

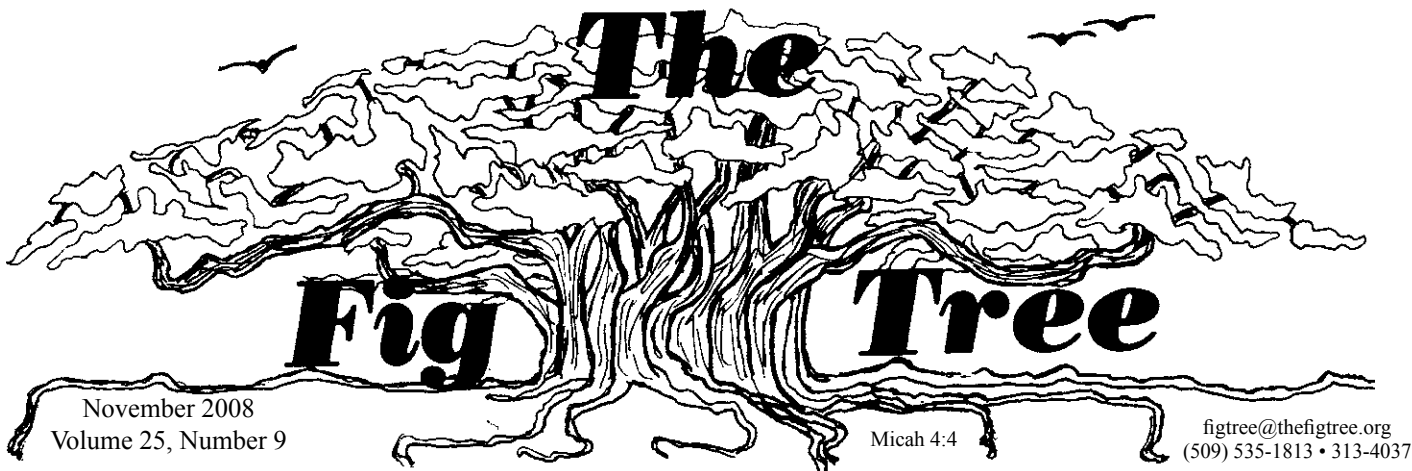
STORIES INSIDE

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*Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest
online in color at www.thefigtree.org*

Church retains Pacific traditions

By Mary Stamp

Marshall Islanders, who are among nearly 900 Pacific Islanders and native Hawaiians living in Spokane County, turn to their church to help them retain their culture, language and community.

Those who have moved to Spokane for educational and job opportunities face adjustment to a different economy and different values, said Shem Mito, deacon at the Jaran Radrikdron Congregational United Church of Christ in Spokane.

As they mix U.S. and Marshall-ese cultures, they try to keep two essential values of their culture: respect and sharing.

Shem, who came in June 2007 from Hawaii with his wife Lise to live near their daughter and grandchildren, described some of the differences:

In Spokane, Marshallese rent housing, but in the Marshall Islands, many own their land and do not have to pay for housing.

Only four islands have electricity. People living on outer islands have no electricity, cook food in underground ovens and do not have utility bills. Many fish and grow



Lise and Shem Mito are active in a Marshall Islands church in Spokane.

food on subsistence farms. When someone goes fishing, he shares the fish he catches with relatives and neighbors.

Because Marshall Islanders here need to have jobs to pay for rent, utilities and food, they help each other find employment.

Marshallese can migrate freely to the United States under the 1986 Compact of Free Association. About 20,000 live in Arkansas and 5,000 in Hawaii.

Because about 55 percent of the 60,000 Marshall Islanders are in the Congregational United Church of Christ (UCCMI) and 26 percent in the Assembly of God Church, Marshallese in Spokane have started churches of those denominations.

The UCCMI church rents space Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1725 E. Bridgeport. The Assembly of God church meets on occasion at Center Pointe.

Recently, Shem shared his story in the context of the history, culture and church life of Marshall Islanders.

The Marshall Islands include
Continued on page 12

Dialogue will explore challenges and opportunities for ecumenism today

Four bishops and an ecumenical leader will discuss “Bread Broken and Shared: Challenges and Opportunities for Ecumenism Today” at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, November 6 at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave.

They are Christ Holy Sanctified Bishop Walton Mize, Catholic Bishop William Skylstad, Episcopal Bishop Jim Waggoner, Lutheran Bishop Martin Wells and Alice Woltdt of the Washington Association of Churches (WAC).

In a recent conversation planning their input, they shared a few glimpses of their thoughts on ecumenism:

- The beginning point of ecumenism is to keep talking with and loving each other.
- Ecumenism is a journey. There is no exit from it.
- Ecumenism contrasts to the

prevailing mentality that “you’re either for us or against us.”

The event is part of the Fig Tree newspaper’s annual Faith in Action Dialogue and launches its 25th anniversary celebrations.

The evening opens with fellowship and displays of ecumenical and interfaith ministries. After brief comments from panelists, there will be discussion and a worship service led by other area church leaders.

“We will have a procession of different breads, visually representing our differences, brokenness and unity,” said Mary Stamp, editor.

The Faith in Action Dialogue focuses on ecumenical understanding and global issues affecting congregational life.

Each panelist shared some biographical background.

• After graduating from high school in 1947 in Gary, Ind., Bishop Mize entered the university there before being drafted and serving six years in the Korean War. Encountering Jesus and marrying Blanche in 1952, he entered Mt. Zion Full Gospel Church’s Bible College and Seminary in San Francisco.

Ordained in 1958 he served Mt. Zion Church until 1963, when he went to Nigeria as a missionary, serving there periodically until 1985. In 1975, he was consecrated bishop of the Nigeria Section. He came to Spokane in 1989 as pastor of Lighthouse Tabernacle and bishop of the Pacific Northwest Regional Diocese.

• Bishop Skylstad left his home in Omak at 14 to attend seminary. After training for the priesthood at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Ohio, he was ordained in the Diocese of Spokane in 1960.

He served as assistant pastor in Pullman, principal of a high school seminary in Colbert, pastor in St. Joseph Parish in Colbert and pastor at Assumption Parish in Spokane. He became chancellor in the diocese in 1976, Bishop of Yakima in 1977 and Bishop of

Continued on page 3

Walla Walla coffee shop connects people, faith

By Bronwyn Worthington

The Walla Walla Roastery serves more than a good cup of coffee.

An icon of the Virgin Mary hanging on the wall in the kitchen reminds the brother and sister who own the coffee shop that their role in life is to serve people.

Co-owners Thomas Reese and Mary Senter invite conversations with and among staff and customers, foster interest in coffee growers and their countries, and help coffee drinkers raise funds for nonprofits.

Integrating their family legacy of service and their Orthodox faith, which they adopted as adults, these siblings’ influence extends beyond the doors of their business.

As the coffee shop grew, Thomas and Mary dreamed of expanding it into an environment that fostered conversations among members of the community.

They consider it part of their job to encourage people to share views on faith and justice as they converse about life and community events.

Thomas and Mary describe their business as part of “the third wave of coffee.”

The first wave viewed coffee only for the sake of consumption. The second wave focused on creating specialty coffees for enjoyment. The third wave appreciates coffees for the unique attributes they offer, for their countries of origin and for the farms that produce them.

When considering which coffees to purchase, Thomas and Mary consider how those in charge of coffee plantations treat their workers and how they sustain the land.

Thomas describes a model coffee farm as one that leaves an inheritance for its grandchildren.

While the business sells some fair-trade certified coffee,
Continued on page 4

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Financial panic must not derail anti-poverty plans

New York (ENI). The global financial crisis should not derail progress on fighting poverty worldwide, religious leaders said, adding that the current financial market turmoil makes attempts to tackle deprivation more urgent.

“When powers declare an emergency, there is mobilization,” said the Rev. David Beckmann, president of the Washington-based anti-hunger group Bread for the World, before a September United Nations gathering in New York on anti-poverty targets in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

While Congress was debating a \$700-billion financial bailout for Wall Street financial institutions, “religious communities have been working with pennies for decades” against hunger and poverty, said David, who helped convene an interfaith consultation on global hunger before the U.N. meeting.

“Today, faith leaders are sending a clear message to government leaders that peoples of all nations and religious persuasions expect them to deliver on their promises,” said Salil Shetty, director of the Millennium Campaign, an effort to galvanize public support for the goals, which include the eradication of poverty by 2015.

Salil’s September statement followed declarations by governments, businesses and other groups pledging \$16 billion toward the goals “against the backdrop of a global financial crisis.”

The New York-based Religions for Peace organization said, “The massive scale of poverty and related suffering can be changed. Because we have the capacity to make this change, we have the moral obligation to do so. Each of our faith traditions requires us to stand with those who live in abject poverty and destitution, and speak out and take action on their behalf. We are united in our call to world leaders, governments, civil society, religious communities and the private sector to take bold action to accelerate the implementation of the MDGs.”

Religious leaders urge candidates to care for the poor

New York (NCC News Service) – The worldwide economic crisis affects most households, and both major presidential candidates are expressing their solidarity with middle-class people on main street. Leaders of the National Council of Churches and its member communions, however, remind the candidates that persons living in poverty in the United States and around the world are hurt the most by the economic downturn.

“As we consider bailouts and recovery plans, we now need to hear your voices demanding that the plight of America’s poorest citizens, and the needs of people living in poverty around the world, will be addressed,” the leaders said in a letter to the candidates, signed by the NCC President, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, the General Secretary, the Rev. Michael Kinnamon, and 14 heads of NCC member communions.

“It is not enough to address the misdeeds of those who bear responsibility for this crisis or to respond to problems and anxieties of the middle class, as important as they are,” the letter said. “Our faith calls us to give particular attention to our most vulnerable neighbors, children and people living in extreme poverty.

“The suffering and the fear experienced by people of all economic conditions today are real,” the letter said. “Economic suffering has not been and is not now equally felt. We urge you to speak with clarity about the suffering of people living in poverty.”

With the financial uncertainty, the signers urge continued generosity to food banks and programs aimed at emergency assistance.

“The impact of our crisis is not just on Wall Street or Main Street. It is also in the alleys of our urban tenements and housing projects, the lanes of rural America and the forgotten cities and villages of the impoverished southern hemisphere,” they said.

Participants pledge their commitment to make “poverty a moral priority for our nation” and challenge the candidates to do so, too.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Seattle judge speaks at NAACP banquet

“The Journey - The Legacy” is the theme retired King County Superior Court Judge Donald Haley will address at the NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet, which begins at 5 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 8, at Northern Quest Casino.

As a child working beside his parents in the cotton fields of Roanoke, La., he believed he would not be limited to working in the fields. His black teachers

gave him self-esteem and understanding of his African-American roots that supported his father’s emphasis on knowledge.

He followed examples of African Americans who succeeded despite odds against them. In 1958, he graduated from the University of Washington School of Law and practiced law from 1968 to 1982, serving during that time on bar association committees.

From 1983 until he retired recently, he served on the King County Superior Court bench and was a leader in the State Superior Court Judges’ Association.

He continues to serve the judicial community and community groups, aware how fortunate he is to have realized his dreams and acknowledging that he needs to continue to be vigilant.

For information, call 483-8644.

Human trafficking education event planned

The Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center will present a workshop on “Human Trafficking: Modern Day Slavery” from 7 to 9 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 12, at St. Aloysius Parish, O’Malley Hall, 330 E. Boone in Spokane.

Rani Hong, a trafficking survivor and founder of the Tronie Foundation, will speak on human trafficking in the Northwest and opportunities for action.

“Human trafficking is modern slavery. It exists right here,”

said Sr. Susan Francois of the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center. “Our goal is to raise awareness about trafficking in our communities and build a coalition to stop the demand for it.”

Rani and her husband Trong, both survivors of human trafficking, founded the Tronie Foundation to restore victims of trafficking and those vulnerable to exploitation. They recently opened the Northwest’s first recovery shelter for trafficking

survivors. Rani shares her story as a survivor to bring attention to others who suffer.

Other sponsors include Catholic Community Services of Western Washington, Franciscan Health, Lutheran Community Services, PeaceHealth, Providence Health, Seattle Council of Catholic Women, Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network and Washington Association of Churches.

For information, call 206-223-1138 or visit www.ipjc.org.

Thanksgiving service includes many faiths

“Voices of Thanksgiving” is the theme for the 2008 Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at 10 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 27, at Manito United Methodist Church, 3220 S. Grand.

The Rev. Michael (Redhawk) Rice-Sauer of Covenant Christian Church is the featured speaker for the service.

Drums, organ, flute, chants, blessings, peace messages, musical offerings, songs, teachings and insights from different faith

traditions are elements of the celebration.

A representative of Second Harvest Northwest will speak about the work of this food distribution agency and the needs of hungry people in these times.

Participants include people from Baha’i, Buddhist, Disciples of Christ, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, United Methodist, Native American and Sikh congregations.

The Interfaith Council and its precursor ecumenical councils

have been celebrating the Thanksgiving Day Service in conjunction with Second Harvest and its predecessor since the 1940s, said the Rev. Joe Niemiec, co-pastor of the Center for Spiritual Living in Spokane and chair of the planning committee.

“This year’s theme on many voices honors the diverse people from all over the world who now live here and throughout the United States,” he said.

For information, call 599-2411.

Forum explores ideas for Spokane’s economy

Spokane Mayor Mary Verner will offer “Ideas for a Vibrant Spokane Economy” at the Spokane City Forum at 11:45 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 19, at First Presbyterian Church, 318 S. Cedar.

Like many cities, Spokane is trying to maintain and expand its local economy during these tough economic times, so the mayor will discuss three elements that may not have been given sufficient attention previously: the expanding youth art and music scene, growing “green” businesses and increased potential for international trade.

Since her election as mayor in 2007, she has directed the activities of the city’s 2,000 employees and managed a \$600 million annual budget. In leadership, she says she encourages decisiveness, inclusion, transparency, and serving all citizens equally.

Her experience includes business, law, planning, policy development, program design and management. Coming from the Southeast, she settled in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where she was a high school teacher, legal assistant and an environmental programs

manager in the Territorial Government.

While Mary was completing a master’s degree, the Spokane Tribe hired her in natural resources management in 1992. She then became executive director of the Upper Columbia United Tribes, which serves the five federally recognized tribes with reservations in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho.

Before she was elected mayor, Mary was an active citizen and volunteer, and served on the Spokane City Council for four years.

For information, call 777-1555 or email info@spokanecityforum.org.



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Editorial Team
Editor/Publisher/Photos - Mary Stamp
Mary Mackay, Nancy Minard, Sara Weaver

Coordinators & Contract
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Journalist challenges militarization of police

Jeremy Scahill, investigative journalist with “Democracy Now,” speaking in Spokane and Coeur d’Alene, called for vigilance, organizing and networking to challenge the para-militarization of police forces and the use of mercenary fighters in Iraq.

He came to the region both to promote his new book, *Blackwater: The Rise of the World’s Most Powerful Mercenary Army*, and because Blackwater, a private security company, wants to open a regional training center for law enforcement in North Idaho.

Jeremy believes Blackwater—founded in 1997 to train military personnel in North Carolina—is a threat to U.S. democracy and global security.

At the Democratic and Republican conventions in Denver and St. Paul, he said, Blackwater-trained paramilitary personnel targeted

journalists covering protests.

In Denver, protesters with Veterans Against the War faced tear gas, snipers and security forces, he reported.

In St. Paul, Blackwater was involved in a pre-emptive raid detaining journalists, he said, until a neighbor allowed other media access to her back yard to film their colleagues’ detention.

Jeremy said the para-militarization of police is growing. Blackwater also makes money off the war in Iraq and spying that decreases civil liberties at home.

He connects the current economic crisis to war profiteers like Haliburton, Dynacorp, Bechtel and Blackwater, who contribute to out-of-control, unquestioned spending on war, with much of the \$2 billion spent each week going to these contractors.

Jeremy said that along with

150,000 U.S. troops in Iraq, there are 190,000 private contractors.

“The mercenaries there are paid more than U.S. soldiers,” he said. “Why is there no outrage? Why do we allow 70 percent of the military budget to go to mercenaries? Why do we allow contractors to gather intelligence that influences decisions by the President and Congress?”

After Hurricane Katrina, the U.S. government paid Blackwater \$950 a day for each guard provided, because the Louisiana National Guard was in Baghdad—\$350 paid to the guard and \$600 for lodging, ammunition, overhead and profits.

“We are in a fight for the future of democracy,” said Jeremy.

Coeur d’Alene Peace, the Peace and Justice Action Center of Spokane and Auntie’s hosted him.

For information, call 838-7870.

Dialogue seeks to further ecumenical life

Continued from page 1

Spokane in 1990.

• **Bishop Waggoner**, who was consecrated Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane in 2000, earned a bachelor’s degree at Marshall University and master and doctor of divinity, and doctor of ministry degrees from Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Va. Before seminary, he served in the Navy.

He served 21 years with the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia, 12 years in parish ministry and nine years on the bishop’s staff before coming to Spokane.

• **Bishop Wells**, a native of Colorado, has lived in Alaska, California and Washington most of his life. After earning a bachelor’s degree in business in 1971 at the University of Denver and a juris doctor degree from the University of Puget Sound Law School in 1976, he completed a master of divinity degree from Pacific Lutheran Theological School in Berkley in 1981.

He and his wife, the Rev. Susan Briehl, have two daughters and have served in pastoral teams at Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church in Bellingham from 1982 to 1986, as university pastors at Pacific

Lutheran University in Tacoma until 1994 and then as executive directors and pastors at Holden Village retreat center off Lake Chelan.

In 1999, he was elected bishop of the Eastern Washington Idaho Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a synod with 105 ministry sites from Jackson, Wyo., to Lake Chelan.

• **Woldt began in July** as transitional executive director for the WAC, after serving as director of the Religious Coalition for the Common Good, public policy director for the WAC and 17 years in social justice, public policy and administration with the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

She has a bachelor’s degree from South Dakota State University, taught and did organizing in Illinois before moving to Seattle in 1975, and has a master’s in public administration from Seattle University. She is a member of Trinity United Methodist and Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ in Seattle.

The first edition of The Fig Tree was published in May 1984 under what was then the Spokane Christian Coalition. The newspaper and website cover news of the faith

and nonprofit communities of the Inland Northwest to break through divisions among people of faith by building understanding, promoting unity and common action.

For information, call 535-1813, e-mail figtree@thefigtree.org or visit www.thefigtree.org.

Through arts, Fall Folk Fest celebrates diverse cultures

The 2008 Fall Folk Festival will present music, dance, stories and arts of varied ethnic traditions from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 8, and from noon to 5 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 9, in The Lair at Spokane Community College, 1800 N. Greene.

The community event promotes awareness of cultural and ethnic traditions in the region, including more than 40 music groups, dancers, storytellers and performing groups, most of whom are local, but also come from Montana, California and British Columbia.

The festival also features Che oke’ ten, Paul Wagner, a Native American flutist, drummer, singer and storyteller in four local performances, two at SCC.

His performances are at 4 p.m., Friday, Nov. 7, at the Boys and Girls Club, 544 E. Providence; 10:30 a.m., Saturday, at the Hillyard Library, 4005 N. Cook, and at 2 p.m., Saturday, and noon, Sunday, at the festival at the Lair.

Che oke’ ten, who is from the Saanich (Coast Salish) tribe, shares the songs and stories of his ancient northwest coast Sissiwiss—sacred breath/sacred life—spirituality, in cultural presentations, ritual and public performances.

In the ancient ways of Sissiwiss spirituality, it is understood that all songs are prayers, that Mother Earth and Ancestors are always speaking and giving songs.

For information, call 624-5693 or visit www.spokane-folklore.org.

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Panelists

Bishop Walton Mize - Christ Holy Sanctified Church
Bishop William Skylstad - Catholic Diocese of Spokane
Bishop Jim Waggoner - Episcopal Diocese of Spokane
Bishop Martin Wells - Eastern Washington Idaho Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Alice Woldt - Interim director at the Washington Association of Churches

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Saturday, Nov. 15
9 am - 4 pm
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The Fig Tree will run another composite ad in the issue out Dec. 3.
Cost: \$14 / col. inch

Coffee builds global ties through projects with growing countries

Continued from page 1
the owners see a need to update the current system. The two have learned that although some smaller farms benefit from the current fair-trade system, other legitimate, larger farms are unable to receive the fair-trade certification.

Working closely with their broker and researching the farms for themselves helps them honor what they consider the original standards of fair trade.

“The goal is to allow the consumer to pay more for a good cup of coffee so the money in turn will return to the grower,” Thomas said.

From the beginning in 2001, Mary has handled public relations for the business, which has included developing initiatives that benefit nonprofit organizations.

Beginning as a wholesale operation in Thomas’ garage, the co-owners spent many hours roasting beans shipped from places as far away as Indonesia and Ethiopia. During this time, Thomas and Mary began helping businesses, churches and institutions to select their own beans and roasts to create signature coffee blends.

Two of the nonprofits that have benefited are the Cambodia Project and The Krista Foundation for Global Citizenship.

In both cases, the roastery has named unique blends of coffee for them.

Thomas and Mary have donated \$1 for every pound of the named blends they have sold to the nonprofits designated.

The Cambodia Project began shortly after Mary and her husband Brian adopted their daughter, Ruth, from Cambodia. A representative of American Assistance for Cambodia suggested a partnership.

In response, Thomas and Mary created their Ratanakiri Blend and Corky’s Blend. The benefit project with those blends lasted until 2007.

“It seemed natural to me to work on the Cambodian coffee project as a way to give back a little to the birth-country of our daughter,” said Mary.

Along with Ruth and two sons by birth, Mary and Brian have adopted two daughters from Ethiopia, where the roastery also has coffee ties.

The Krista Foundation Benefit features the Global Citizen blend of coffee. It began after Aaron Ausland, the late Krista Hunt Ausland’s husband, came to the roastery several years ago. He told how the Krista Foundation began in Spokane after Krista died at age 25 in a bus accident while she and Aaron worked in Bolivia



Mary Senter and Thomas Reese serve coffee, friendship, conversation with a background of faith.

Photo by Bronwyn Worthington

as community developers.

His story also drew Mary’s interest because she knew Krista’s parents, Jim and Linda Hunt, who taught at Whitworth when she was a student there. The Hunts helped establish the foundation in their daughter’s name.

The foundation seeks to empower young Christian adults to embrace service as a way of life, become active and imaginative citizens, promote stewardship of creation and commit to think globally and act locally.

Having grown up in Walla Walla, Thomas and Mary experienced a secure, happy childhood with their parents and other siblings, Daniel and David. The Reese children grew up in a Presbyterian home with their father practicing law and their mother creating a hospitable home for them and for struggling children they took in.

“Mom always had an open door. Often we had others living with us,” Mary said.

Thomas’ journey into Orthodox faith led him from Portland to Alaska and back to Walla Walla.

Shortly after Thomas graduated from Walla Walla High School in 1980, he moved to Portland, lived an alternative lifestyle involving skateboarding and punk rock music, and became caught up in destructive habits and drug abuse.

Realizing his need for a change, he moved to Anchorage in 1988. He believes Alaska’s untamed, diverse lands opened him to a new understanding of the meaning of life.

“During this point, God came to me, and I changed,” he said.

Along with inspiration from nature, Thomas found friends who were different from any he had

met before. Connected by their Orthodox faith, the group influenced him to adopt the Orthodox tradition.

“In my hour of need, they were just there,” he said

Free of drug addiction and filled with the joy of his new faith, Thomas met his wife Elizabeth at St. John’s Orthodox Cathedral in Eagle River. They married in 1990. Today they have six children, aged two to 16.

In 1996, after working with TransAlaska Pipelines for several years, Thomas and the assistant priest of his church began the Holy Cross House ministry. For five years, he, Elizabeth and their first two children cared for 20 young people, assisting with administrative tasks, cooking and mentoring.

Thomas also helped counsel young people who struggled with drug problems, as he had. He believed he had a responsibility to be available to others.

Seeing her brother’s transformation, Mary attended worship with him in Alaska. She was drawn by the liturgy and “a faith that seemed ‘real.’” She returned to Walla Walla and became involved in St. Silouan Orthodox Church, which met in a private home until 2003 when they moved into a church building.

Other family members, impressed with Thomas’ transformation, also converted: brothers, David, who now lives in Yakima, and Daniel, formerly a Presbyterian minister and now assistant priest at St. Silouan, and their mother. Their father remains Presbyterian.

Thomas joined St. Silouan when he and his family returned to Walla Walla in 2000, seeking a

new vocation.

Feeling limited by a lack of formal education, he sought purposeful work. After much discussion, he invited Mary to be his business partner and open the Walla Walla Roastery.

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In 2006 they moved the roastery to its current location near the Walla Walla airport.

While Thomas and Mary consider participation at St. Silouan Orthodox Church a vital part of their lives, they attempt to live out their faith every day at the Walla Walla Roastery.

Thomas said he and Mary are open to sharing their faith without pushing it on people.

He says he likes to mix with various groups, just as Christ spent time with more than one group of people.

“We just try to be Christians and reach out to people,” he said.

Being in the kitchen, the icon of the Virgin Mary, Thomas added, is more for them than their customers. It reminds them to integrate their faith into their work.

For information, call 526-3211.

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Music by Shirley Mier
Directed by Danielle S. Read

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Follows stories of three unaccompanied immigrant children

Documentary depicts parallels between immigrants and Advent Posadas

A 55-minute documentary, "Posada," tells the stories of unaccompanied immigrant children, drawing a parallel between their journeys and the traditional Mexican Advent Las Posadas procession and stirring concern about attitudes toward and treatment of immigrants.

The Rev. Mark McGregor, SJ, of Gonzaga University Ministry and adjunct communication arts teacher, wrote, directed and produced "Posada," subtitled "A Night to Cross All Borders," as his debut film.

He will show it as part of the Catholicism for the New Millennium series at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 4, at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University.

Scott Cooper, director of Parish Social Services with Catholic Charities, and Gonzaga student Ivonne Guillen will share in a discussion after the film.

"Posada," Mark explained, "means 'shelter' in Spanish."

The film raises issues about immigration reform addressed by the U.S. Catholic bishops' "Justice for Immigrants: A Journey of Hope: the Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform," which was launched in 2005, Mark said.

It is also part of Las Posadas Project, a nationwide project which promotes celebrations of Las Posadas in Advent as a way to spread hospitality and solidarity.

Gonzaga University is planning a Posadas procession at 9:30 p.m., before the 10 p.m., Mass at St. Aloysius Catholic Church on Sunday, Dec. 7.

Mark also encourages participation with St. Joseph's Catholic Church's Las Posadas procession on Friday, Dec. 19, said Ramon Carranza, vice president of La Raza, which is co-sponsoring the event with University Ministry.

For 2008, Las Posadas Project suggests a theme for each of the nine days of celebration—dignity, human solidarity, immigrants, solidarity, hospitality, perseverance, justice, hope and Christmas.

Mark spent three years as a child in Panama, where his father was in the military. When his family moved to Oak Harbor, Wash., they drove through Central America and Mexico.

His eye-opening childhood experience of living in and traveling through Central America and seeing the poverty there stirred his concern about immigration.

After earning a bachelor's degree in economics in 1984 from Seattle University, Mark completed the master's program in Jesuit philosophy at Gonzaga University in 1988.



The Rev. Mark McGregor, SJ, university minister, filmmaker

From the next four years, he taught Latin American history at Seattle Preparatory School. He was ordained a Jesuit priest in 1996 and earned a master's in fine arts at the Loyola Marymount School of Film in 2002.

While there, he also served as chaplain at the Central Juvenile Hall, where he met Amalia Molina, a volunteer chaplain and immigrant from El Salvador. She and her husband had been detained for 16 months in a federal detention center. Through her he met three teenage detainees who subsequently wanted to tell their stories in "Posada."

When Mark left to teach at Fairfield University in Connecticut from 2003 to 2007, he carried a vision to do a film to tell Amalia's story.

She preferred that he first "tell the children's stories."

As he thought of the story of Mary and Joseph going door-to-door, being rejected and finally being welcomed, he realized that Amalia "opens doors for teenage immigrants." In 2005, the seed for the film started to grow.

With assistance from Fairfield and Loyola Productions, Inc., he took 10 Fairfield students to shoot the film in December 2006 and January 2007. Production was completed in March 2007.

The film parallels the inward spiritual journey from rejection to acceptance with the outward journey of unaccompanied youth coming from Latin America, he

said. It also depicts the teens' spiritual journeys as they learn to rely on God as people help them find shelter.

At one point, one boy looked at the fence being built along the border and said spontaneously, "Look at the Berlin Wall. It came down. I wish there were no more walls in the world."

Mark, who teaches video, leads liturgies and conducts retreats at Gonzaga, challenges the conditions and human rights abuses that immigrant children face in federal detention centers.

Despite the cruelty they experience, he sees strong faith among immigrants and their advocates.

"Many are resilient and joyful despite suffering," he said.

When a bishops' document, such as the one on immigration, comes out, he believes there is need to inform people of the Scriptures, history and social teachings behind the call for reform.

"We need to prepare people in the pews in a way that inspires commitment to thoughtful advocacy," he said.

"Jesus' incarnation is a credible, effective statement for the church to speak on immigration," Mark said. "In it, God crosses every border between divinity and humanity to make a home with us. Jesus' ministry of preaching, teaching and healing reached out to outsiders."

Mark advocates a pragmatic, Christian viewpoint toward 12

million undocumented people who are lured to the United States to serve "our economic needs," he said. "Our relationship with immigrants benefits our economy and society, but we leave the immigrants in the shadows, vulnerable and scapegoated."

"The bishops oppose building a wall that divides people and land," he said. "They call for enhancing guest worker programs that reflect needs in the economy."

Along with rallies and marches for immigration reform, the Posadas Project invites people to join Posadas processions, to pray for immigrants and hear stories about past and present immigrants.

"It seeks to plant seeds for Catholics to respond with greater concern," said Mark, who coordinates the project, "which may

include going to marches and rallies.

"Before supporting advocacy, we need to experience at Christmas our call to be better Christians and neighbors," he said. "We promote posadas to promote justice for immigrants as we prepare for Christmas and make room for God in our lives."

"Posada" won the best short documentary at the October 2008 Orlando Hispanic Film Festival and won Human Rights and Religion prize in December 2007 at the Religion Today Film Festival in Trent, Italy.

For information, call 313-4239 or email mcgregor2@gonzaga.edu.

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FaithTrust Institute hopes religious institutions will be sanctuaries of safety

Step by step for more than 30 years, the Rev. Marie Fortune has seen progress as the faith community has addressed religious, spiritual and cultural issues related to sexual abuse and domestic violence.

While many regional and national denominations have established policies and procedures for handling complaints of clergy misconduct, many need to do more, and few faith-based non-profits have policies, Marie said.

Seeing the changes over those years, she is hopeful.

She knows the FaithTrust Institute, which she founded in 1977 as the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, has had international, multi-faith and multi-cultural impact, providing communities and advocates with tools to address abuse that betrays trust in congregations.

The institute works with Asian, Pacific Islander, Buddhist, Jewish, Latino/a, Muslim, Black, Anglo, Indigenous, Protestant and Roman Catholic organizations, providing training and consultation in person and in videos, internet and print. It does training on clergy ethics, congregational safety and health, healthy families, human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

FaithTrust urges religious institutions to foster a climate in which abuse is not tolerated, so they can be sanctuaries of safety, where individuals can experience justice and healing.

After studies at Yale Divinity School in 1976, Marie, who grew up in North Carolina, served as interim pastor at Tolt Congregational United Church of Christ in Carnation—drawn to the Northwest by an intern year in Seattle.

At Tolt, she volunteered at Seattle Rape Relief, where she felt called to serve the church by addressing women's experiences of violence and sexism.

Her questions about sexual assault and domestic violence were met by silence in the parish and among clergy colleagues, but survivors at the rape crisis center had faith questions they were afraid to ask their pastors or rabbis.

Marie realized theological education and religious upbringing did not prepare clergy to respond to violence against women from a religious context, so clergy could not help church members deal with violence they experienced. Secular agencies couldn't help clients with religious questions.

Because there were agencies providing services for victims of sexual assault, Marie decided to focus on education about sexual and domestic violence and formed the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence.

In 1979, the program went



The Rev. Marie Fortune

national, focusing on advocacy, education and religious issues related to child abuse and domestic violence.

A phone call in 1983 from a woman who experienced sexual harassment from her pastor made Marie aware of abuse of power in congregations. As the center received more calls, they realized victims needed to have support.

"Averaging three to five calls a week, we offered women support until the late 1990s," she said.

That was the impetus for the clergy ethics program. Because victims were spread across the country, the center developed resources and trained people to respond to them.

Survivor organizations formed, offering counseling and advocacy. Some denominations, like the United Methodist Church, trained advocates in their regional conferences. These advocates now receive the complaints and offer retreats for survivors.

"Some pastoral counselors have added advocacy and therapy for survivors. Some work with regional churches. Others are independent," she said.

Marie said retreats are effective, because as they come together women realize they are not alone and see others are at different stages, so they know there is hope.

"I'm pleased at associations people have made and carried on over many years," she said.

After one retreat, facilitators developed the first video, "Not in My Church." The script shared stories of retreat participants. Issues came to life. Marie finds it effective in introducing "the many faces" of clergy misconduct.

"Survivors have remarkable

strengths," Marie said. "Their stories convey their faith and commitment to the church. It surprises me, because it would be easy for them to chuck the church."

"While some have left, many are grounded in faith and determined to live their values even though they experienced people who did not live those values," she said. "Although wounded, many continue to believe what they were taught and maintain integrity about participation in their faith."

Marie said the video is "a powerful tool for education to help change the system."

FaithTrust Institute consults with judiciaries, helping them develop policies and procedures, but does not have resources to assist in other settings. Secular groups advocate for legal protection in the work place.

Marie said most churches and faiths have policies—some better than others. Many mandate boundary and ethics training for clergy—from two hours every three years to one day every other year. She said at least a day a year is needed to cover basics and reach new clergy.

The institute urges seminaries to require boundary training and have policies about professors dating students or students' relationships with congregants in field-work, said Marie.

Teaching a clergy ethics class at the Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry, she finds students thoughtful and eager to integrate ethics in their ministry to assure quality of life for congregations.

"Awareness of boundaries means healthy ministries," she said. "Professional boundaries relate to finances and confidentiality, as well as sexual relationships and power."

Independent churches, with no wider office for women to go to with a complaint and no one to deal with clergy who violate policies, leave a victim of sexual, emotional or spiritual misconduct with only legal action.

The institute helped the Seattle Archdiocese start training programs in 1990, but Marie said most dioceses have consulted with Catholic resources on the pedophilia crisis.

While she sees progress toward a shift in values and expectations, Marie knows some people do not understand, do not want to understand and may never understand.

"With media coverage of Protestants addressing clergy misconduct in the 1980s and 1990s case by case, one woman at a time, each was seen as an anomaly," Marie said. "Media overlooked the wider context of many cases and did not cover how institutions responded and established ethics."

"With media coverage of the Catholic crisis focusing on sexual abuse of boys," she said, "awareness of abuse of girls and women was lost."

Marie said policies should address abuse of power by clergy with any person of any age.

Are there fewer cases of clergy sexual misconduct?

"It is hard to tell, because churches and faiths are still catching up on incidents 10, 20 and 30 years ago," said Marie, who hopes that as education takes root there will be fewer incidents.

Awareness of ethics and guidelines among lay members varies with denominations. Some distribute policies, post fliers on bulletin boards, provide brochures or put information on their websites, listing inappropriate behaviors and where to call for help.

"It's important to be proactive, to let people know the avenues to address and end abuse in their faith communities," she said.

"Few denominations, however, educate congregations."

"If everyone understands what boundaries are appropriate, everyone can help assure professional conduct," she said. "It's important for laity to be informed, especially when clergy learn the rules but think they are above the rules."

Marie listed some dynamics affecting congregations' health:

- Leaders may not know what happened. If they are aware, they may take sides.

- Confidentiality required in legal cases can lead to silence that creates suspicion.

- A congregation's health before the misconduct is a factor.

- Strong lay leadership helps a congregation come out spiritually strengthened.

- Pastors who follow abusive pastors need special training.

- Congregations need to do background checks on pastoral candidates.

"If the whole system is aware, it is hard for offender to move to other churches," Marie said.

"I'd like to see us move faster, but we are moving forward one step at a time," she said. "When we are aware, we can be part of the solution."

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Teens and adults feed the hungry through Fatima’s parish garden

By Virginia de Leon

In a vegetable garden near their church, young people and other members of Our Lady of Fatima parish work together to cultivate both the soil and a spirit of community, and to help feed the hungry in Spokane.

For the past five years, youth group members along with parishioners have harvested hundreds of pounds of tomatoes, peppers, beans, carrots and other fresh produce for the House of Charity, a homeless shelter in downtown Spokane. Sponsored by Catholic Charities, the House of Charity serves more than 66,000 hot meals each year to people who live on the streets as well as to the elderly living in downtown housing facilities.

The fruits and vegetables grown by members of Fatima, at 1517 E. 33rd Ave. in Spokane, helped nourish people who otherwise would have nothing to eat. For some, it’s the only opportunity to eat fresh, healthful, organic produce.

“You see gratitude in their faces,” said Fatima youth minister Dan Glatt, describing the experience of delivering crates of vegetables each week to the House of Charity.

For the youth and other parishioners, the garden is a way to be “part of the solution,” he said, and “do social justice in the world.”

Youth at the South Hill church came up with the idea for the “Garden of Hope” about six years ago after the youth group volunteered to help with the Bishop’s Poor Man’s Meal at the House of Charity.

Students met poor people who eat at the shelter. They also heard stories of generosity—how community donors enable the shelter to serve tens of thousands of free, hot meals with an annual food budget of roughly \$8,000.

As the youth reflected on their experience, they started asking: How can we help the hungry in



Maddie Weiler, Lauren Guthrie, Melissa Powell and Laura Powell pick the last of the broccoli.

our community? What more can we do besides volunteering at the Poor Man’s Meal?

Looking at undeveloped church property north of All Saints Catholic School, they came up with the idea of planting a garden to grow fresh vegetables.

The Rev. Jim Kuhns, Fatima’s pastor then, supported the youth and encouraged them to pursue their plan. Early in the spring of 2003, Dan and the students bought seeds and other material, brought tools from home and started planting.

Their first garden consisted of raised beds on 640 square feet. Fifteen teens planted carrots, tomatoes, radishes and other fruits and vegetables that were easy to grow, Dan said.

Every Sunday when they gathered as a youth group, they spent about 45 minutes weeding, mulching and tending to the garden. Mid-week, Dan watered the plot before going to work at Fatima.

By mid-August 2003, the students harvested several boxes of vegetables each week and took them to the House of Charity. Be-

fore the first frost, they harvested nearly 1,000 pounds of produce—carrots, tomatoes, radishes and other vegetables.

Growing food for people who often go hungry and lack access to fresh fruit and vegetables gave students hope and empowered them to realize they could make a difference, said Dan.

“They realized there were other ways to help besides writing a check,” he said.

Positive feedback from Catholic Charities and the House of Charity encouraged the youth to continue their efforts.

The next year, the students received a \$500 grant from the Catholic Foundation and a small donation from the annual collection of Operation Rice Bowl during Lent. With these funds, they bought starter plants and expanded the garden by preparing a second plot on the church’s vacant land. In this new 16-by-32-foot space, they grew more vegetables including nine varieties of peppers.

It was another successful year even though a marmot reduced

their harvest of jalapeno peppers and habanero chilies. The marmot left non-spicy varieties alone.

By the third year, the Garden of Hope grew with a third plot. In 2005, the youth more than tripled the number of pepper plants from 16 to about 50, increased the tomato yield and added new vegetables including green beans and purple carrots—a novelty for House of Charity diners.

This summer, the students diversified the garden by planting okra, eggplant and broccoli and by continuing to tend an 8-by-16-foot patch of strawberries they started last year. The garden’s yield also included more than 100 pounds of tomatoes, 60 pounds of beans and several boxes of spaghetti squash

and cantaloupe.

The House of Charities used some of the produce to make a vegetable soup served at the Poor Man’s Meal in October.

The Rev. Ty Schaff, Fatima’s pastor since 2006, has a new vision for a quiet, reflective space in the gardens, adding a pathway, an area for reflection and a small amphitheatre.

Responsibility for tending the garden now extends to more Fatima parishioners. In addition to 10 teens, who regularly work on the garden, about six parish families come regularly to help weed, water and mulch. Members have donated funds for tools, a rototiller and supplies such as seeds and manure.

Fatima parishioner Rich Peplinski dug a trench for an irrigation system. Ryan Senger, a 16-year-old parishioner at St. Peter’s and a member of Boy Scout Troop 431, hopes to create an entryway to the garden as part of his Eagle Scout project.

Dan and others envision growing fruit trees, raspberry bushes and more varieties of fruits and vegetables. They seek money to build a tool shed and a greenhouse so parishioners can plant seeds earlier in the spring instead of buying starter plants.

Their dream is to continue expanding the garden to bring more food to the House of Charity. Now, the garden uses 1,800 of the 7,000-square-foot property.

“By participating, parishioners and youth become part of the solution,” Dan said.

For information, call 747-7213.

St. Gertrude’s holds concert, meal

As part of the 2008-2009 centennial, “100 Years at Home in Idaho,” the Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, Idaho, is hosting local and regional musicians giving concerts on “Traditions Shaping Tomorrow,” honoring past and present Benedictine traditions and values.

The next concert is on the Feast of St. Gertrude of Helfta, at 4 p.m., Sunday Nov. 16, in the monastery chapel. The event honors the faculty and students of the former St. Gertrude’s Academy and St. Gertrude of Helfta, patroness of

the monastery who was an author and spiritual director.

The Sisters from the Monastery of St. Gertrude are also planning “Sisters Saturday,” serving tacos from 4 to 8 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 8, at the Keuterville Pub & Grub. A portion of the proceeds will support the Monastery Windows Campaign as part of major renovations to the historic monastery.

They replaced all 273 original windows at a cost of \$606,000 and have raised \$530,000 so far.

For information, call 208-962-5063 or visit www.StGertrudes.com.

Fig Tree receives Holy Names grant

The U.S.-Ontario Province Ministry Grant Committee of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary has awarded a major grant to The Fig Tree in memory of Sr. Bernadine Casey, SNJM, founder and associate editor for 24 years.

The Fig Tree seeks to find some matching grants to fund an associate editor to help The Fig Tree continue to grow and help others live more justly.

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Serving in clinics abroad stirred commitment to fair trade

Treating poor people in clinics in Nepal, Micronesia, South America, Belize, Pakistan and Afghanistan helped instill family practice physician Lauri Costello's commitment to fair trade to help people feed their families and gain self esteem.

Twenty years ago, she was among the volunteers who helped First Presbyterian Church do their first Jubilee sale with crafts from Ten Thousand Villages, started in 1946 by a volunteer for the Mennonite Central Committee after visiting Puerto Rico.

Lauri credits the Frankhauser family—John, Mary, Kresha and Katie—with starting and assuring continuation of the event that has grown to 24 vendors, raising more than \$50,000 in a weekend.

Lauri has added to the vendors. Three years ago after learning how tea bag art helped South African women make a living, she arranged a booth for it.

Coasters, suncatchers, ornaments, earrings, necklaces, crosses and notecards are made with original, indigenous art designs on recycled tea bags.

For the third year, Lauri will volunteer at the T-Bag Designs booth at Jubilee, a fair-trade alternative Christmas gift event from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday, Nov. 14 and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 15, at First Presbyterian Church, 318 S. Cedar.

"Jubilee is a way for me to care for and connect with people around the globe, to assure people receive a living wage so they can feed, shelter and educate their children, and so they can live with dignity," she said.

Lauri learned about tea-bag art from Jodee Hetzer of New Jersey at a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA in 2006 at Birmingham, Ala. Jodee, who distributes the art in the United States, will be in Spokane for Jubilee 2008.

The tea-bag art began when Jodee's British friend, Jill Heyes, moved to South Africa in 1998. Seeing the poverty of women who wanted to feed their children in a settlement near Cape Town, she began teaching them crafts. Paper maché and potato printing were unsuccessful.

While sharing tea and telling a friend of the dilemma, she asked: "What can we do?"

"Tea-bag art," the friend replied, looking at her tea bag.

They formed a nonprofit organization that collects used tea bags, dries them in the sun, empties them and uses them as the "canvas" for ethnic designs.

The company, which employs 15 permanent staff, additional part-time staff and 10 people with disabilities, collects used tea bags from around the world and sells its products globally. It helps support 125 people.

Lauri, who practiced family medicine from 1985 to 2003, no



Lauri Costello shows some of the tea bag art she will sell.

longer takes for granted all she has.

"In South Africa, a woman who had lived on the streets under a cardboard box now earns enough to have a small house for her children," Lauri said. "Now her favorite thing is hearing the rain on the roof. Tea-bag art restored her dignity."

Instead of giving a hand-out, the project gives a hand-up that appreciates what the women create and provides an adequate return to meet their basic needs.

Lauri left church in her childhood but returned while attending the University of California Santa Barbara. She completed studies in medicine at the University of California Davis and came to Spokane for her residency with Family Medicine Spokane in 1985. After her residency, she set aside her goal of being an overseas doctor and joined Family Health Center.

In medical school, she had spent three months at a clinic on the outskirts of Katmandu, Nepal, serving people who live in neighborhoods with open sewers.

"I was finishing medical school on my way to a career. It was three months of my life. The people I treated were poor and this was their life. There was sewage running down the streets, and their children were dying of diarrhea and malnutrition," said Lauri.

She kept alive her commitment to serve through several short-term experiences overseas. Since

she left Family Medicine Spokane in 2003, she has sought a long-term overseas opportunity.

In December 2005, she went to Pakistan, where she observed and was unable to improve poor care of newborns. Whether they were premies, post-dates or had infections, they were given the same treatment, that included antibiotics and steroids.

"I thought I could do something, looking at each baby and writing appropriate orders for their specific problems," she said.

The nurses, however, didn't follow Lauri's orders. After two weeks, Lauri was disturbed, realizing she was coming in each day wondering which babies had died that night.

She has also done medical service in Micronesia, Belize, Ecuador and Afghanistan, often caring for mothers and babies.

After completing her residency in 1988, she and her husband, Dean DuPree, spent eight months backpacking around South America and visiting mission hospitals.

In 2002, she spent three months in Dangriga, Belize, with Target Earth, helping in a one-room clinic with no equipment. In the next few years, she went back to Belize several times for two-week visits through an Episcopal Church in Western Washington.

In April 2005, she went to Kabul, Afghanistan, where medical residents wanted to learn about high-tech infertility treatments,

rather than addressing the high infant and maternal mortality from a lack of prenatal care, unattended deliveries on dirt floors, and use of unsterilized knives to cut the umbilical cord, resulting in high rates of neonatal tetanus.

She is also concerned about the direction for U.S. medicine.

"We serve so many uninsured people. Insured people pay huge premiums, but doctors still do not receive what insurance companies should pay them," she said.

Having no children, she has been free to do medical work abroad.

"Now I'm waiting on God for the next opportunity," said Lauri, who now is a freelance surgical assistant.

"My passion is not to convert the world but to be Jesus' hands and heart to people in need around

the world," Lauri said.

"Through medical care and Jubilee, I come alongside people to help them help themselves, like teaching people to fish rather than giving them fish. I want to help restore their dignity and give them ability to use knowledge and equipment we offer," she explained.

For her, that's what Jesus is about.

Her commitment to economic and social justice has led to concern about U.S. churches' emphasis on increasing members and budgets, over caring for the poor here and around the world. That's why she continues her involvement with Jubilee.

"We need to treat people as Jesus did. Jesus was kind, compassionate and loving," she said.

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Oxen and mules help Palouse farmer slowly adopt organic methods

By Carol Price Spurling

A rusty windmill stands proudly at the Zakarison family farm on Highway 27 between Pullman and Palouse. The local landmark identifies where three generations of Zakarisons have lived on the Palouse since 1935.

Some aspects of Eric Zakarison's approach to farming today are like earlier Palouse farming as he increases the acreage devoted to organic farming out of his desire to care for the environment.

With 10 acres of grain now organic, he seeks to transition about 25 to 150 acres to organic. He has planted them in alfalfa and grass to nourish the soil and keep weeds down before beginning a three- to five-year rotation of organic winter grain, organic spring grain or Austrian winter peas, and alfalfa.

Driving by the farm, one might not spot the difference between transitional organic acres and conventionally grown acres, until the livestock catch the eye.

Two large Belgian draft mules, a team of young oxen and a llama guarding Dorper ewes are part of the visible difference.

Eric is training the mules and oxen to do some of the heavy work, like pulling hay wagons, so he doesn't have to fire up the tractor and use fossil fuel so often.

"Ultimately I'd like to use them for tillage. For now, I use oxen to move poultry houses and surrounding fenced areas," he said, describing them as "solar-powered tractors."

When he used an ATV, the poultry became so flustered with the noise they fluttered about, and he ran over some.

Moving poultry houses, he said, is the most efficient, healthy way to raise free-range poultry. Each day he moves chickens to a fresh patch of ground, where they eat bugs and whatever is growing, fertilizing as they go. Shifting the shelter and fence keeps the birds in and the coyotes out.

This year, the Zakarisons raised 450 chickens and 50 turkeys for sale to local customers. He plans to double that amount next year.

"It feels good to sell my chickens and turkeys directly to people who will take them home and consume them. I love that they are eaten locally," Eric said.

The demand for his poultry is high. At a small-farm poultry-processing workshop held at his farm recently—sponsored by Rural Roots at www.ruralroots.org—he encouraged participants to raise chickens.

Eric also raises locker lambs for local customers. They're born from Dorper ewes, a cross breed suited to the Palouse because they can eat wheat stubble and don't



Eric Zakarison sells turkeys locally.

Photo by Carol Price Spurling

need to be sheared. The meat is mild tasting, because the sheep's lighter coat results in less lanolin flavor, he said.

Like the poultry, he regularly moves the sheep and an electric fence to fresh ground. A llama named Scooter guards them and rounds them up at night into the place in the pasture or field Scooter feels is safest.

Eric told of his family settling at the farm: "My aunt ran away from home in Montana and married a wealthy man from around here. She and her husband told her family: 'Come on over. It's great.' Because the Zakarisons were nearly starving in Montana at the time, the whole family moved," explained Eric.

Starvation has not been a problem since then. Eric lives with his wife, Sheryl, down the road from the home farm, and they have raised three children: Shannon, Ariel and Aaron.

He and his father, Russell, farm 600 acres of their own, growing winter and spring wheat, and spring barley. With land that belongs to Eric's uncle's estate, they work 1,300 acres.

For a farmer wanting to care for the environment and move away from intense, unsustainable "industrial" farming practices, it is a daunting amount of land.

"My goal is to increase organic acres and shrink industrially farmed acres. Our total acreage is too big for organic, even 600 acres is too big," Eric said. "Organic farming, which uses less fossil fuel, is more labor intensive."

Determined to take the long view, he knows petroleum is not going to be any cheaper.

"It will be prohibitively expensive someday to use fossil fuel. We need to start to change at least 10 years before we need to switch," Eric said.

Agriculture before World War II was organic. What we now consider "conventional" farming is barely 50 years old. The growth

of industrial agriculture with huge tractors, huge fields and tons of petroleum-based fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides has been so pervasive that Eric said he and farmers like him are seen as mavericks.

Still, he is determined to live and work according to his principles, with his spiritual beliefs and family sustaining him. He said it takes faith to be a small, independent family farmer.

"Farming the way I do leaves us vulnerable to the forces of weather and the complexities of commodity markets," Eric said.

"An optimistic outlook and the ability to not let the everyday failures take us down are important. I think with age I am improving in this regard, because I can look beyond the daily lows or highs to stay steady."

"A faith in a supportive and loving God really helps," he said, "faith in a God who is never judgmental or vindictive and who can encourage me through faith for what I am, who tempers my triumphs and consoles my failures."

Eric is quick to credit his wife Sheryl's off-the-farm work at Washington State University for giving them a dependable income and health insurance. That allows him to "experiment."

"As we try to use alternative techniques, there is more labor involved. It wouldn't work without my family," he said.

Eric said his father has been supportive to a point, but recently, when the anhydrous ammonia fertilizer bill was three times what it was a few years ago, his father began to see more value in what Eric is trying to accomplish.

Much of Eric's inspiration for farming "experiments" comes from a 2006 book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan. It traces foods in several types of meals to their sources.

Eric said it was a life-changing book for readers who never un-

derstood connections between federal farm policy, commodity crops like soybeans and corn, cattle feedlots, factory-farmed chickens, diabetes and obesity, and the food supply.

An example Pollan gives of a sustainable, healthy farm is Polyface Farm, owned by Joel Salatin, who has also written several books, including *Pastured Poultry Profits*, one of Eric's main reference manuals.

Eric appreciates both Salatin, a fundamentalist Christian, and Pollan, who is non-religious, for their ability to study problems and come up with solutions that benefit humankind, society and the environment.

"We too often write off or tune out people from faiths that may conflict with or be different from our own," Eric said.

"I am like Pollan, because I am a progressive Christian, who at times draws faith from both wonders of the natural world and from Jesus. However, I love Salatin's can-do approach to farming while staunchly defending the environment in which he farms. I would be comfortable chatting with Salatin despite our differing faith backgrounds."

Eric grew up attending the Community Congregational United Church of Christ in Pullman. He drifted away in his teen years but returned when his children were young. His sister, Kristine, has been pastor at of that church since 1995. Eric serves as a deacon.

"Our church family's concerns for social justice, the environment, and sustainable food production and living, and my views are pretty much the same," he said. "It is wonderful when our spiritual needs and world views agree with our church."

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Abuse-free workplaces engender productivity and healthy workers

We want to believe women have come a long way. With steps forward and a shift in attention or media spotlight, we want to assume all is well, won or protected, but some workplaces are not safe.

For example, despite efforts of churches and faiths in recent decades to establish policies on clergy misconduct, some people in faith and nonprofit workplaces still abuse power. Some think ethics policies and discrimination laws don't apply to them.

With focus on sexual misconduct by male clergy, it's easy to miss other subtle or overt abuse. Plus, we really want to assume faith or nonprofit workplaces are safe.

Executives, middle-management, co-workers, subordinates or volunteers—clergy, laity or secular—may act in unethical, discriminatory, hostile, abusive ways. Abuse of power may come from men or women superiors, equals or subordinates.

Harassment and discrimination can surface in hiring, compensation, training, promotions, work conditions and termination. Hostile work cultures range from tolerating subtle putdowns to overt harassment.

A subordinate may resent a professional woman. A woman in a professional job may overlook or want to deny offensive behavior to keep the job. She may not want

to believe she is a victim of discrimination, abuse of power or sexual harassment. She may blame herself.

Uncomfortable work environments are not the norm. Most people know that good manners, basic decency, positive motivation, common sense, respectful relationships and democratic input benefit the mission and bottom line.

Because workplace abuse may be hard to identify, we compiled some questions from resources of the Center for Organizational Reform, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, FaithTrust Institute and an attorney who handles such cases, in order to call attention to illegal, inappropriate and unethical activities:

- Is communication with co-workers transparent, open, honest and direct or filtered through certain people? Is miscommunication common?
- Is there a culture of rumor, criticism or control that silences new ideas, conversations and creativity?
- Are some staff or volunteers favorites and others excluded or reported on, fostering fear and distrust?
- Are incompetent employees continued and allowed to hinder those with specialized skills and connections needed to advance

the mission? Is jealousy unchecked?

- Is there subtle or overt insubordination, interference with clients, put-downs or misinformation to discredit an employee?
- Does a supervisor/subordinate cover up when he/she doesn't meet a deadline and blame a co-worker?
- Is scapegoating prevalent?
- Do workers fear that reporting harassment will lead to termination?
- Is there retaliation for reporting abuse—in performance reports, disciplinary action, unreasonable goals, denied promotions, blame, demotions or hostility?
- Are continued employment, promotions or treatment dependent on a sexual relationship with someone in power?
- Is there unwanted attention, talk of sexual activities or inappropriate joking?
- Does abuse increase when an employee is pregnant? Is there advice on family planning? Is a pregnant woman terminated?
- Is a new father discouraged from taking family leave?
- Are people terminated when they use their health insurance?
- Does a glass ceiling prevent advancement of capable women?
- Are there impediments to a woman pursuing her professional career goals?

- Are young women hired, paid less and encouraged to move on before a promotion would bring a raise?
- Does the employer pressure a person to resign, agree not to sue for harassment or discrimination, or require silence?
- Is there pressure to resign to avoid paying unemployment? Does the nonprofit challenge payment of unemployment because each termination costs them more?

It should be obvious that unhealthy relationships and hostile working conditions impede the health, esteem and productivity of an organization, an abuser and an abused person.

To address concerns, it's important to be self-aware, recognize abuse, record it, report it, seek support, speak out and, if necessary, seek legal recourse.

Congregations, regional and national denominations who are covenantal partners of faith-based organizations need to call their partners to accountability, transparency and ethical workplace practices so they can be effective in their missions.

People of faith need to support work environments that reward performance, protect rights and are free from indignities of gender or any other discrimination.

Editorial Team

How wealth circulates in society can reflect compassion and justice

In playing the either-or, right-wrong, left-right, capitalist-socialist polarized mindset in the political campaign, confusion about realities can be skewed. It's been evident as candidates have recently bandied about the sound bite, "spread the wealth."

Discussion ranges from decrying redistributing of wealth as "socialism" to realizing that all taxes, subsidies, loopholes, lobbying, spending, producing and consuming spread, redistribute, circulate or share wealth.

When those with the wealth call it "class warfare," they seek to stir fear generally, "redistributing" their own fear of losing the chunk of wealth they hold. It's like nobles convincing peasants to fear something that would actually help the peasants.

In 2004, according to figures of the Federal Reserve Board, the top 20 percent of the population held 85 percent of the financial wealth—stocks, bonds, trust funds and business equity—the middle 40 percent held nearly 15 percent of the wealth, and the

bottom 40 percent own just 0.2 percent. In the Jubilee Year described in Leviticus 25, debts are forgiven, slaves are freed, lands lost are returned and community torn by inequality is restored.

Today's disparity in wealth as ownership is neither sustainable nor healthy, even for the super wealthy. With massive sums held in investments, with windfall profits and with excessive salaries for a few, the cycle of greed that redistributes more wealth to the wealthy few eventually bursts.

Just as children may not readily share toys, those with the most wealth may not want to share it. We need regulations to assure that more of the wealth is shared and is circulated so poverty is eradicated.

The 80 percent who have just 15 percent of the wealth need to realize that a healthy economy spreads wealth among everyone.

It does not assume that those with less wealth are less deserving or of less human value.

Taxes and tax cuts redistribute wealth. Welfare for the rich or poor, no-bid contracts with built-in profits, pork projects, bills Congress passes, Social Security, interest on debts, weapons spending and dumping money into wars are some of the ways governments redistribute wealth.

The question is, in what direction is the distribution?

To those who have much, much is expected in generosity and gratitude for the blessings—such as sharing it justly with workers who help create the wealth.

Our faiths talk of loving, caring, sharing and even *giving* until it hurts.

The five percent some foundations may release from endowments for grants or humanitarian aid and the two to three percent individuals donate on average to churches and causes are something and help, but imagine what a biblical tithe would do.

Many Pacific Islanders, such as Tongans, circulate wealth in gifts that may seem to be like interest-free loans. Tongan culture

understands that "wealth is not what you keep, but what you give away."

Tongans share what they have, readily passing wealth in money, food and gifts to friends, family, community and church for education and other needs.

A recipient passes on part of the money, food or gift off the top before folk in our culture might consider it fiscally wise.

If Tongans can't give a lot, they give a little. By pooling resources, a little becomes a lot. It's like a microenterprise loan or like the early Christian community that assured that everyone had enough.

It is wealth and security for the whole community, not based on accumulation, but on relationships and respect.

In these troubled times, we might learn from faith models and Pacific cultures.

At least within the faith and nonprofit communities, we might take heed and generously circulate the wealth we have within and beyond our circles.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Letter to the Editor

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

Thanks for all you do. Every time I read the Fig Tree cover to cover, I am so much more aware of all the people in our area who are working for justice and living out of compassion because of their faith. It always gives me hope when reading it, because so much of the rest of our media brings only despair. I usually end up "stealing" something like prayers from the interfaith celebration of peace! Your work is really a blessing for our region.

Shonna Bartlett
The Ministry Institute

Invitations to give financially to help worthy causes can sometimes be overwhelming—appeals for the cancer society, lung association, YMCA, Camp Fire, Boy Scouts, symphony, college scholarships, homeless families and our church.

I could easily give away my entire monthly salary to worthwhile causes in Yakima and for church and national concerns, but we have bills to pay at home and things we want to do.

Questions arise: In God's eyes, what is responsible stewardship and when does my lifestyle become self-centered? How much should I give away to others and what is a reasonable amount on which we could/should live. For some, \$25,000 is adequate, and for others \$75,000 is not enough.

I wrestle with this. As Christians, we are to have compassion for others in need, yet we are also to take care of ourselves. How much car do I need? How much home? When is a vacation extravagant? How many shoes do I need?

The bottom line is if my giving to my church and other causes is not affecting my lifestyle, I'm not giving enough. My giving to ministries and services needs to be at a level that I deny myself things to help others. If our faith doesn't cost us anything, is it worth anything?

The Rev. David Helseth
Englewood Christian - Yakima

As write this message, the Dow Jones Index is hovering around 8,000. That's around a 40 percent drop from its high a year ago. Gulp! I suspect many of us have been anxiously watching retirement accounts plummet and are facing uncertainty in our work places.

My intent going into this article was to call us to a life of faithful stewardship, as we do every fall. In these uncertain times, instead of shying away from the topic of stewardship, I want to challenge us to lean in more resolutely than ever, remembering Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount not to store up treasures on earth.

Jesus knows us well. He knows that our

current challenge is not so much a challenge of turbulent markets as it is a challenge of the human heart. It's about an alternate vision for life in which our hopes do not rest on a rising and falling net worth, but are instead anchored in the enduring promises of God. It's the challenge of living either in fear of losing that which we will certainly one day lose, or living in the joy of holding onto that which will never be lost.

Jesus also knows our hearts tend to follow our treasuring.

A life that is truly life grows up out of doing good and being "generous and willing to share." Our ability to give may be less than we hoped, but we are called to give nonetheless. We may think that our small portion is insignificant, but when we join together in a common vision and purpose, our small portions add up into a mighty offering to God.

In the challenging days ahead, our community and our neighbors will need us more than ever to serve as a witness to hope.

The Rev. Craig Goodwin
Millwood Community Presbyterian

When the Bible was being composed, they didn't have public relations experts or damage control specialists. If those folks had been around, the Bible might have taken on a whole different look.

If the Philistines had a "spin-doctor," Goliath's reputation as a warrior might have been saved. Goliath, it could be said, came to do battle, but when he saw the poor, little, spindly David, ill equipped and inexperienced, he refused to participate in combat with such uneven odds. Instead, he lay down his sword and shield, and in the process was hit in the head by a stray rock. Ah me! Goliath, as it turns out, was the real hero of the story.

King David may have saved his reputation had he had media experts to whitewash his affair with Bathsheba and his arranged death of her husband, Uriah. Israel was at war. Could David, as Commander in Chief, help it if Uriah was sent to the front and killed? That's war. Out of compassion and sympathy, David married Uriah's wife so she would not be alone. What a great PR opportunity. Leave it to the Prophet Nathan to blow the whistle on that one.

In our day, politicians and commentators speak of "straight talk" and "telling it like it is." Oh that it were so.

The U.S. historian, Theodore Hamerow, said, "History appears at present to be a science in technique, but an art in interpretation."

The Rev. Wilbur Rees
Shalom United Church of Christ
Richland

Second Harvest plans for tough times

Second Harvest is preparing for a challenging 2009, said executive director Jason Clark. The food distribution organization seeks to be ready for potentially tough economic times.

According to a Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development statewide food bank report, a record 27.6 percent of clients were new in the most recent quarter.

In Spokane County, Second Harvest's 2008 Client Survey revealed that one in five food bank clients was visiting a food bank for the first time. The nearly 650 clients interviewed for the 22nd annual survey in August helped paint a picture of local hunger:

- 40 percent of emergency food clients are children 18 years old or younger.
- 12 percent of clients are seniors age 55 or older.
- 95 percent of client households earn less than half of Spokane County's median family income.
- 79 percent of client households report income below the federal poverty level.
- 38 percent of households have at least one adult working full or part time.
- Single parents head 25 percent of all households. Of those, 87 percent are single mothers.
- 66 percent of parents go without food so their children can eat. Of those, 32 percent say this happens daily or weekly.
- 60 percent of people in households without children say they skip meals when they run low on food, and 62 percent of those say this happens daily or weekly.
- 14 percent of the households rank high grocery prices as the main thing that made it difficult to put meals on the table.
- Another 11 percent ranked gas prices as the main barrier.

"We anticipate food bank lines will be longer before they are shorter," Jason said. "It's important that Second Harvest has the ability to transport donated food where it's needed most. We are asking the community to help us be prepared."

Community food drives will be more important than ever, he said, adding that its website lists nonperishable food items needed and has food drive sign up forms. Money also helps.

"Generous folks from the food industry donate truckloads of food," he said. "The cost of transporting, handling and distributing

the donated food is Second Harvest's responsibility. Each dollar helps us provide more than six pounds of food."

Jason said Second Harvest needs volunteers for the warehouse, events and food drives.

November drives include:

In "Scouting for Food" Saturday morning, Nov. 8, local Boy Scouts will collect nonperishable food from neighbors.

Tom's Turkey Drive, Nov. 21 and 22 at Spokane County Rosauers stores, sells \$15 Thanksgiving dinner bags. The dinners will be distributed Nov. 25 at the Salvation Army, 222 E. Indiana.

The annual Turkey Trot begins at 9 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 27, by the duck pond at Manito Park. Participants bring donations.

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

Calendar of Events

Nov 1- Dec 31	• "The Gospels in Nez Perce: The Evangelizing Work of Fr. Joseph Cataldo, SJ," Gonzaga University Foley Library, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Nov 6	• Fig Tree Faith in Action Dialogue, "Bread Broken and Shared: Ecumenical Challenges and Opportunities Today," Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave., 6:30 p.m., 535-1813
Nov 7-8	• Che oke' ten (Paul Wagner), Native American performer, Boys and Girls Club, 544 E. Providence, 4 p.m., Friday; Hillyard Library, 4005 N. Cook, 10:30 a.m., Saturday; Spokane Community College Lair, 1800 N. Greene, 2 p.m., Saturday, and noon, Sunday
Nov 8	• Judge Donald Haley, "The Journey - The Legacy," NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet, Northern Quest Casino, 100 N. Hayford Rd., 5 p.m., 483-8644
	• "Sisters Saturday," Monastery of St. Gertrude benefit, Keuterville Pub & Grill, 4 to 8 p.m. 208-962-5063
Nov 8-9	• Fall Folk Fest, The Lair at Spokane Community College, 1800 N. Greene, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday, noon to 5 p.m., Sunday, 624-5693
Nov 12	• Veterans for Peace Veterans Day Funeral March, "One Eighty for Peace," Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, KYRS and Need to Know, Community Building, 35 W. Main to Congressional Offices, 838-7870
	• Heart Films: Short Films which Touch the Human Heart, "Four Portraits of Native American Action," Center for Organizational Reform and St. Joseph Family Center, Barry House at St. Joseph Family Center, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., 483-6495 x 33
	• "Human Trafficking: Modern Day Slavery," Rani and Trong Hong, Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, St. Aloysius Catholic Parish, 330 E. Boone, 7 p.m., 206-223-1138
Nov 12-15	• Environmental Education Association of Washington 2008 Conference, "Generation Green: Sustainability Takes Root," Wenatchee Convention Center, Wenatchee, www.eeaw.org/conference
Nov 14	• "Late Nite Catechism 2," St. Thomas More Catholic School, 7 p.m. 466-3811 x 313
Nov 14-15	• Jubilee, First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 747-1058
Nov 16	• "Traditions Shaping Tomorrow" Concert, St. Gertrude's Monastery, Cottonwood, Idaho, 4 p.m., 208-962-5064
Nov 19	• "Ideas for a Vibrant Spokane," Mayor Mary Verner, Spokane City Forum, First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 11:45 a.m.
Nov 21	• International Dinner, "Our Global Mosaic," Whitworth University HUB, 5:30 p.m., 777-4509
Nov 22	• "A Time for Gratitude," Sr. Alice Ann Byrne, OP, The Ministry Institute, 405 E. Sinto, 10:30 a.m., 313-6012
Nov 27	• Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, Manito United Methodist Church, 3220 S. Grand, 10 a.m., 599-2411
Nov 28-30	• Festival of Fair Trade, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., 448-6561
Dec 4	• "Posada," Catholicism for the New Millennium, Mark McGregor, Scott Cooper and Ivonne Guillen
	• Fig Tree Board Meeting, Manito United Methodist, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.
Tues-Sats	• Habitat-Spokane work days - 534-2552
Fridays	• Colville Peace Vigil - 675-4554
3rd Mons	• NAACP - 467-9793
1st Sats	• Spokane Ministers' Fellowship & Wives/Widows Fellowship, Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, 806 W. Indiana, 624-0522
2nd, 4th Weds	• Pax Christi, St. Joseph's, 1503 W. Dean, noon, 844-4480

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Concert presents original songs telling stories of homeless people

The 2008 HeartSongs from the Edge of the World Concert emerges from relationships among people of different social and economic experiences. Scriptwriters and musicians listen to stories of homeless people and create original songs that convey their experiences and feelings.

The third annual concert presents human faces to help the audience see homelessness with new eyes, said the Rev. Michael (Redhawk) Rice-Sauer, pastor of Covenant Christian Church, guitarist and composer.

He hopes participants will ask: "What keeps us from seeing? What filters our sight and clouds our vision of homeless-

ness and homeless people?"

The concert is at 6:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 7, after a 5:30 p.m. silent auction at The Bing, 901 W. Sprague.

The program includes blind comedian Jim Green, the Voiceless Choir of homeless and formerly homeless families, and Spokane Mayor Mary Verner, performing an original hip-hop song based on a homeless teen from Crosswalk.

Redhawk thought when he began engaging in issues of homelessness and started the Voiceless Choir that it might be a short-term project.

"God was in the process. Hungry children drive me crazy," he said, "and I formed relationships with people. Some

are now doing well. Some are not."

The project has expanded to include the Covenant Homeless Initiative, which is inviting congregations to adopt, shepherd or mentor local homeless families as congregations did to resettle refugees from Vietnam, El Salvador, Russia and other parts of the world.

Congregations will recruit mentors who will be trained to support families with housing, food, clothing and education until they are back on their feet.

"In the process, we hope relationships will develop as they have with international refugees," Redhawk said.

"My dream is that everyone from fundamentalists to Buddhists will meet

at the human place and create healing across their traditions as they express their passion to care for others as they care for themselves," he said. "It's not just about writing a check but about touching people's lives."

HeartSongs will benefit Volunteers of America's Crosswalk program that serves homeless teens, providing food, education and resources, and the Voiceless Choir that empowers adults and children as they give concerts and record and sell CDs.

"Music and the arts expand people's daily lives, feeding their souls in ways nothing else can," said Redhawk.

For information, call 448-1311.

Marshallese still experience effects of nuclear testing on their islands

Continued from page 1

islands in 29 coral atolls and five large islands spread over more than 750,000 square miles of the Pacific north of the equator west of the international dateline.

From 1946 to 1958, U.S. tests of 67 nuclear weapons left the northern atolls of Bikini, Enewetak, Utrik and Rongelap uninhabitable. People moved to other islands. Fallout spread over all the islands. Some people still suffer from tumors, thyroid problems and retardation.

Women still give birth to deformed babies. Some lack all or part of their skeletons and die shortly after birth.

While atomic tests ended before his birth in 1955 on Ebeye in the Kwajalien Atoll—an atoll is a group of islands surrounding a lagoon—Shem said his parents and grandparents told of red sunrises when bombs exploded and of fishermen who became sick and died after powder fell on them while they were in their boats.

"We pray for those affected," Shem said.

The United States has provided some compensation for people from the northern islands, but negotiations are still underway, and people continue to be sick, he said. A bill in the U.S. Senate would increase funding for nuclear waste cleanup, health care, relocated people and those who cleaned contaminated sites.

When Shem was young, his

family moved from Kwajalien Atoll, which has a U.S. military base, to the Ailuk Atoll, where he attended elementary school.

Shem graduated in 1974 from high school in the capitol, Majuro. After vocational studies in the Palau Islands, he spent two years studying at Filandia University in Hancock, Mich., to be a secondary school teacher. Returning to Majuro, he finished studies at the College of the Marshall Islands in 1980. He taught in elementary and secondary schools there from 1983 to 2002.

When he married in 1985, he said, "I took Jesus to be my Lord and decided to be a pastor, too."

In 1994, he became assistant pastor of the Marshall Islands Congregational United Church of Christ, which he did along with teaching, until he moved to Kona, Hawaii, to teach high school, including English as a second language. He and Lise have two married children in Hawaii.

Shem worked last year as a substitute teacher for Spokane public schools and now provides home care for two senior men through Senior Helpers in Spokane Valley, two hours a day. He helps with meals, transportation and personal needs.

Members visited several churches before deciding to hold services and activities in their own language at Trinity United Methodist.

The church's women's program meets Thursdays in the home

of the pastor Aimokwe Hisaiah, whom the UCCMI sent last November. There is a program for children and youth.

"After our worship from 1:30 to 4 p.m., we have activities and share foods," Shem said.

The church has about 40 members. On Sundays 60 to 100 attend with about 100 children.

For birthdays, Constitution Day May 1 and other celebrations, people in the churches and wider community gather for feasts, singing and dancing.

Marshallese men in Spokane work in various factory jobs. Many are looking for full-time jobs. The women who work do housekeeping or restaurant jobs, said Shem, who has been in the United States more than five years and seeks to be a citizen.

"The church is an important part of our culture and customs in the Marshall Islands. When missionaries from the American Board for Foreign Mission came in 1857, they negotiated with the chiefs, and everyone became part

of the church.

From the start, the Marshall Islanders did the mission work. When the United Church of Christ formed in 1957, the Marshallese church took that name.

The UCCMI has congregations in Los Angeles, Honolulu and Eugene, Ore. It is affiliated with the Wider Church Ministry of the UCC and the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

For information, call 217-9088 or email shemmito@hotmail.com.



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