details but asked them to pray for him each day.

Pat was impressed by a cooperative program in Agua Prieta called Café Justo. The cooperative produces coffee in Chiapas in southern Mexico and sends it north to Agua Prieta, where other members process it, prepare it for market, sell it in their coffee shop there, and fill orders to be sent to various markets outside of Mexico. Café Justo hires members of the community in all areas of the co-operative to create sustainable, local business. This practice provides employees incentives to remain in their family lands.

"We will be ordering Café Justo to serve and sell at St. Aloysius after Masses on June 25 and 26, with information about how to order from the cooperative."

Another day, Pat and Mary Jo joined others in ritualizing migrants who died in passage by planting a cross in the desert.

Some crosses have the names of victims; others simply say, "No identificada" when no name can be assigned to the migrant.

On another occasion, they met a border patrol agent named Obie. He explained that he tries to treat each migrant with dignity if possible. Knowing that the people he spoke with were only visiting in the border area, he tried to extend their concern beyond the suffering they were seeing there.

Mary Jo was struck by Obie's wisdom. He told them, "Look for the 'borders' where you live. Who are the marginalized and outcast in the area? Try to make a difference for those who live in poverty and fear where you are. Step out of your comfort and take a small step to make it right."

Since returning, the seven participants have shared reflections about their experiences with the St. Aloysius community through powerpoint presentations, in the newsletter and on the website.

They are now meeting to discuss what they want to do now, such as ways to work with the Café Justo co-op.

"We are now keeping informed on immigration policy and current activities at the border," Pat said. "We will continue to contact our elected representatives in Washington, D.C., to urge them to work for humane immigration laws."

For information, email patsweeney526@gmail.com or visit stalschurch.org/?s=borderland.

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## The 'San Pedro Syndrome' raises questions about mission approaches

When consulting 15 years ago with a church in what was then called "a developing country," its leader asked me to meet with a young English volunteer. Based on her skills, he had no idea how she could contribute meaningfully to any of their current needs. After chatting with her, I too was at a loss; beside her enthusiasm, she brought nothing the church needed, and I didn't know what to suggest. Nor did I know how she and the church should deal with this mutually frustrating situation.

A decade later, I served as the interim principal at a small Christian school in Puebla, Mexico. Their new principal had pulled out at the last minute, and they were happy to have me for the fall semester even though I had no K-12 experience. I had taught only at the university level, but I brought a Christian commitment, administrative experience and a passion for education. That combination met their needs.

The school's missionary teachers and administrators knew what they were do-

ing and brought training that admirably served the school.

These contrasting experiences set me thinking and then writing. The result is a satirical novel: *The Mission Trip to San Pedro 2*, published last November. It pokes fun at an approach I call "parachute missions," where a church group makes a week-long pilgrimage to a country whose language they don't speak and whose culture they don't understand.

The book tells of one such group that, because of their travel agent's error, end up in the wrong San Pedro. That's just the beginning of the woes facing the youth pastor and nine high-schoolers. They set out to "help," but these unexpected guests instead need help from two local churches—evangelical and Catholic—to get through the week.

The novel is not an anti-mission diatribe. On the contrary, Christians need to take seriously Jesus' Great Commission to share the Good News.

The history of Christian missions is a mixed bag, however.

During the colonial era, European monarchs sent explorers, soldiers and missionaries into uncharted territory, claiming land, resources and people for the king and queen—and claiming souls for God.

Recently many Christians in the West have thought more carefully about missions and evangelism. Having distanced themselves from the imperial, colonial approach and culturally superior mindset, most missionaries today serve with greater cultural sensitivity and humility.

That's not always the case.

Each summer, some U.S. churches still send high schoolers to paint churches or do other unskilled tasks that could easily be done by locals who would welcome the employment. Typically, these groups have no particular skills, at least none that are urgently needed.

Do these week-long trips, which I call San Pedro Syndrome trips, accomplish anything worthwhile, such as raising awareness of the importance of missions? Sometimes they do, but Robert Lupton,

in his book *Toxic Charity*, cites research by academics at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School that "suggests service projects and mission projects do not effect lasting change. Within six to eight weeks after a mission trip, most short-term mission-trippers return to the same assumptions and behaviors they had prior to the trip."

Should we end all short-term mission trips? No, but books like *Toxic Charity and When Helping Hurts*—resources for anyone considering international missions—demonstrate that we need wiser ways of responding to Jesus' Great Commission, respecting those whom we presume to "help" and avoiding the San Pedro Syndrome.

**Gordon Jackson\***  
Guest Editorial

\* Gordon Jackson, who grew up in South Africa, taught journalism for 32 years at Whitworth University. Since retiring in 2015, he has written five books, including three satirical novels.



For Jewish and African -American Communities

## Panelists consider 'Separate Histories, Common Challenges'

By Catherine Ferguson SNJM

On the last Sunday of February, Black History Month, Temple Beth Shalom, Congregation Emanu-El and Spokane Area Jewish Family Services sponsored a virtual panel, "Separate Histories, Common Challenges."

The event brought together members of the Spokane Jewish Community and representatives of the African American community to reflect on current realities and linkages between anti-Semitism and anti-Black racism.

The hope of panel sponsors was to create a greater understanding of historical and contemporary differences and common struggles of the two communities and explore opportunities for greater solidarity in the region.

In explaining how the concept for the panel arose, **Diana Koorkanian-Sauders**, president of Congregation Emanu-El, spoke of the Jewish community's response to the racist killing of George Floyd and so many other African Americans, and the need

to confront structural racism nationally and locally. Because social justice is a key principle of Judaism, Congregation Emanu-El and Temple Beth Shalom looked into possible actions.

Along with building relationships with the Spokane NAACP, their inspiration came from a recent documentary, "Sharing Legacies: The African-American Jewish Civil Rights Alliance," which traced the involvement of Jewish leaders in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

They found the film enlightening and inspiring, but it led them to want an event to go beyond the historical solidarity it described, to show the present local situation in the Spokane region and to lead participants to understand distinct issues and concerns of each community while building solidarity with one another.

**Michael DeLand**, assistant professor of sociology and criminology

at Gonzaga University, moderated the panel, which focused on the participants' experiences and their reactions to some of today's controversial issues related to racism in the United States.

"What is critical race theory (CRT)? How do we teach about race, racism and oppression and political topics today? What is the way we teach about race, racism and oppression in all kinds in schools? Does the anti-CRT movement threaten our capacity to teach children about racism, anti-Semitism and other forms of oppression? What is the state of racism and anti-Semitism in the Spokane region? What are opportunities for building stronger forms of solidarity between the two communities?" Michael asked.

**Among the panelists** were three speakers who identify as Jewish: Emily Kaufman, an investigative researcher from the Anti-Defamation League in Seattle, Joan Braune, professor at Gonzaga's Institute for Hate Studies, and Joann Muneta, chairwoman of Latah County Idaho's Human Rights Task Force, and two members of the African American community in the Inland Northwest, Kiantha Duncan, president of the Spokane NAACP and Scott Finnie, professor and program director of Eastern Washington University's Africana Studies Program.

Each shared experiences that brought them to where they are today, their understandings of anti-Semitism or anti-Black racism, and their view of similarities and differences in the oppression of Jews and Blacks.

**Emily Kaufman**, like other Jewish-identified panelists, grew up in an interfaith family. She explained that at the Anti-Defamation League she works against defamation of Jewish people but more importantly against all forms of hate because she has come to see them as interconnected.

As a young person, she traveled to South Africa where she witnessed racial oppression that she described as being "so draconian and so oppressive that it allowed her to reflect on the reality of the segrega-

tion going on in American society during those years.

"It woke me up to the kind of white privilege that I had," she said.

**Scott Finnie** grew up in the San Francisco Bay area in the 1960s and 1970s, and belonged to a family oriented toward social justice. His cousin, Huey Newton, was one of the originators of the Black Panthers.

"This led us to family discussions about what is social justice and what is the best methodology to achieve it. Was it Malcolm's view? Was it Martin's?" he remembered.

Mike asked the panelists what they thought when they heard racism described as "systemic" or "structural"?

**Kiantha Duncan** responded. "It tickles me when I hear people talking about getting at the root of systemic racism. These structures, these systems didn't just happen. They were created and what is at their root is power and the value this has in our country," she said.

**To help people understand this**, Scott used the metaphor of how the world is set up structurally to favor right-handed people.

"Right-handers don't have to adjust when they open a notebook. They don't have any awkwardness if they are driving a stick shift. It is not that right-handers are bad people or need to feel guilty because the structures favor them but there is a need to hear from the left-handers to know about how the system is difficult for them," he said.

Scott noted that in health care, the rate of incarceration, the system of policing, housing practices, structures have been put in place that privilege white people.

**Kiantha talked about the pushback** to critical race theory.

"It is a useful way for those who don't want to give up power to cloak their desire to maintain power," she said, adding that

this is especially the case for those who believe that the white race is under threat by Blacks and Jews.

"We went wrong talking about critical RACE theory. We should have just said critical history theory, because this is really the history of our nation, not just the history of the races in our country," she said.

**Joann Muneta** explained that the attack on critical race theory was being used to defund public education in Idaho.

Scott clarified that no one in K-12 public schools is teaching critical race theory. The experiences blacks have had throughout U.S. history need to be taught as part of the actuality of history.

The panel concluded with an acknowledgement by Kiantha that racism is alive and well in the Inland Northwest.

**Joan Braune** affirmed that white Jews, though they might not be considered white by some white nationalists, are recognized as white by U.S. systems, particularly policing and education.

"White Jews are not just passing as white," she said. "They are white and they benefit from the privilege of whiteness like any other white person."

**Joann suggested reviving a coalition** of church organizations working together for human rights as a positive step to build a more effective solidarity between those experiencing anti-Semitism and anti-Black racism.

Many churches are concerned about human rights and the injustice of racism, she said.

"Anti-Black racists and anti-Semites would like nothing more than to keep us divided," Joan said. "Alone, we are like the fingers on a hand but together we become strong like a fist."

The full discussion and resources are at [spokanetbs.org/learn/lifelong-learning-adult-education](http://spokanetbs.org/learn/lifelong-learning-adult-education).



# Calendar of Events

Area code for phone numbers is (509) unless otherwise listed.

- May 2-27** • **Hidden in Plain Sight: A Visual Anthology on the Complexities of Asian Identities Exhibit**, APIC Spokane, Terrain Gallery at 628 N. Monroe, and at Eastern Washington University Women's and Gender Education Center (WAGE), Monroe 207 in Cheney, 339-4861, remelisacullitan@gmail.com (details page 3)
- May 3** • **SCAR Spokane Meeting with APIC Spokane**, Carl Maxey Center, 3114 E. 5th, 6 to 7:30 p.m., bit.ly/apicscar
- May 4** • **The Art of Rebellion: Social Justice and Chicana/Chicano Visual Arts**, 1:30 p.m., humanities.org
- May 5** • **South Perry Thursday Market**, to Oct. 27, 1000 S. Perry, 3 to 7 p.m., thursdaymarket.org
- **Grand Opening, Latinos en Spokane offices**, 1502 N. Monroe, 5 to 8 p.m., facebook.com/latinosenspokane
- **Cinco De Mayo Fiesta**, Family Promise of North Idaho, Coeur d'Alene Resort, 115 S. 2nd, 5:30 to 9 p.m., familypromiseni.org
- **Spring Fling/Auction**, St. John Vianney Catholic School, Arbor Crest Wine Cellars, 6:30 p.m., stjohnvianney.schoolauction.net
- **Spokane Human Rights Commission**, hybrid, 5:30 to 7 p.m., 625-6258, lkissler@spokanecity.org
- May 6** • **LR Montgomery Art Show**, Spokane River Keeper art sale and exhibit, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 5 to 8 p.m., spokaneriverkeeper.org
- May 7** • **North Idaho Veterans Stand Down**, North Idaho College, 1000 W. Garden, Coeur d'Alene, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 208-964-2819
- **Kootenai County Farmers' Market**, Hwy 95 and Prairie, Saturdays to Oct 22, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 208-620-9888, marketmanager@kootenaifarmersmarkets.org
- **Hats and Hooves, Derby Day Brunch**, for Children's Advocacy Center by Safe Passages Violence Prevention, Hayden Country Club, 2362 E. Bozanta, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 208-664-9300
- **Gala Fundraiser**, Woman's Club of Spokane, 1428 W. 9th, 838-5667
- May 8** • **Mother's Day Brunch**, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC), 6910 S Ben Burr, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., ihrc.net
- May 10** • **Central Washington Nonprofit Network** Lunch and Learn, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., centralwanonprofits@gmail.com
- **Peace and Justice Action Committee**, PJALS, 5:30 p.m., jarcher@pjals.org
- **Climate Action Meeting**, 350 Spokane, 6:30 to 8 p.m., 350spokane.org/get-involved/events/
- **Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light Trivia Fundraiser**, 7 to 9 p.m., zoom, earthministry.org/event/earth-ministry-wa-ipl-online-trivia-fundraiser/
- May 11** • **Kootenai County Farmers' Market**, Downtown Coeur d'Alene, 5th Ave, Wednesdays to Sept. 28, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., 208-620-9888, marketmanager@kootenaifarmersmarkets.org
- **Sabes Que? Speaker Series** and Monthly Meetings, Hispanic Business Professional Association, 6 p.m., asociacion.hispanaspokane@gmail.com
- May 12** • **Annual Hispanic Graduates and Youth Scholar Recognition Ceremony**, Hispanic Business Professional Assn., Spokane Community College, 5:30 p.m., hbpaofspokane.org
- **"Returning Salmon to the Spokane River Basin: Welcome Home!"** Spokane Riverkeeper, Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, 6 p.m., spokaneriverkeeper.org
- **Rock the Runway, The Arc of Spokane**, Historic Flight Foundation, 3829 E. Rutter, 6 p.m., 535-6000, 789-8326
- May 12, 26** • **Showing Up for Racial Justice**, PJALS, 5:30 p.m., slightly@pjals.org
- May 13** • **Chewelah Farmers' Market**, Chewelah City Park, Fridays to Oct. 14
- **Catholic Charities Gala**, Davenport Grand Hotel, 333 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 5:30 p.m., 800-918-9344, cceastermwa.org/gala
- May 13, 14** • **24-Hour Sacred Art Retreat**, IHRC, 4:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., ihrc.net
- May 14** • **Spokane Farmers' Market**, Saturdays to Oct. 29, 5th and Browne, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 995-0182, spokanefarmersmarket.org
- **Liberty Lake Farmers' Market**, Saturdays to Oct. 8, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Public Launch Meet & Greet**: Kootenai County NAACP, G.O. Chippeny Park, 827 N 8th, Coeur d'Alene, 208-991-2142
- **Coeur d'Alene Kite Fly**, Mental Health Awareness Month, McEuen Park, 702 E. Front, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 208-769-2315, cdanami.org
- **Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Heritage Day and Family Fun Fair**, Riverfront Park, 1 to 9 p.m., 928-9664
- **Spring Family Fair**, Northeast Youth and Family Services, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Wonder Saturday Market**, Saturdays to Oct. 30, 835 N. Post, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Catalyst for Cool Annual Fundraiser**, 350 Spokane, 2928 N. Madelia, 5 to 8 p.m., 350spokane.org
- May 14-15** • **Spokane Public Radio Record Sale**, CenterPlace Regional Event Center, 2426 N. Discovery Place,
- Spokane Valley, Sat: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sun: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., 688-0300
- May 16** • **Snake River to Salish Sea Spirit of the Waters** Nimiipuu Totem Journey, Nimiipuu Protecting the Environment, Hells Gate State Park, Lewiston, Idaho, 9 a.m.
- **Hidden in Plain Sight, EWU Reception**, Film Screening and Panel Discussion, EWU Monroe 207, 339-4861, apicspokane.org
- **NAACP General Membership Meeting**, zoom, 7 p.m., spokanenaacp@gmail.com
- **Spokane Climate Project**, Gonzaga Climate Center, 7 p.m., bit.ly/ClimateCtrEvents
- May 16-17** • **Community Leadership Summit**, Innovia Foundation, Spokane Convention Center, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., innovia.org/events/2022-community-leadership-summit/
- May 17** • **Fairwood Farmers' Market**, Tuesdays through Oct., 319 W. Hastings, 3 to 7 p.m., fairwoodmarket@gmail.com
- **Women Helping Women Fund: An Iconic Night at the Fox**, 1001 W. Sprague, 4 to 6 p.m., 328-8285, whwfspokane.org/an-iconic-night
- May 18** • **Silent Day of Prayer** on the Blessed Mother Mary and the Theology of Joy, IHRC, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., ihrc.net
- **Community Learning Event: A Virtual Conversation with Resmaa Menakem**, United Way Spokane, 12 p.m., unitedwayspokane.org/Excelerate-Success
- **Asian Americans 101: The Complexity and Diversity of Asian American Experiences**, Spokane Valley Library, 12004 E. Main, 6:30 p.m., apicspokane.org, bit.ly/AsianAmericans101
- **Alice Wong, SCC Hagan Center Diversity Series**, 6:30 p.m., scc.spokane.edu/events
- May 18-20** • **Washington State Nonprofit Conference**, washingtonnonprofits.org/learning/learning-calendar/
- May 19** • **Bloom in Tune**, benefit for Spokane Symphony Orchestra, Judy's Enchanted Garden, 2629 W. Northwest Blvd., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., mybidnez@yahoo.com
- **SCORE Workshop**: Building a Sustainable Nonprofit, 12 p.m., scd.evanced.info/signup/list
- **Asian College Connections - Discussion of Asian American Achievements, Familial Pressures & the Model Minority Myth**, 6 to 7:30 p.m., bit.ly/AsianCollegeConnect
- May 21** • **Peacekeeper Training**, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., pjals.org
- **Saturday with the Symphony: A Children's Program**, Coeur d'Alene Public Library, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., cdalibrary.org/events/
- **Sukiyaki Dinner**, Highland Park United Methodist, 611 S. Garfield, 12 to 4:30 p.m., 535-2687
- **Blue Jean Ball**, Communities in Schools of Spokane, Rockin' B Ranch, 5:30 p.m., spokane.ciswa.org/event/blue-jean-ball/
- **Pops 3: Havana Nights** with the Mambo Kings and Camille Zamora, Spokane Symphony, Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox, spokanesymphony.org
- **Northwest BachFest**, pianist, violinist and cellist, Barrister Winery, 1213 W. Railroad Ave., 7 to 9 p.m.,
- May 23** • **One Life at a Time Luncheon**, benefiting Christ Kitchen, True Hope, 1316 N. Lincoln, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., christkitchen.org
- May 24** • **Garland Summer Market**, Tuesdays to Sept. 13, 4 to 8 p.m.
- May 25** • **Double Crossed: The American Missionary Spies of World War II**, 1 p.m., humanities.org
- **Opening of Millwood Farmers' Market**, Millwood City Park, Wednesdays to Oct. 12, 3 to 7 p.m.
- **Kendall Yards Night Market**, Wednesdays to Sept. 21, 5 to 8 p.m.
- **Annual Benefit - "Solidarity: Building a Just Future for All of Us."** Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 6:30 p.m., virtual, pjals.org
- May 27** • **Closing Reception/Solidarity Event**, "Hidden in Plain Sight," Terrain Gallery, 5 to 8 p.m.
- May 28** • **Spokane Garry: A Historical Expedition**, Great Northwest University, 611 E. Indiana, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 284-7100
- **El Mercadito**, Latinos En Spokane, AM Cannon Park, 11 a.m., info@LatinosEnSpokane.org
- **The Fig Tree Distribution and Mailing**, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 535-4112, development@thefigtree.org
- **The Fig Tree Board Annual Meeting**, 12 to 3 p.m., 535-4112, mary@thefigtree.org
- Tues** • **Grief Share**, Support for Those Grieving the Loss of a Loved One, IHRC, 1 to 3 p.m., ihrc.net
- **Talk-Oh! Tuesdays**, Kootenai Environmental Alliance and Lake Coeur d'Alene Waterkeeper, kealliance.org
- Tues-Sun** • **Awakenings: Traditional Canoes and Calling the Salmon Home**, Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sats** • **Bonner's Ferry Farmers' Market**, city parking lot, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., board@bonnersferryfarmersmarket.org
- Sat, Sun** • **Spokane's BeYOUtiful Local Farmers' Market**, Northtown Mall, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., 315-9608
- **Wonder Farmers' Market**, 835 N. Post St., 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., wonderspokane.com
- **Burritos for the People**, Spokane Community Against Racism, Main Market, 44, W. Main, 9 to 10 a.m., scarspokane.org/burritos-for-the-people

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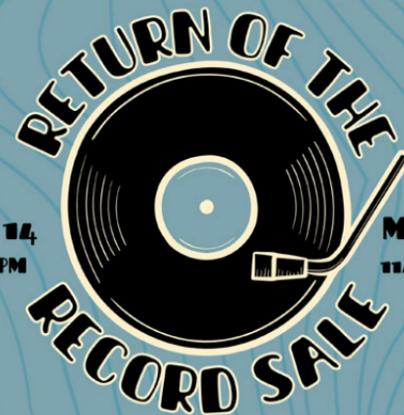


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# Our Place food bank offers choices for guests, so it's like shopping

Each day that Our Place food bank is open, Tracie Swanson says she sees and serves Jesus as Jesus comes down the line of tables filled with food for hungry individuals and families.

The tables are set up in the parking lot, under tents if necessary, outside Our Place Community Outreach at 1509 W. College Ave. in West Central Spokane.

In March 2020, Our Place took their food bank outside, and continued to offer a free shopping opportunity for people to select from a choice of food.

"Since then, we only closed one day for smoke, one day because it was too cold and one day because it was 106 degrees," said Tracie, the part-time executive director for 14 years.

"We make sure the most vulnerable members of the community are not overlooked, judged or discriminated against but treated with dignity and respect as they choose food to feed their families," she said.

Tracie, staff and volunteers sense people's fear, depression and uncertainty about the future with rising costs for rent, utilities and food. Many of those helping know fear and uncertainty because they have been on the other side of the tables, picking up food rather than keeping their tables supplied and answering questions about how to use jicama or artichokes.

One day there was an oversupply of bananas, so volunteers made sure people took as many as they wanted. Another day there were few tomatoes, so they limited them to two per person.

"We are seeing more Afghan refugees and other immigrants, seniors on fixed incomes, and intergenerational families with aunts, uncles, cousins, parents, children and grandparents living in one household because of the outrageous rents," Tracie said.

"Prices are going up and up," she said, "so people are happy when Second Harvest and Northwest Harvest provide cases of tuna, peanut butter, grape jelly, scalloped potatoes, refried beans, black beans or other canned goods we can give people."

The husband of development director Kat Hartsell stocks



Tracie Swanson helps hand out food at Our Place.

shelves at a grocery store and keeps them informed on what items are hard to get.

**Tracie appreciates** Our Place's 35-year history of staff and volunteers giving people hope by offering a bounty of food to feed their families.

Since COVID, Our Place's outdoor food distribution has been open from 4 to 6 p.m., Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Thursdays.

Samples of food items sit at the check-in desk so people can see the items and volunteers can explain what they are.

"It helps overcome language barriers," Tracie said.

**Clothing, blankets,** bedding, sleeping bags and other household items are available inside, depending on donations.

The clothing bank, which includes men's clothing, is open for 15-minute periods to five people wearing masks during food bank hours.

Laundry facilities are available on a first-come, first-served basis 9:30 to 11:15 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 2 to 4:30 p.m., Wednesdays.

"We are low barrier, meaning we do not ask many questions and receive people from the entire community," she said. "We only have boundaries for hygiene products—like toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper and items purchased with grants. Anyone can pick up feminine

hygiene items and diapers."

Each day 25 to 30 of Our Place's 80 volunteers help set up the tables, keep food supplied and then put the tables away. Tuesdays, staff and volunteers come in to do administrative work and restock.

Donations are received during office hours, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 2 to 6 p.m., Wednesdays.

**When Our Place is closed,** they keep 21 crates stacked three high in a covered area outside the front doors stocked with food as their own Little Pantry. It is used by homeless people and those needing food other days of the week, as well as by people stocking their own Little Pantries, which are like Little Libraries in neighborhoods.

Our Place also invites those who have Little Pantries to come by at the end of the food distributions on Wednesdays and Thursdays to pick up extra food. Volunteers and staff guide people who come to the food bank to other resources and services. Previously, Our Place served

about 1,000 a month. Now it serves 3,000 to 5,000 a month. On Wednesdays about 300 come and Thursdays about 500.

Much food is supplied from Second Harvest, Northwest Harvest and grocery rescue twice a week from My Fresh Basket, Safeway and Natural Grocers.

They offer yogurt, dairy, bread, mac and cheese, canned goods, produce and proteins, soup, chili and peanut butter.

**In 2020-2021, the program** provided 611,536 pounds of food, 29,034 articles of clothing, 24,020 hygiene products, 179 loads of laundry and 1,053 household items.

Our Place also provides bus passes and utility assistance. This year their budget jumped from \$205,000 in 2018-19 to \$280,000 to meet rising costs.

"We have to raise more funds to serve more people," she said. "Fortunately, we own the building."

**Benedictine Sister Meg Sass,** who helped canvas the neighborhood and recruited churches to start Our Place in 1987, will speak at the 2022 Stage Lights Fundraiser at 6 p.m., Thursday, June 23, at Salem Lutheran Church, 1428 W. Broadway.

Now living at the Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, Idaho, Sr. Meg will reflect on the history of the program, started as an ecumenical ministry drawing together churches to pool their resources and serve the community.

**Our Place continues** to receive the support of community churches, including St. Augustine, St. Joseph on Dean and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic; Emmanuel, Westminster and Knox Presbyterian; Salem Lutheran, Christ Central, St. John's Episcopal Cathedral and the Sisters of the Holy Names.

Faith communities provide not only financial support, but also

board members and volunteers.

The largest support is from grants, and second largest from individuals. Other sources include other churches, organizations and the board fundraiser.

"Church support provides the structure to keep us going," Tracie said.

**While the churches are** still integral, in 2018 the organization changed its name from Our Place Community Ministries to Our Place Community Outreach.

"We are more about outreach services than ministry," she said.

"From the beginning, staff and volunteers gathered for prayer at the start of each day," she said. "For a while, we got away from that, but now are back to praying."

**"Few nonprofits continue** as long as we have," continued Tracie, who earned a degree in journalism in 1993 from the University of Idaho. "In recent years, we have been more effective at making our presence known in the community through Facebook and other means."

At a recent conference of 500 nonprofit leaders in Yakima, the speaker asked how many had been with their nonprofit for two years and five years. Many raised their hands. She was among nine who had been executive directors more than 10 years.

"There is high burnout because of the stress among those working in social services," said Tracie, explaining that she works part time, so she has time off with her family to rejuvenate.

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