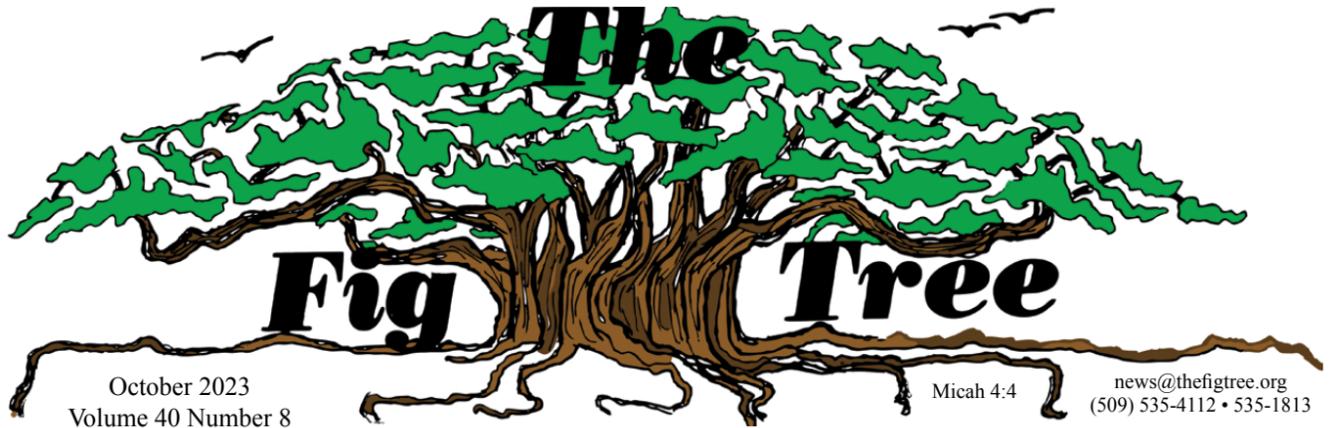


40TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Stories inside

- Dietitian improves health in North Idaho - p. 5
- S.L.A.M. invites groups to mission of learning - p. 7
- Organizer discovers dynamics of power - p. 11
- Shalom is key to ending homelessness - p. 16

CALENDAR ON PAGE 11
FEATURES 70 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

Sravasti Abbey marks 20th year

By Mary Stamp

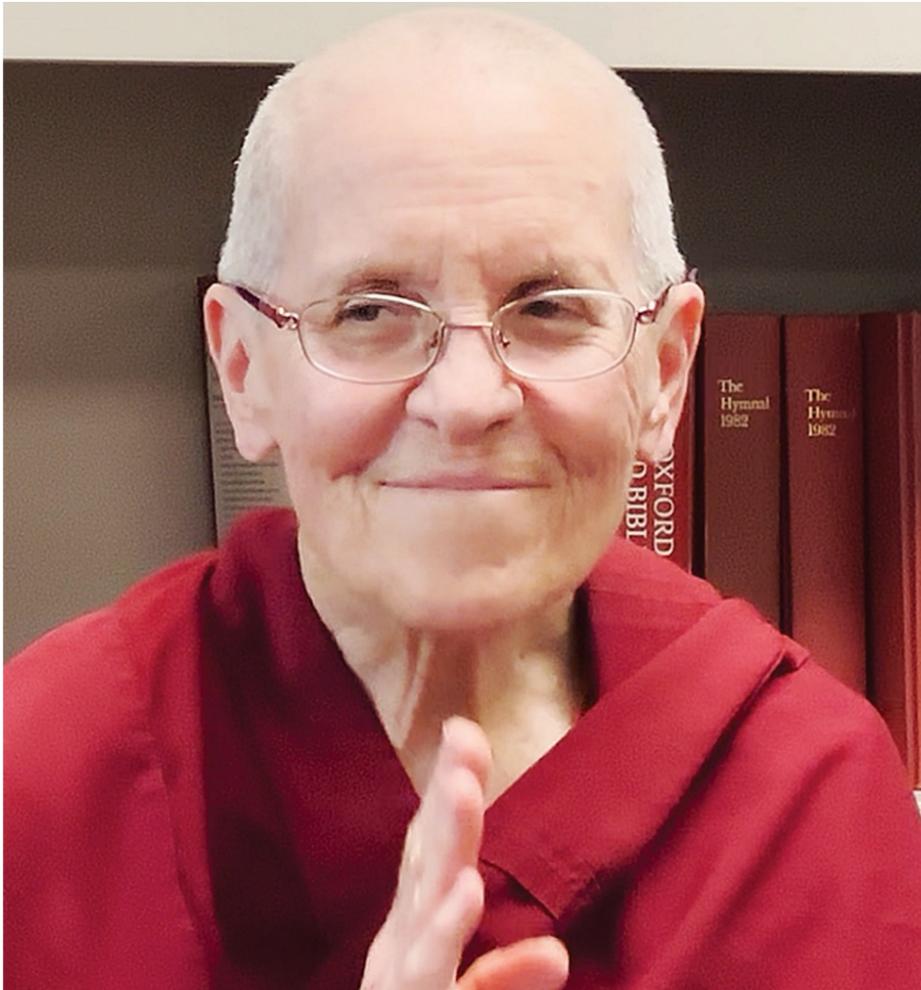
Venerable Thubten Semkye of Sravasti Abbey, a monastic Buddhist community celebrating its 20th year near Newport, said her early years were like another life, growing up in Levittown, PA, a planned suburban community, and attending a Catholic school.

Now she is part of a monastic Buddhist community that focuses on ethical conduct—not harming any person or creature, relying on the kindness of others, using resources wisely and being celibate.

“Buddha gave 84,000 teachings to help us cultivate our minds to serve the world,” Semkye said, noting that “when life throws us a curve, we need to see adversity as part of our spiritual path, challenging us to learn patience, compassion, generosity and love.

“Problems are opportunities to grow good qualities so we can be both strong and happy,” she explained. “We seek to purify ourselves of anger, laziness, pride and confusion. In Tibetan Buddhism, we know that the mind is the source of happiness and pain.”

The abbey has guidelines—based on Buddha’s teachings—on what nuns and monks may own, where they go, how they spend



Venerable Thubten Semkye weaves her story in with abbey’s life.

time or when they use the car or internet.

“Our mission is to grow as a monastic community to serve the world by showing kindness, understanding and compassion,” Semkye said.

Sravasti Abbey’s mission and vision include environmental and social action, support for youth who lack a stable home life, emergency services, visiting prisoners and teaching Buddhism.

“We value interfaith dialogue—rejoicing in similarities and respecting differences as we seek to be the best human beings we can be. No one is left out of love. While we share Buddhist teachings, we do not say everyone needs to be Buddhist,” Semkye pointed out.

“People today are overwhelmed and looking for tools to help them,” she added. “People come to gain gems of wisdom. We mirror back the good in the world, the amazing things people do.”

She values connecting with other faith traditions so that together the faith voice can have “the volume it needs” to have more impact.

Semkye recently shared her journey to Sravasti Abbey and its

Continued on page 4

New NWIM Synod Bishop’s ministry is to be present, relate, share stories

In her first three months with the Northwest Intermountain (NWIM) Synod, Bishop Meggan Manlove often posted on Facebook photos of congregations she visited and selfies with church members as she traveled from Leavenworth to Pocatello and places in between.

The posts express her belief that ministry is about being present with people in their lives, building relationships and sharing stories.

Meggan was elected to a

six-year term at the Synod Assembly, April 28 to 30, in Pasco. She began July 1.

On Saturday, Oct. 7, she will be installed as bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) NWIM Synod at the Cathedral of the Rockies, Boise First United Methodist.

She is the synod’s fourth bishop and the first one from Idaho.

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will preach and install her. More than 300 people will attend, including pastors and

deacons of 88 synod ministry sites, former bishops, bishops from 64 other ELCA synods, ecumenical and interfaith partners, family members and friends.

From 2010 to June 30, Meggan was pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Nampa, Idaho. Before that, she served from 2004 to 2010 at Soldier Lutheran Church in Soldier, Iowa.

Meggan was born in St. Paul, Minn., where her father worked in outdoor ministries and her mother in the youth division of the American Lutheran Church. When she was four, they moved to Custer, S.D., where her father directed two Lutheran camps and her mother led the chamber of commerce.

After high school, Meggan studied history and English at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., graduating in 1998.

Unsure what she wanted to do next, she joined the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, working for a year with refugees at a Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Syracuse, N.Y. She learned

Continued on page 10

Fall Festival of Sharing builds support for Fig Tree

The Fig Tree’s Fall Festival of Sharing will invite readers to become sponsors and sponsors to renew their donations between Oct. 1 and Giving Tuesday on Nov. 28.

The goal is to raise \$20,000 in sponsorships to support The Fig Tree’s mission to share stories of people who make a difference because of their faith and values and the Resource Directory’s efforts to offer resources to make a difference in lives.

Past and present members of The Fig Tree Board of Directors are pledging \$4,000 in matching funds so gifts of donors will be doubled.

With increased costs for printing and mailing, it’s important to reach the goal. Supporters can help raise funds by using videos online to share The Fig Tree story of spreading news and resources to make a difference in the lives of people.

This fall after the area wildfires, directory editor Malcolm Haworth provided targeted resources to people suffering losses. He gave out copies of the directory to connect people with resources that help them improve their lives.

“For its 50th year, we published 22,000 copies, 4,000 more than last year because of demand,” he said. “It’s an effective, in-demand self-help tool.”

“Through offering stories and resources, we connect people, foster understanding and inspire respect among the diverse people in the region,” said editor Mary Stamp. “Instead of following typical media approaches of playing up differences to keep people uncertain and vulnerable, we use solutions and peace journalism to give people a voice and a chance to both reflect on the past and present, and have hope for the future.”

Next year is The Fig Tree newspaper’s 40th anniversary.

Continued on page 2

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Global ecumenical prayer offered for Holy Land

A global ecumenical prayer hosted by the World Council of Churches (WCC) on Sept. 18 focused on the World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel, and the meaning of finding a spiritual home in the Holy Land. People gathered online and in-person to pray, advocate and stand in solidarity with people in the Holy Land.

The theme for the week from Sept. 16 to 23 was "No Place to Lay My Head," to reflect the challenge for Palestinian families and others around the world.

WCC general secretary Jerry Pillay reflected on the importance of land. "The right of a family for home is sacred," he said. "The people who for decades have yearned for a place to lay their heads in peace. Their lands are taken, homes are demolished, rights for security and dignity are taken. When we deny people their land, we strip away their roots and sense of belonging."

His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilus III of Jerusalem and of all Palestine said people who live in the Holy Land are the living witnesses of the divine-human encounter.

"The Holy Land is a home for people of good will," he said. "For centuries the Holy Land has been a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious civilization and, though some groups seek to change this, we are witnesses to a sacred history that embraces all the children of monotheistic faiths."

He expressed concern that, without this diversity of life and faith in the Holy Land, the region will lose its fundamental character and mission. "We have a real and a spiritual home in the Holy Land because of this divine-human encounter, a home on earth that points to our heavenly home and to our common humanity," he said.

The World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel included the International Day of Prayer for Peace on Sept. 21, when faith communities join in worship, education and acts of support for peace and justice for Palestinians and Israelis.

WCC joins demonstrators to end fossil fuels

Representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC) joined tens of thousands of demonstrators in New York City for the "March to End Fossil Fuels." The protest took place before the UN General Assembly, where world leaders gathered for climate discussions.

The march began with an interfaith invocation, gathering people from various religious backgrounds. Frances Namoumou, from the Pacific Conference of Churches, offered a Christian prayer focusing on water as a life-sustaining resource, emphasizing the need to safeguard it from exploitation and extraction.

Henrik Grape, WCC senior advisor on Care for Creation, Sustainability and Climate Justice, emphasized, "The fossil fuel industry shows an unwillingness to change, despite the evidence and scientific consensus. People of all faiths and Indigenous communities have marched together to demand the removal of fossil fuels from our society's systems. A swift and equitable phase-out is essential to protect our shared home."

Organizers estimated that nearly 75,000 individuals participated in the march, marking it as the largest climate protest in the U.S. since the COVID pandemic outbreak in 2020.

Athena Peralta, WCC program executive for Economic and Ecological Justice, stressed the WCC's faith-based duty to support those most affected by climate change. "Our faith compels us to call upon our leaders to transform our unsustainable and unjust economic practices. Today, we acted in accordance with our faith."

In June 2023, the WCC Central Committee endorsed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, reaffirming its commitment to a fossil-free future. The "March to End Fossil Fuels" sent a message: the time to shift away from fossil fuels is now, and the global church community is at the forefront of this call for a rapid and equitable transition to protect our shared home.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Fig Tree fall fundraiser undergirds efforts

Continued from page 1

Fall Festival of Sharing donors help keep The Fig Tree and Resource Directory growing, building staff and board capacity as the media venture now starts to develop a networking initiative.

The goal of the networking is to provide communication tools for congregations and nonprofits to share directly with each other in order to strengthen their efforts to serve in the community,

region and world.

Malcolm suggested that particularly during events like the wildfires, congregations and nonprofits can share with each other what they are doing so they can partner with each other for ideas or gain ideas for action.

He also created a Google map online to help people locate where they can find services that they need near where they live.

Sponsors may send donations

by mail or go to thefigtree.org/donate.html where there are links to give through PayPal or Facebook. The Facebook link for online donations—beginning now at facebook.com/donate/98646681927797—has no fees until Oct. 31, when it runs through PayPal.

For information, call 535-1813 or 535-4112 or email mary@thefigtree.org or development@thefigtree.org.

Conference addresses questions on aging

The Healthy Aging Conference will be held from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 14, at the Washington State University Academic Center, 600 N. Riverpoint Blvd. in Spokane.

Educational sessions will focus on questions about aging.

Topics include legal and financial issues, insurance and veter-

ans benefits, managing patient choices, memory concerns, dental options, levels of care, caregiver support, residence transitions, movement, safety and frailty and geriatric medical issues.

The event is free but registration is required. It is co-sponsored by Providence Health Services, Aging and Long Term

Care of Eastern Washington, Horizon Hospice and Palliative Care, Washington State University Health Sciences Spokane, Spokane Regional Health District and Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center.

For information, call 489-4581 or visit healthyagingspokane.org.

Little Food Pantries draw use, gratitude

People who use Little Food Pantries at two Spokane churches are grateful for them.

Country Homes Christian Church has two Little Food Pantries by its parking lot. Usually, a few hours after they are stocked, the food runs out, but members faithfully keep the pantries filled for neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

Often they find prayer request slips, and sometimes a thank-you note from those using the pantries.

Recently the volunteer filling the Opportunity Presbyterian Church's Little Free Pantry was approached by an elderly woman.

"She told me that had it not been for our pantry, she would

not have eaten last week," the volunteer said.

"What seems like just a package of spaghetti noodles or a can of green beans to us is an entire week of meals for someone else," she said, thanking everyone who has donated food and hygiene products. "We are changing lives and helping defeat hunger in our community."

Fall Flannery Lecture will be a discussion

A Flannery Lecture sponsored by the Gonzaga Religious Studies will be held 4:30 to 6 p.m., Monday, Oct. 16, in Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga on the theme, "Should Christians Forgive the Church for Clerical Sex Abuse?"

During the hour and a half session, speakers will focus on ways to answer this question.

Flannery Lectures are offered through an endowment of the late Maud and Milo Flannery of Spokane to further theological

study and teaching at Gonzaga. The Religious Studies Department invites theologians twice a year to deliver the lectures—in this case a discussion program.

For information, call 313-6776.

NW Fair Housing seeks survey responses

Northwest Fair Housing Alliance, along with Abt Associates, the National Fair Housing Alliance and the Fair Housing Center of Washington invites Washington residents to share their experiences with past and ongoing housing and/or lending

discrimination through a community survey at [surveymonkey.com/r/C3LBM9N](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C3LBM9N).

Information will be collected on the historical extent of housing discrimination in purchasing homes or accessing credit, and the lasting impacts of housing discrimination in Washington today. The goal is to document discriminatory practices in the

state and to inform leaders of possible housing programs to address unmet credit and homeownership needs.

Many housing discrimination stories are unreported and undocumented, so the hope is to connect with people so they can share their stories.

For information, [wshfc.org/covenant](https://www.wshfc.org/covenant).

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Photographic mural depicts past, present and future neighbors

A mural with more than 140 life-sized and larger than life-sized figures of East Spokane people representing the past, present and future was dedicated on Saturday, Sept. 23.

After two years of discussions with Terrain about having a mural to celebrate the diversity of the community, the East Central Spokane neighborhood decided to locate it on the side of the new Carl Maxey Center at 3114 E. 5th. Terrain secured an \$80,000 grant for the project.

Photographs were taken of individuals and families, particularly at the Spokane Eastside Reunion Association (SERA) back-to-school event where children and families came for shoes and supplies.

Photos of people represent the community's diversity, not only racially but also in generations.

Aretha Sconiers, housing evictions specialist at the Carl Maxey Center, said the background images include sights from the

neighborhood, like Calvary Baptist Church and a swing at Underhill Park.

"Our goal is to bring vibrance back to the community," she said, adding that there is space on the wall for 250 images, so more will be added.

Rev. Amos Atkinson, the black business/workforce program coordinator, said the vision was for the East Central neighborhood to claim what rightfully belongs to it—equality, justice, respect, empowerment and vitality.

Dr. Shari Williams-Clark, executive director of the Carl Maxey Center, added that it's "affirming for the community to see themselves and their beauty, and the beauty of so many black and diverse faces in this multicultural community. It gives us hope."

Artist Carl Richardson, an art instructor at Spokane Falls Community College, worked with Reinaldo Gil Zambrano of Gonzaga University's art department to print the photographs



Carl Maxey Center mural reflects diversity of East Central Spokane community.

and plan their placement. Both painted the design on the east side of the building.

"We rolled an acrylic medium on the back of the photos as a gluing agent and to protect them from the elements," Carl said.

They placed them on the wall and will cover them with anti-

graffiti, a medium that will also protect them from UV rays.

"I hope the mural will help change attitudes about what is happening in East Central Spokane," Shari said.

The mural covers auto sales signs to establish the building's identity. The Carl Maxey Center

offers a one-stop-shop for wrap-around services to help people find jobs, prevent evictions, start and support black businesses and move out of homelessness.

For information, call 385-3107, email drshari@carlmaxeycenter.org or visit carlmaxeycenter.org.

YWCA calls for groups to act during Domestic Violence Month

During Domestic Violence Action Month in October, the YWCA Spokane calls on organizations and individuals to take action as part of the annual campaign to raise awareness about domestic violence and encourage proactive steps to address the critical community issue.

"Spokane County has the highest reported rates of domestic violence in Washington," said Jeanette Hauck, CEO of YWCA Spokane.

"This October, let's unite in solidarity with survivors of domestic violence, amplifying their voices and advocating for their rights. We encourage organizations and individuals to partner with us in taking meaningful action to create a safe and inclusive environment for all," she continued.

"Together we can shine a light for survivors to show our support. We can join together to help spread awareness and action this October," she said, inviting people to join YWCA Spokane

during Domestic Violence Action Month (DVAM).

Purple is the nationally designated color for domestic violence awareness.

For survivors, the color can be a symbol of peace, courage, survival, honor and dedication to ending violence, Jeanette said.

YWCA Spokane invites people to create a united, visual campaign throughout the city by wearing purple, shining purple lights in their home and business, and displaying DVAM materials.

There is an online action kit with materials and resources to print or share online at ywcaspokane.org/dvam.

To support survivors and help break the cycle of violence, YWCA Spokane is offering several events.

- The film "Breaking the Cycle: A Better Man" will be shown from 6 to 8 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 5, at the Magic Lantern Theatre, 25 W. Main.

The film looks at the complexities of domestic violence,

challenging societal norms and shedding light on the importance of accountability and healing. Registration is at ywcaspokane.org/dvam-better-man.

- "Pathways Forward: Digital Abuse & DV" will be a Zoom conversation from noon to 1 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 18, with community experts meeting to discuss how digital abuse impacts survivors of domestic violence.

Registration is at ywcaspokane.org/pathways-oct18-2023.

- To deepen understanding of domestic violence, there are virtual Domestic Violence 101 and 201 training sessions in November.

Information is at ywcaspokane.org/training.

- "Domestic Violence 101: Recognize. Respond. Refer" will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays Nov. 6, 8 and 9.

- "Domestic Violence 201: Learning in Action" will be on Mondays, Wednesdays and

Thursdays, Nov. 13, 15 and 16.

Donors may help provide these resources and more at ywcaspokane.org/give.

Organizations interested in joining the campaign may contact Erica Schreiber, community engagement director, at 789-

8275 or ericas@ywcaspokane.org. For information, email dvam@ywcaspokane.org.

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Sravasti Abbey now has 24 monastics living in their community

Continued from page 1
 intersection with the founding 20 years ago.

After one term at a community college, she went skiing in Colorado in December 1973. At 18, she told her parents she was moving there. She fell in love with Colorado, the mountains, open spaces and the West, but also fell into the fast life of the ski world. For six years, she supported herself as a house painter and brick mason helper.

In 1979, she went to Idaho with a friend and bought land with funds from her grandfather. She built a house in the woods, learned about the environment, planted trees and gardened.

"I fell in love with the earth," she said.

After her stepmother died in 1985, Semkye returned to live with her father. During that time, she travelled to a spiritual healing center near New York City.

"That connected me with my spiritual yearning," she said.

She returned to live near her father from 1990 to 1996, continuing to learn about herself.

In 1996, Semkye moved to Seattle. There she met Venerable Thubten Chodron and found answers to the questions she had been asking. She found a spiritual home.

The name Thubten means "the able one's teachings." Venerable is a title of respect for those who are ordained in Buddhism, she explained.

Semkye also met Thubten Chonyi in the early 2000s at the Dharma Friendship Foundation in Seattle, a Buddhist center that offered teachings and connection for the lay Buddhist community.

Chodron wanted to start a Buddhist monastery, but not in Seattle, which had many Dharma centers. In 2001, she went to Missouri, hoping to start a monastery with monastics from other traditions, but the situation was not conducive. She was then invited to Idaho where she and her lay students searched for a suitable property to purchase.

"We looked for land and buildings. Every location was too far, too rocky, too desolate or had legal obstacles," said Semkye, then a landscaper in Seattle.

While Chodron was studying with one of her Tibetan teachers, a friend showed her pictures of properties in Washington. One near Newport had a building with big windows and it looked like the bow of a ship, but the price seemed too high to raise from supporters.

After offers on properties in Southern Idaho fell through, Chonyi, who was living with friends in Cataldo, arranged for Chodron to teach at North Idaho College in Coeur d'Alene. They booked a hall for 80, but more than 125 came, so they moved to the library.

"With that much interest in learning about Buddhism, we decided to look in this area," said Semkye.

A realtor took Chodron and a lay friend to tour the property near Newport. It was exactly what she was looking for. After the realtor left, they went from the meadow to the barn, where they met the owner, Harold Unruh. They told him it would be hard for her to get a bank loan because she did not own a home or car.

Because they would use it for

a Buddhist monastery, Harold, whose father had been a Mennonite pastor in Spring Valley, talked with his wife, Vicky. They agreed to carry the mortgage.

They signed a contract, and Chodron moved in with her cats on Oct. 17, 2003.

Lay students brought furniture from Seattle and Boise, cleaned the house, took down curtains to open the view and organized Friends of Sravasti Abbey.

Chodron was on the mountain with two cats and an occasional guest to help and cook meals.

In May 2004, Semkye moved to help her take care of the garden and forest and organize lay volunteers to come and offer service.

From June to October 2004, volunteers turned a log cabin garage into a meditation hall, raising and replacing the roof, adding a new entry door, a floor and wiring.

"It was bare bones but had space for 60 cushions. We consecrated it in time for the first winter retreat," she said.

When they hosted retreats, women slept on mattresses in bedrooms in the house and there was space for men in the workshop by the barn.

When two Tibetan teachers came in winter 2005, they hosted 80 in the meditation hall.

In 2005, Janet Howell came to the abbey. She was ordained in 2006 as Thubten Tarpa. Over five years, other students of Chodron moved in and were ordained as novice nuns. By 2010, there were six ordained monastics.

Over 20 years, monastic candidates have come from Canada, Singapore, South America, Mexico, Vietnam and the U.S.

A respected teacher, Chodron has taught throughout Asia, Europe, Australia, Mexico and the U.S. She also puts talks on YouTube, does livestream events and has written dozens of books.

Buddhist monastic ordinations must be given by a qualified senior monastic, so when Tarpa was ordained in 2006, three Taiwanese nuns came to assist. The rite was translated from Chinese to English for the abbey.

"It was the first ordination in English," said Semkye.

Semkye was ordained in 2007. Taiwanese nuns supported all the ordinations until 2018, when the abbey nuns had sufficient seniority to give the ordination on their own.

"Tibetan Buddhism does not offer full ordination for nuns, so western novice nuns ordain in the Chinese tradition in Taiwan. Men who take novice ordination at the abbey also take full ordination in Taiwan.

Today there are 24 ordained nuns and monks in the Sravasti community, including three resident teachers, Chodron, Ven. Sangye Khadro and Geshe Tenzin Chodrak.

"We separate the genders," Semkye said. "Most nuns live in

the women's residence. Monks and laymen live in the men's wing in Chenrizig Hall."

Sravasti Abbey can house up to 50 for retreats. Friends come from the region for weekends. Longer courses draw guests from around the world and U.S.

"We have more than 1,000 supporters around the world," Semkye said.

Because Sravasti has outgrown the meditation hall, they are building a Buddha Hall, so more people can come for retreats, lectures and monastic rituals. The goal is to complete it in 2024, Semkye said.

For information, call 509-447-5549, email office.sravasti@gmail.com or visit sravastiabbey.org.



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Groups host speakers for Laudato Si Day of Prayer and Action on Oct. 28

Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, Gonzaga University's Office of Mission and Ministry and Immaculate Heart Retreat Center present Anna Johnson, senior programs manager for the Laudato Si Movement in North America, and Ben Chu, specialist for ecological spirituality at Gonzaga, for a Laudato Si Day of Prayer and Action, on Saturday, Oct. 28, at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd.

Anna will address "Living Laudato Si Individually and as Church." Ben will discuss "Practicing Ecological Spirituality."

With the Laudato Si Movement (LSM) in North America, Anna mobilizes Catholics for personal and systemic ecological transformation. Previously,

she worked in Catholic social teaching, curriculum design and leadership training.

Globally seeing how the climate crisis exacerbates injustice, she focuses on ecological justice. She holds a bachelor's in peace studies and political science at the University of Notre Dame and a master's in sustainability leadership at Arizona State University.

Anna described the LSM as a spirit-led movement to build, inspire and mobilize a global community of Catholics to care "for our common home and achieve climate and ecological justice with all people of good will."

Ben, a former wildland firefighter, discerned a new vocation after having children, "to protect

the planet as a first responder and plant seeds of hope to care for our common home," he said.

"Pope Francis invites us in Laudato Si to journey into ecological conversion. Our faith can enrich this conversion," Ben said, "through awareness that each creature reflects something of God and has a message to convey to us."

For information, call 459-6174 or 448-1224, email kpark@ihrc.net or julie.simmons@cceasternwa.org, or visit cceasternwa.org.



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Dietitian serves people on WIC and people with diabetes in North Idaho

By Kaye Hult

Since January 2022, Danielle Boward, nutrition services program manager at Panhandle Health District (PHD), has exercised her skills as a dietitian to advance nutrition services through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program and through Diabetes Education Services.

As the WIC coordinator in North Idaho, she and her WIC team serve low-income and uninsured parents or caregivers of children under five, women who are pregnant, just had a baby or are breastfeeding a baby.

"We want to make sure family members who are pregnant, breastfeeding or care for young children and may be nutritionally at risk know they are welcome," she said.

Danielle and her team work with anyone at risk of or living with diabetes through the PHD Diabetes Education Services.

She wants clergy and service providers to be aware these services are available to the people in their communities and clientele.

WIC started in 1974 as a federal program to serve low-income families, she said, listing its four emphases.

1) Supplemental food: the USDA provides fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, whole grains, beans and baby food.

2) Nutrition education: Clients learn to use food in healthy ways, receiving shopping tips, child-friendly recipes and information customized for their needs.

3) Breastfeeding support: WIC provides classes in breastfeeding, and access to peer counseling, pumps and supplies.

4) Care beyond WIC: When clients need services WIC cannot provide, staff refer them to other programs.

"Once clients are certified as being at nutritional risk," Danielle said, "they can meet at



Danielle Boward applies her skills as dietitian.

no charge with dietitians, peer counselors and lactation consultants four or more times a year. These services supplement their OB-GYN visits.

"WIC may be the only touch point for health for some clients," she said. "We're helpful and respect clients' boundaries. We provide education and advice to promote health.

"We are a public health organization that provides federal and state grant resources to North Idaho communities," she said.

Danielle supports staff in five locations with Panhandle Health and WIC offices: In addition to the main office at Hayden, there are offices in St. Maries, Sandpoint, Kellogg and Bonners Ferry.

Along with being a registered dietitian, Danielle is a certified diabetes educator and certified life coach. With Diabetes Education Services of Panhandle Health, she oversees two programs that use trained coaches who assist with behavior change and goal setting.

The program's brochure says one in three people lives with prediabetes. One in 10 people lives with Type 1, Type 2 or gestational diabetes. Blood tests help people know which pro-

gram is best for them.

The year-long diabetes prevention program is designed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and targets behavior and lifestyle changes for people with prediabetes to prevent Type 2 diabetes from developing.

"Our goal is for a certified life coach to facilitate interaction and encourage support within a group of peers with prediabetes who meet to discuss behavior change topics, such as meal management, exercise, problem solving and stress management," Danielle said.

In the diabetes management program, clients may have one-on-one counseling or join a group class taught by a dietitian.

"Group classes for those newly diagnosed help them learn about diabetes through discussions and learning activities, techniques that engage them in active learning," Danielle explained.

"We recently finished a diabetes class in Bonners Ferry covering meal management, physical activity and glucose levels," she said, noting that many North Idaho communities lack access

to diabetes education.

Neither diabetes program is income dependent, although most participants use insurance or self-pay options. If a person qualifies for a program but can't afford it, financial assistance options are available at the Panhandle Health District, she said.

The nutrition services programs Danielle manages serve a variety of populations. Some cannot afford housing. They may live on couches in others' homes or in their cars. WIC may be their only nutrition source in hard times.

"Mothers who need dental care often struggle to eat well," she said. "We refer them to free dental programs for their children and themselves.

"We've referred mothers without homes to shelters and other support organizations that can help with rent or utilities," she said.

Danielle oversees operations, state grants and spending funds for these programs. She also assists with client interactions and daily tasks in the five locations.

An average day includes staff meetings, community outreach, travel to PHD and WIC offices, and meeting with WIC and diabetes clients.

Danielle's desire to make an impact by working in health care began with her experiences as a child. Her family moved to various states and countries.

Her parents served with a disaster relief organization in Peru to create jobs and provide relief in disasters. Living in Peru, she experienced many cultures.

From her mother, a nurse, Danielle developed an interest in health care.

At Walla Walla College, she earned a health sciences degree in 1997 and became a certified health education specialist.

In 1999 at the University of Washington in Seattle, she earned a master's degree in nutrition sciences after participating in a coordinated dietetic internship. After graduation, she became a registered dietitian.

Since then, she has worked in several hospital systems in Washington and California.

In 2021, she moved to Idaho and began to work for the Emily Program in Spokane, counseling people with eating disorders to eat healthily, responsibly and guilt free. She came from there to the Panhandle Health District.

"As I set goals each day, I ask: How can I reach more people with these programs? How can we reach enough people who want to participate so our programs can keep happening? If we don't have people enroll, grants don't continue to roll in. Public health depends heavily upon grant funding.

"As I support the staff in these programs," she said, "maintaining a positive mindset is important to me. I promote good communication and offer encouragement.

"How can I support PHD and encourage the staff here to stay passionate? They work here for the right reasons, prioritizing being able to make a difference."

For information, call 208-415-5130 or visit phd1.idaho.gov.

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www.raceamity.org

South Asia Cultural Association brings concert, workshop to Spokane

This fall, the South Asia Cultural Association of Spokane is bringing programs to Spokane in October with help from City of Spokane grants.

The South Asian Classical Music Concert, "Sangeeta Kacheri," is presented by five people from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 14, at Unity Spiritual Center, 2900 S. Bernard St. It is preceded at 5:15 p.m. by an Indian Vegetarian Dinner, which may be purchased.

The artists include vocalist Sri. Sunil Gargyan; string musicians

Sri. Vijay Muralidharan on the violin and Smt. Saraswati Rangan, playing a veena; and percussionists Sri. Sai Raghavan, playing a mridangam, and Sri. Ghatam Ravi, playing a ghatam.

In addition, they are leading a workshop at 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 13, at Shadle Park Library.

While the musical programs are free, registration is requested and there is a charge for the dinner in October.

For information, call 467-5558 or email sacaspokane@gmail.com.

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Young scholar receives 2023 mentorship

Elise Leal, Whitworth assistant professor of history, has been recognized as a 2023 Young Scholar in American Religion. She is one of 10 selected for the fellowship by the Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).

The program provides intensive mentorship in scholarship, teaching and professional development for early-career scholars in American religion.

Elise came to Whitworth in 2018 and teaches courses on early America, women and gender, and religious history. Her research focuses on historical intersections between cultural formation and religious belief and practice, particularly in relation to gender, childhood/youth and social reform in the late 18th and early 19th century United States.

“For the past few decades, this cohort experience has pushed scholarship and teaching on

American religion in new directions through creative conversations and collaborations,” said Elise, who will develop two new courses for the history department at Whitworth.

Her first book, tentatively titled *Holy Nurseries: Sunday Schools and the Creation of Childhood in Early American Christianity*, is under review at University Press.

For information, call 777-4703 or email tcoder@whitworth.edu.

Research project awarded national grant

Gonzaga University’s Whitehead Research Project (WRP), which is studying 20th century philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, was recently awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for its multi-decade work to collect and edit the philosopher’s published and unpublished lectures, papers and correspondence.

The 17-volume “Edinburgh Critical Edition of the Complete Works of Alfred North Whitehead” is in its early stages, with two volumes published to date. The three-year, \$350,000 Scholarly Editions and Translations grant will fund staff and graduate student workers to accelerate progress.

Whitehead (1861–1947) began his career as a mathematician before shifting to phi-

losophy and emigrating from England to America in 1924 to join the Harvard philosophy department, where he lectured for 13 years. In 1929, he wrote *Process and Reality*, inspiring the contemporary “process philosophy” and “process theology” movements.

Martin Luther King Jr. quoted Whitehead in his 1964 Nobel Peace Prize lecture, said Brian Henning, WRP executive director, and professor of philosophy and environmental studies at Gonzaga.

In recent years Whitehead’s “philosophy of organism,” stressing the interdependence of organisms and their environments, has been influential in modern environmental movements.

“As one of the 20th century’s

original thinkers, Whitehead has increasing relevance today on environmental issues, making the Critical Edition of his writings urgent,” said Joseph Petek, director of research and publication.

The Whitehead Research Project, founded in 2005, is home to not only the Critical Edition, but also the Whitehead Research Library, the Whitehead Encyclopedia and the Contemporary Whitehead Studies book series.

“The award reinforces the WRP’s status as the world’s leading academic project studying him,” said Brian. “The Critical Edition’s first two volumes and archival materials online have enlarged our understanding of his philosophy.”

For information, call 313-5885 or email henning@gonzaga.edu.

Jewish group presents documentary

The Spokane Area Jewish Family Services and Temple Beth Shalom, with the support of the Alhadeff Family Charitable Fund, will present a free public screening of the award-winning documentary “The Jewish Jail Lady and The Holy Thief: A Story of Addiction, Recovery and Redemption.”

After the screening at 7 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 4, at Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave., there will be a panel discussion with the stars of the film and area experts on how the Spokane

community can effectively fight against addiction.

The film follows Harriet Rossetto and Rabbi Mark Borovitz, who worked to remove the stigma of addiction and build Beit T’Shuvah, a nonprofit addiction recovery center and synagogue community in Los Angeles.

The film also chronicles the life of Harriet, a housewife-turned-social worker who helped incarcerated felons re-enter society, and her partnership with Mark, an ex-con and recovering alcoholic who becomes an ordained rabbi.

Their efforts to save thousands of lives over 35 years through Beit T’Shuvah have brought

recognition, including participation in President George W. Bush’s roundtable on faith and recovery and the Advocates for Action award from President Barack Obama.

Harriet, a retired licensed clinical social worker who founded Beit T’Shuvah, and Mark, the CEO and retired senior rabbi of Beit T’Shuvah, share their wisdom throughout the country.

They will speak on a panel with Spokane County Sheriff John Nowels and others to address the challenges of addiction locally.

For information, call 747-7394 or email director@sajfs.org.

Feast celebrates first \$1 million

On Sept. 20, Feast World Kitchen, 1321 W. 3rd in Spokane, celebrated bringing in \$1 million in profits from food sales and tips to support the chef partner families and dishwashers.

Donations at the Sept. 20 fundraising event covered program expenses so all the dining out dollars went to the chefs to help them further establish their lives, careers and businesses in the U.S.

For information, call 608-1313 or visit feastworldkitchen.org.

U.S. Attorney of Idaho speaks at KCTFHR banquet

Joshua Hurwit, U.S. Attorney for Idaho, will be the keynote speaker for the 24th annual human rights banquet of the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations (KCTFHR) beginning at 5:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 7, at the Best Western Plus Coeur d’Alene Inn at 506 W. Appleway Ave.

Joshua, who earned a bachelor’s degree from Stanford University and a juris doctor degree from Harvard University, received Harvard’s 2005 “Best Oralist Award.”

Banquet goers will see “Idaho Listens,” a 22-minute documentary film promoting civility. The film, which calls for bringing Idahoans together to talk and listen to each other, was produced by the Boise State University Institute for National Values in partnership with funding from philanthropist Greg Carr.

The KCTFHR will also present its annual Civil Rights Award to the Hagadone Corporation for their recent creation of a full-service health clinic for their employees and families.

Tony Stewart, the task force’s secretary, said the KCTFHR hopes the Hagadone Corporation’s action will be an example of corporate responsibility to employees for other businesses to emulate.

The task force then will present the 2023 Bill Wassmuth Memorial Volunteer-of-the-Year Award.

Gonzaga University Foley Library and the North Idaho College Molstead Library will receive awards for housing all the documents of the KCTFHR’s more than 42 years of history of the human rights group. Those documents are available for public viewing and research.

For information, call 208-765-3932 or visit idahohumanrights.org.

Lutheran church, Jewish fellowship host Sukkot Celebration in Post Falls

Calvary Lutheran Church and Beth Shalom Messianic Jewish Fellowship, both in Post Falls, are holding a Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) Celebration at 6 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 5, at the grand pavilion at Q’emiln Park at 12201 W. Parkway in Post Falls.

The celebration, which is open to the community, regardless of spiritual background, includes a kosher potluck meal.

“We will gather with family, friends and neighbors outdoors—under a heated pavilion—as is tradition with Sukkot,” said Matt Erickson, pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church. “We will gather to give thanks and celebrate.

“We ask that all come with an open and curious heart as our hosts give us a chance to learn about the Feast of Tabernacles and invite us to join together in fellowship,” he said.

The meal will benefit Family Promise of North Idaho, so guests also will learn about Family

Promise’s work with North Idaho faith communities to provide for families who are without a home. An offering will be collected.

“Sukkot celebrates how God protected, guided, provided for and gave hospitality to the Hebrew people as they were homeless, journeying through the wilderness for 40 years,” Matt said. “We believe God provides those blessings to homeless people today through Family Promise.”

Guests are asked to bring a dish to share with Beth Shalom, which is a fellowship of Jewish and Gentile believers.

“We have been asked to prepare meals that do not contain unclean animal products,” he said. “People need not worry about ingredients being certified kosher and may use their regular kitchen and cookware.”

For information, call 360-296-3070 or email pastormatt@calvarypostfalls.com or visit bethshalomcda.net, calvarypostfalls.com or familypromiseni.org.

Fall Compost Fair & Leaf Festival

Saturday, October 28, 2023
11 am-2 pm
John A. Finch Arboretum

Spokane County residents who complete the activities may take home a free compost bin. Limit one per household. Bins provided by the Spokane County Regional Solid Waste System.

Please arrive no later than 1:30 pm and bring proof of residency.



For more information call 509-625-6580 or go to www.spokanecountysolidwaste.org

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Program invites mission groups to come to learn about the Yakama

By Emma Maple – Intern

In 2012, Corey Greaves, a Native American Christ-follower who lives on the Yakama Reservation in Washington, developed a program called Students Learning About Missions (S.L.A.M.)

It invites family groups or middle school through college student groups to come to the reservation in order to serve and, most importantly, to learn.

“They come to learn Native American history and who we are,” said Annaweinita Miller, S.L.A.M. trip director.

The trips were established in response to ineffective, insensitive mission trips. Before S.L.A.M., Corey said every summer people poured to the reservation on mission trips run in a “western, colonized paradigm.” He called them “drive-by-mission trips.”

“They came, painted houses, led vacation Bible schools, took before and after pictures of the houses they painted, went home after a week, put together a PowerPoint, showed it to the church and said, ‘Look what we did!’”

The next week, more groups came and did the same things.

At the end of the summer, nothing changed on the reservation except a couple of paint jobs, but youth went home feeling good about themselves, he said.

Mission groups used a “typical top-down missiological paradigm of ‘We’re coming to help you,’ never bothering to ask if we needed help,” Corey said.

After watching summer after summer of unfruitful mission trips, he decided to develop a better program.

S.L.A.M. trips are run in “an Indigenous way with groups coming to learn about our ways.”

“They come humbly asking, ‘May I come?’” Corey said. “If we give them permission, they come in a posture of learning. We don’t let them lead vacation Bible schools or kids clubs. They come to learn because they have a lot to learn.”

S.L.A.M. visits run from Sunday to Friday 10 weeks a year—two in the spring and eight in the summer.

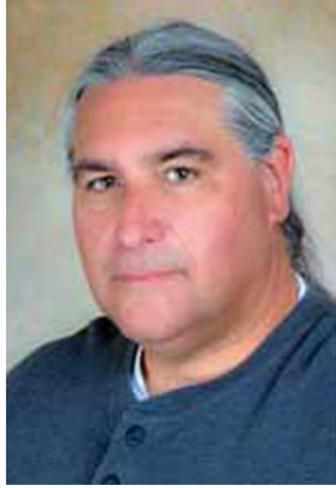
These trips are only one part of the program Corey runs called Mending Wings, a nonprofit Native American youth organization that serves the Yakama Reservation. He is president and cofounder.

Besides helping outsiders learn about Native American culture, Annaweinita said S.L.A.M. trips bring in income to support other Mending Wings programs. Because Mending Wings hires reservation youth to help run trips, they gain leadership opportunities.

“It’s an investment in our kids’ leadership and future, as well as the future, leadership and understanding of groups that come,” she said.

Annaweinita invites each group that takes part in a S.L.A.M. trip. To find interested groups, she does outreach at conferences and networks online. Once she finds a group that might fit, she sends an invitation.

“That empowers leaders to be like, ‘Okay, they invited us, we’re not just going there to walk our way. They’re inviting us to their home,’” she said.



Corey Greaves, left, and Annaweinita Miller change paradigm of mission visits on the Yakama Reservation.

Photos courtesy of S.L.A.M. website

Once a group chooses to take part in a S.L.A.M. trip, Annaweinita builds a relationship with them while they’re at the reservation and maintains the relationship when they have left. Often, she invites groups back in a few years.

S.L.A.M. trips are usually booked well in advance, often filled for the following spring and summer by September and October, sometimes before the schedule is posted. Because so many want to take part in these programs, each summer is jam-packed.

This summer, about 380 took part in S.L.A.M. trips.

Even though Annaweinita and Corey emphasize this is not a traditional mission trip and is about learning humbly, they said sometimes a group slips through the cracks and comes “to help those poor Indians.”

When these groups refuse to accept they are learners rather than teachers, “it does not work out well,” said Corey.

This summer, one group had to leave midweek.

“We do have groups that don’t get it.” Corey said. “They want to function in that old model, because they think that’s what works. From their perspective, it’s working, but when we talk to the Indigenous people, it’s not working.”

That model has been around since Columbus landed. It hasn’t changed much, he said, even though less than three percent of Native people claim to follow Jesus after more than 400 years.

“That’s not a good return. It begs the question. Is it the model? I believe it is,” Corey said. “A definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over but expecting a different result. We see that in short-term youth mission trips.”

While S.L.A.M. trips focus on how guests can learn from those on the reservation, Corey said the Yakama do learn from people who come. One week this summer, there were more than 80 people from different cultural backgrounds—Samoans, Tongans, Hmong, Alaskan Natives and Africans.

“One night when we had a Salmon Feast, our kids drummed and danced. Then we invited the guest groups to share their dances. It was a cultural exchange experience for all of us,” he said.

Each year, S.L.A.M. trips have one of four themes that repeat every four years: compassion, courage, honesty and respect. Courage was the 2023 theme.

The themes are woven into the program through teaching that focuses on the senses. The first day, participants hear a teaching on the year’s virtue, targeting their sense of hearing.

During the next days, they focus on their other senses to see the virtue in everyday life. For example, participants use touch the second day to make mats or moccasins, learning about the compassion of nature and the world everyone is part of, said Corey.

Next, they have a lesson on the virtue through sight, then taste and so on.

“By the end of the week, they used all their senses in an Indigenous way,” Annaweinita said. “It’s a different way of looking at life. People won’t get it in one week but will forever be changed. They go home with different feelings—being learners and part of the family.”

“Our spirituality is in and through everything we do.” Corey said. “For me, as a follower of the Jesus way, I want to experience what it is to be a follower of Yeshua. What does

that look like? Sound like? Smell like? Feel like?”

Corey’s desire to learn and teach about Jesus was part of the reason he started Mending Wings.

“I had a pretty clear vision of what the Creator was calling me to do,” he said.

Mending Wings focuses on “teaching kids stories of Jesus from an Indigenous perspective and theology, which is different from European theology,” he said.

“We don’t say we have the Creator all figured out or put in nice theological boxes that explain everything, as often happens in western theology,” Corey said. “In Native theology, we don’t take the mystery out, because it’s wonderful. That understanding humbles us.”

Focusing on Jesus’ story from an Indigenous perspective also means honoring and remembering their culture and who they are as a people.

“We talk about our faith in Yeshua, but also talk about how important it is to hang onto and remember our spirituality as Yakamas. Before we had a Bible, the Creator gave us that spirituality. We try to tie that in together, not throwing one out over the other, because we don’t see them as mutually incompatible realities,” he said.

A song by his friend Cheryl Bear summarizes how Corey feels about his experiences of Jesus in his culture:

“You spoke to our grandfathers many ways through Mother Earth,

through visions and rituals, through fasting and prayer, through holy men who prophesy through our sacred songs and dance,

and then you sent your son Yeshua and you spoke to us through him.”

“Jesus makes what the Creator has given us more beautiful,” Corey said. “Now we also have a Savior.”

He incorporates this cultural understanding for S.L.A.M. visitors, so many leave saying they have a bigger picture of the Creator.

“If we learn, worship and look at the Creator through our own cultural lenses, we have a narrow view of this infinite, invisible, mysterious Creator. When we see the Creator through other cultural lenses or perspectives, we gain a bigger picture of who the Creator is. No matter what culture, we all use finite minds to describe the infinite,” he explained.

For information, visit mendingwings.net or email corey@mendingwings.net or annaweinita@mendingwings.net.

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Alliance offers training on colonization

A series of training sessions, “Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization,” is being offered by the Spokane Alliance.

Developed by a team of U.S. Native Americans, Indigenous/First Nations Canadians, Aboriginal Australians and Māori New Zealanders, it is designed to take thousands of people in faith, labor, health care and community organizations through a process to set the stage for right relationships and meaningful

action with Indigenous people.

Members of alliance institutions can attend the sessions free of charge.

The training sessions will be on Zoom. Commitment to all five dates is requested.

Sessions will be 6 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 14, Thursday, Nov. 16, Tuesday, Nov. 28, Thursday, Nov. 30, and Tuesday, Dec. 5.

Follow-up monthly sessions with local indigenous presenters will be in person from 6 to 8

p.m., Thursdays.

On Dec. 7, Spokane tribal historical Warren Seyler is the presenter.

The Jan. 11 session will be led by the Salish School of Spokane.

The Feb. 15 program is planned with the American Indian Community Center.

For information, call 532-1688, email laurel@spokanealliance.org or visit https://www.spokanealliance.org/wrestling_with_the_truth_of_colonization.

‘Purple with a Purpose’ campaign seeks to involve businesses in ending violence

Spokane Regional Domestic Violence Coalition and Stop the Silence Spokane plan the third year of the “End the Violence: Purple for a Purpose” campaign.

Their goal is to involve local businesses in raising awareness and fostering community involvement to prevent domestic violence in Spokane, which has a high rate of domestic violence.

There are opportunities to empower through support, initiating

dialogue and dismantling barriers, building stronger communities, involving local businesses as allies and inviting collective action for change, said Annie Murphey, executive director for Spokane Regional Domestic Violence Coalition.

Businesses can sign up at lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/qPYLASu/P4Psignup to receive a Purple for a Purpose kit with materials and resources to

promote the activities.

They are invited to display purple merchandise, transform businesses with purple décor and other purple themed means for awareness in person and online.

In addition, SRDVC is hosting the Support Inspire Progress (SIP) fundraiser at 5 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 21 at Highball and Northern Quest Resort and Casino.

For information, visit endtheviolencespokane.org/sip.

Sravasti Abbey is planning a retreat on ‘Good Grief’

Venerable Sangye Khadro, a Buddhist nun, teacher and author, will lead a residential weekend retreat on “Good Grief” from 3 p.m., Friday, Oct. 6, to 1 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 8, at Sravasti Abbey, the Buddhist monastery at 692 Country Lane Rd. near Newport.

Through teachings, meditation and discussion, the course focuses on understanding the underlying causes of grief and

identifies practices that enable people to learn from grief and transform it.

Loss—of a loved one, a pet, a job, a home, a skill or ability—may give rise to grief, which can last for years or decades, said Thubten Chonyi.

“Grief is painful, and it needs to be acknowledged and healed, not suppressed,” she said, “but grief also offers an opportunity for spiritual growth and trans-

formation.”

She said that Buddhist teachings and methods can be useful for people from many faiths dealing with grief and other struggles.

Venerable Sangye Khadro was born in California and ordained as a Buddhist nun at Kopan Monastery in Nepal in 1974. She has studied Buddhism with masters including Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Lama Yeshe,

Company gives \$10,000 to assist families needing food

This summer, Amerigroup presented a \$10,000 sponsorship for the Audubon Park Food Bank to assist families struggling with food insecurity, said Yoshunda Blunt, Amerigroup’s marketing and community relations representative.

Earlier this year, Laura Velonza, Pacific Northwest district administrator and Audubon Park Church member, asked Amerigroup to partner with the food bank. She told Yoshunda that the ongoing issue of food insecurity affects many households in Spokane.

For more than 50 years, Audubon’s Park Food Bank has been a resource for individuals and families facing these challenges. The food bank and church have provided what they can from community donations, but Laura knew they could do more.

To present the gift, Yoshunda joined Laura and Karen Peacock, food bank director, for a tour of the food bank.

“It’s an act of compassion that goes beyond financial assistance. It’s about coming together to uplift those who are most vulnerable,” said Laura.

Karen said the sponsorship allows the food bank to purchase food and update its space, so “people who come to our food bank feel good about coming.”

Yosuhund hopes Amerigroup’s example will inspire other businesses and individuals to create positive change in their spheres.

“By collectively addressing food insecurity and promoting well-being, we witness the potential to uplift lives, elevate spirits and establish a legacy of positive transformation that resonates far beyond a single act of generosity,” said Laura.

For information, call 325-4541 or email laura@audubon-parkumc.org.

Retreat center announces upcoming events

Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC) presents retreat and concert in October and Silent Day of Prayer in early November.

An Evening Praise and Worship event will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 27 at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd. It will be led by Marty Rotella, a singer, songwriter, producer and three-time Grammy Award nominee.

His focus is on bringing an audience closer to Jesus and the Blessed Mother as he shares about his life, faith and mission.

IHRC will present a Concert and Retreat Event on at 1 p.m., Friday and at 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 28, both led by Marty, who will offer an afternoon of “peace, hope and healing to uplift spirits and rejuvenate souls,” said Kristen Parker, office and programs administrator at IHRC.

A Silent Day of Prayer, “The Heaven Club, the Communion of Saints,” with Mass, two conferences, lunch, the Holy Hour of the Adorate and the Sacrament of Reconciliation will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 1.

It will be led by Sr. Mary Eucharista, SMMC, spiritual life and retreat administrator.

For information, contact 448-1224 x 100 or kparker@ihrc.net.

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Side by Side brings people together across differences in abilities

By Catherine Ferguson

As a community of people of differing abilities experiencing life together, Side by Side (SBS) is a much-needed ministry, one that is in contrast to the polarization in the country.

SBS is a community where everyone belongs, said David Sittser, the executive director.

Its website describes it as a community guided by the vision that everyone was created by God and in God's image and that image is love.

"Disability is often used as a way to differentiate people, but we want to blur the lines between people with disabilities and people who are typically abled," he said. "We want to provide opportunities for people simply to be—without an agenda."

In short testimonial videos on the website, two participants, Mac and Grace, describe their favorite things about Side by Side as "hanging out... with the whole Side by Side crew" and "just being together, connecting."

David explained the genesis of this ministry in Spokane.

Because of his experiences during his study for a master of divinity degree at Duke Divinity School in Durham, N.C., David co-founded the Side by Side ministry in Spokane in 2019 with two others, Janet Neder and Ryan Tjelle.

"During my program there, I began to volunteer at Reality Ministries, which fostered friendships among people of all abilities. I began to have friends there and really liked it. After I finished my academic work, they asked me to become their director of community development, and I stayed there for eight years," he said.

Eventually he and his wife, Kelli, came back to Spokane.

David described the quality of the relationships he formed there as mutual, authentic and reflecting the reality of Christ's love for all.

"An important part of Side by Side is the belief that while people with disabilities have unique challenges which can sometimes be a barrier to relationships, all of us are created in the image of God," he explained.

Side by Side operates as a faith-based organization and has spiritual elements in its programs, but the programs embrace individuals of all beliefs.

"Everyone is welcome regardless of their personal faith journey," he said.

These same qualities that David found in his experience at Reality Ministries are promoted in the relationships among the



David Sittser blurs lines related to disabilities.

volunteers and participants in the programs of Side by Side, too.

He pointed out that it is important that relationships be reciprocal and take place in a culture imbued with beauty.

To aid in making that beauty, sometimes David's wife provides flowers from their garden to enhance the programs and events.

Both volunteers and participants value hospitality. They are genuinely glad that each one is there, and each takes the time to attend to the others, so they discover more about each other, God and the world.

The ministry currently has its home base with Central Lutheran Church at 512 S. Bernard in Spokane.

Presently its 55 participants and 45 volunteers are engaged in five programs that make up its core activities: music, cooking, evening groups, common prayer and farm days, which are scheduled at set times on different days of the week.

Since it is a faith-based ministry, common prayer is an important program element.

"We gather for morning prayer by Zoom on Fridays at 9:30, but since COVID, we are only able

to gather online. We make sure the liturgy is accessible for all and that it is led by people of all abilities," David explained.

Its music program features a choir that sometimes performs at local churches and last January performed at the SBS Advent Arts Night.

Groups on Tuesday evenings alternate between large group gatherings that they call "the huddle" and a gathering of small groups that they call "home groups."

David described a recent huddle: "On Sept. 5, about 70 people gathered at Corbin Park. We ate, heard a message and sang together. At these gatherings and our home groups, we build friendships with people with and without developmental disabilities and have fun together."

For the home groups, eight to 10 people—participants and volunteers—meet at the homes of various SBSers where they share a meal and fellowship. At these gatherings, everyone builds friendships with people with and without developmental disabilities.

Farm days occur once a month on Saturdays from April through October as the weather allows.

They feature a picnic lunch, walks and the opportunity to ride horses, giving people of all abilities the chance to enjoy outside activities together.

Side by Side's cooking program illustrates the essence of its key principles and the joy they bring to all involved.

The program has a team of about 18 members—about half with disabilities and the other half without. David plans the menu, puts together the recipes and then the team gathers on Wednesdays to prepare the meal. On Thursdays, they finish the cooking and serve the meal to families and friends. Over the course of time, everyone shares in the preparation, the cooking and the serving.

A recent meal treated guests to a summer salad, pasta with ricotta sauce and, as dessert, a peach cobbler with fresh local peaches.

David pays special attention to accommodating the unique needs of some team members, who may require adaptive tools for chopping ingredients or prefer grated alternatives to chopping, modifying recipes accordingly.

Besides the regular program activities, Side by Side occasionally has a special event that allows those who participate to see each other in a new context and to deepen the relationships that are so central to the vision of the organization.

Two of these mentioned by David were an Advent Arts

Service in January and a spring talent show.

"The service was beautiful. The choir sang different carols for the lessons. Different kinds of art were displayed—from wood cuts to knitted baby blankets. Then, last spring, we rented a space for a talent show that drew 250 people."

Lauren Taylor, one of the volunteers, summarizes her appreciation of Side by Side, saying, "We get a better picture of who God is by walking in community with people who are different than us. Our life is better because of Side by Side."

SBS is a nonprofit organization that relies on donations and small grants for its funding.

For information, email david@sidebysidespokane.org or visit sidebysidespokane.org.

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New bishop recounts her pilgrimage through ministry to her new role

Continued from page 1
about Ignatian spirituality and the Catholic Worker Movement, and worshiped at a Jesuit college.

“One Sunday, I visited a Lutheran church and felt like I came home,” she said.

The center was then resettling refugees from Kosovo and Bosnia. At an after-school program, she worked with Vietnamese, Hmong, Haitian and Bosnian refugee youth.

“I knew about refugee resettlement from Lutheran Community Services but had never been on the front line. Hearing their stories opened my world view and awareness,” Meggan said.

During college, she went to work at Camp Christikon near Billings, Mont. Its camp director led many campers and staff into ministry. She was among them.

To have a big city experience, she chose to go to the University of Chicago Divinity School. She earned a master of divinity in 2002. Because it was not a Lutheran seminary, she studied a year at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.

For her intern year from 2003 to 2004, she was part-time in Lutheran campus ministry at Eastern Washington University and part-time intern at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Cheney.

Meggan conducted many funerals there, which she said was good preparation for her first call in rural Soldier, a community of 200 between Sioux City and Council Bluffs.

“I did my first wedding and first funeral in Soldier on the same day,” she said.

“As the town pastor, I attended many ball games and did pastoral care in the bleachers,” Meggan said.

When she came to Soldier, the community was affected by the 1980s economic downturn and the farm crisis from big agriculture taking over family farms.

The church, which is of Norwegian heritage, was the only church in town and drew about 60 to worship. It had two buildings, an old one in the country, where they worshiped in the summer, and a newer one in town, which they later tore down and rebuilt with air conditioning. Then they worshiped only in June at the country church.

When the insurance company said it would stop insuring the older church unless it had new siding, she helped the church raise \$40,000 for siding.

Meggan also served on the board of Lutheran Lakeside Camp, owned by many Lutheran churches in Iowa. At her second parish in Nampa, Meggan continued to have strong ties with outdoor ministries, serving on



Meggan Manlove is being installed as bishop on Oct. 7.

the board of Luther Heights in the Sawtooth Mountains.

Nampa grew to nearly 117,000 in her 12 years there but experienced an economic downturn in 2008, like the rest of the country. People lost jobs and the housing bubble burst.

Trinity Lutheran, which had about 70 attending until COVID, was the only ELCA church in Nampa. Since the pandemic, many worship in person, but some still worship online.

“Before I came, the church dug up its front yard to make a pantry garden, tended by expert gardeners. The produce went to food pantries,” Meggan said.

The church also helped start a Traveling Table mobile food and produce distribution in North Nampa.

Trinity joins with ecumenical partners to do shared worship and youth activities. It is also part of the Treasure Valley (TV) Cluster, 10 ELCA churches that offer joint confirmation, church council retreats, online worship services and a website with daily devotions.

In the 1990s, Trinity had leased land around it to the Sisters of Mercy, who built 16 affordable homes, managed for more than 20 years by Mercy Housing. In 2014, Mercy Housing was leaving Nampa and wanted to sell the houses and land. Trinity bought them and created a nonprofit, Trinity New Hope.

Meggan learned about affordable housing as Trinity New Hope worked with city, county and state governments and other nonprofits to serve people in shelters, keep people in homes, change laws and expand the housing stock.

In February 2020, just before the pandemic, she went for training in spiritual practices offered with a Lilly grant at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley and at a California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, Calif. Meggan led three cohorts on spiritual practices online.

“Although I prefer in person, I found we could build community in powerful ways across a vast geographical area,” she said. “I became comfortable with video conferencing.”

In 2016, Meggan studied with San Francisco Theological Seminary’s ecumenical doctor of ministry program. She earned the degree in 2021.

Believing there is power in storytelling, she wrote her dissertation on “Equipping Lutherans in How to Tell Their Faith Stories.”

“Storytelling is a healing tool for individuals and communities. I am relational. It’s how I see the world and how I see ministry,” she said.

Meggan was ready for a change when she was nominated to be bishop.

She shared thoughts on what the church needs to be about today:

- People need to read scripture with the best scholarship, and to know the whole biblical narrative, not just a few verses to make a point.

- In whatever context they are, people need to know their neighbors’ needs.

- Lutherans have no need to apologize for their liturgy, because it shapes people in life-giving ways.

- One practical need arises because not all of the synod’s 88 congregations can afford full time pastors. So the synod is finding ways to equip lay leaders to be ministers.

- The ELCA’s ecumenical partnerships and full communion relationships with many denominations allow for sharing pastors,

buildings and campus ministries.

- Churches can build relationships so they can do housing together or find other unique ways to respond to what is happening in their communities.

To encourage congregations, she travels to visit them and hear stories of the people and the churches.

Meggan finds anxiety among

people who love the church and want to pass God’s love on to neighbors and future generations.

“I visit churches to remind people they are part of something bigger—a larger church,” she said.

For information, call 208-318-4845 or email bishopmeggan.manlove@nwmsynod.org.

Young Spokane man spends 12 months learning about organizing

Cameron Conner, who grew up in Spokane and Nepal and founded the Conscious Connections Foundation, is spending a year exploring how community organizing has impact around the world. With a Watson Fellowship, he is funded to live and learn about cooperatives in Barcelona, innovative economic policy in England, neighborhood-based civic associations in South Africa and traditional nomadic communities in Mongolia.

This opportunity requires putting his life on hold for 12 months, time away from his partner of six years, his family and a career he loves.

In this issue's Sounding Board and over the year, Cameron will share with The Fig Tree insights from encounters on how relationships and power can bring change.

Growing up in Spokane in the late 1990s, a decade marked by union busting and deindustrialization, Cameron saw many stable industrial and healthcare jobs disappear. He also traveled for months at a time to Kathmandu, Nepal, where his family has worked nearly 40 years, primarily in partnerships with refugees from Tibet.

"Experiences with friends, family and community on both sides of the globe taught me that there was a deep divide between the world as it is and the world as it should be. I saw some people I knew turn to alcohol out of shame for being unable to support their family. At 11, I saw peers in Nepal drop out of school to work to support their siblings. Some kids on my wrestling team were afraid to go home because of abusive parents. I lost friends to suicide," he said.

Cameron's parents were role models who, he said, "were not afraid to address issues head on." Nonetheless he saw people he loved forced to act out of desperation because they had no power.

"I, too, felt powerless, unable to fight problems that were bigger than me. I was angry and afraid of my impotence," he said.

Cameron started searching for opportunities to act in order to realize he was not powerless.

An opportunity came in 2013 when he learned that two young women in Nepal and many of their classmates couldn't afford the next year's school tuition and would drop out.

"That was actionable," he said. "In 2014, I saw my opportunity, and co-founded the non-profit Conscious Connections Foundation (CCF) with partners in Spokane and Kathmandu to address two challenges facing families in Nepal: access to primary healthcare and girls' education."

CCF's mission was and remains "to invest in the power of women and girls to be key



Cameron Conner shares insights on power of organizing.

Photo courtesy of Cameron Conner

participants in their society."

When a 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal a year later, CCF temporarily also became a tool for disaster relief, distributing food, providing temporary shelter and rebuilding schools.

"That was another opportunity to take action," he said.

"Flushed with the success of the concrete impact we were having, and armed with the new contacts made in Nepal, I continued down the road of international humanitarian aid," he recounted. "I moved to the northern border of Greece where I sub-contracted under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to provide housing and shelter for Syrian refugees fleeing the Syrian Civil War and ISIS."

He was initially stationed in the Idomeni refugee camp, an informal settlement of nearly 16,000 people created when Macedonia's government shut its borders and allowed only a few hundred to cross the frontier every day. Thousands stayed, believing it would give them a better place in the line to cross into Macedonia, Cameron said.

"A month into my time in Idomeni, as I began our daily drive to the camp, my supervisor got a ping on her cellphone. A photo came, showing lines of police and military dressed in camouflage sweeping through Idomeni and rousing residents out of their shelters," he reported. "As our car drew close, we were stopped by a police barricade. We could only watch as residents were herded into buses, carrying what few items they had packed, before the police line

forced them out.

"As we tried unsuccessfully to get past the police and help families, a line of bulldozers came into view, leveling the tents, make-shift kitchens and improvised soccer field," he continued.

Returning a day later, Cameron sat in silence on the side of the road staring out at what was left of Idomeni.

"That changed my worldview fundamentally," he said. "I realized acting alone was not enough."

To truly change things—to change the system—people have to be at the negotiating table. To be there, they need more than altruism and personal dedication. They need an organized group to apply pressure to pursue their goals. They needed to build power.

"Frustrated with the limits of disaster relief work, I returned

to the U.S. to earn my bachelor's degree at Whitman College. While doing so, I worked with the City of Walla Walla to create their Neighborhood Engagement Program, an initiative helping neighborhoods organize for local change," he said.

As program coordinator, Cameron loved bringing people together across differences, seeing them learn to take action and watching their transformation as they realized they had the ability to achieve concrete improvements for themselves and their neighbors.

After graduating, he began working for the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), the oldest and largest U.S. Community Organizing Network.

"As an organizer with the IAF in Dallas, Texas, I worked with schools, congregations and neighborhoods to address predatory payday lending, immigration reform, mental health care access, COVID-19 vaccines and more.

"During nearly three years in Dallas, I saw organized people win incredible victories: taking down the largest oil and gas tax-break in Texas and restoring billions of dollars to state schools, pressuring six of Dallas' worst slumlords to improve living conditions, and having legislators in Iowa allocate \$2 million for mental health resources developed by community leaders.

"The people who participated in these fights felt proud, not powerless. I felt proud," he continued.

Cameron added that among those in the organizing effort were 22 faith communities, including a Lutheran Church, a Jewish synagogue, an Hispanic Catholic church and an African Methodist Episcopal church.

"Before I went to Texas, I

was not involved in organized religion, but there I saw a side of the church that broke walls down," he said. "People came together in community to fight for one another. Hispanic people had not realized white people had problems but saw that as they established relationships. As they listened to each other's pain, they stood together."

Cameron saw that people working together as peers could accomplish something to benefit everyone in the community and be proud of themselves.

"The focus of organizing is building relationships. We could organize for fair housing without separating the political and the personal," he said.

As a Watson Fellow, he will learn from community organizing models in Spain, England, South Africa and Mongolia.

"Each place has organized people and money to achieve impressive victories in unique ways," he said.

"I hope to learn from leaders in these areas, begin conversations, become a better organizer and stoke our collective imagination for what organizing—and the world—can look like in the future," Cameron commented.

A version of his third blog is in Sounding Board.

His blogs are at cameronnorbuconner.com/blog.

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Riverkeeper envisions mutually beneficial relationships for the health of all living beings

Jerry White Jr, Spokane Riverkeeper, opened a Sept. 19 program, "Rights of Nature, Indigenous and Advocacy Perspectives," with the Gonzaga Center for Climate sharing reflections on the impact of English law.

Spokane Riverkeeper protects the Spokane River and connects the community to it. Its tagline is "It's your river, we protect it!"

"Is it your river?" he asked. "What does that mean?"

Jerry said advocacy is based on English law that presupposes nature is an object. The legal system introduced in colonial North America saw land, rivers and forests as possessions, he said. That system still affects environmental work, because it assumes the river is owned in common.

Users with common ownership are protected under laws like the Clean Water Act of 1972. Polluters, recreationalists, cattle raisers, water purveyors all have their uses designated and protected, Jerry said.

"So our river legally accepts thousands of gallons of effluent polluted with PFAs and chlorinated chemicals, microplastics and pharmaceuticals," he said. "The river is also legally used to turn turbines for air conditioners, lights and Xboxes. Within legal limits, harm done while exercising common ownership is accepted. Aquatic life falls to the wayside and often is an unvalued afterthought.

"The web of life is harmed, even as citizens, communities,

tribes and riverkeepers work to forestall its degradation," he said. "Protecting the uses replaces values of health and well-being."

Jerry asks questions: "What if our environmental protection was not based solely on early English legal frameworks? What if it was based on mutual respect and reciprocity? What if our relationships with the river, salmon, lands, plants and other communities prioritized mutual health and well-being? What if mutual respect was born out of our mutual interdependence?"

"What if, rather than defining our protection, use and interactions in terms of ownership, we interacted with and protected the world because of opportunities for reciprocal partnerships? Might

the health and vibrancy of all living systems be the outcome?"

For information, visit spokane-riverkeeper.org.



October is Domestic Violence Action Month.

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Teacher of teachers addresses teaching in climate of polarization

At The King's University in Edmonton, Alberta, Gonzaga graduate Ivon Prefontaine teaches students to be effective teachers in today's climate of polarization, where just a few parents with extremist views may influence what is or is not taught.

He invites his students to adopt the approach he used in 15 years teaching seventh, eighth and ninth graders at Stony Creek, a small school in Stony Plain, a town of 700 near Edmonton, where he built trusted relationships with parents and fostered a sense of hope for students.

During the April International Conference on Hate Studies, co-sponsored by Gonzaga University at Spokane Community College, Ivon shared insights from a book chapter he co-authored called "A Futures Perspective for an Andragogy of Hope."

Ivon, who earned a doctoral degree in leadership studies at Gonzaga University in 2017, believes teachers can play a role in opening hopeful learning spaces for K-12 students.

He encourages teachers to adopt a pedagogical—teaching children—and andragogical—teaching adults—creed suggested by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire: "I am a teacher full of the spirit of hope in spite of all that stands to the contrary. I am a teacher who refuses the disillusionment that consumes and immobilizes."

Ivon grew up in Rycroft, a town of 550, a one-day drive from Edmonton. His K-12 school had 150 students.

Later his family moved to Prince George, B.C., where he graduated in 1972 in a class of 900 and then met his wife, Kathy.

He studied education for a year at the University of Notre Dame in Nelson, B.C., but decided to leave to play hockey. After leaving the university, he worked in banking for 15 years. Then he realized that even though he could make more money in banking, he was called to teach.

As a 33-year-old father of three boys, Ivon began at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. On the first day of an introduction to education class, the professor said that by October, 40 percent of 320 students would be gone, but he was one who stayed.

Ivon planned to teach physical education. As a third-generation francophone in Alberta with



Ivon Prefontaine teaches Canadian teachers to dispel hate.

Photo courtesy of Ivon Prefontaine

family roots in 17th-century Quebec, he also studied French.

After graduating in 1993, he taught core subjects—junior high social studies, science, math, English and physical education—at schools in Stony Plain.

"I realized teaching was not about teaching a subject but about teaching human beings," said Ivon, whose teaching philosophy is influenced by Parker Palmer, 84, a U.S. writer, speaker and activist at the Center for Courage and Renewal in Seattle. Parker emphasizes community, leadership, spirituality and social change in education.

After his first year at Stony Creek school, Ivon knew he needed to learn more, so he joined a cohort program at the University of Portland, Oregon. He earned a master's in 2004.

"I did projects on active learning and teaching strategies to engage students to think, write, care about their neighbors and share with the community," he said.

He started a doctorate in leadership studies at Gonzaga, traveling to Spokane during the summers of 2006 to 2013, taking online courses and attending full time from 2013 to 2017.

"I realized K-12 teachers were losing agency in teaching, as administrators were deciding what was relevant for students to learn. There should be give and take," he said. "Having valued taking time to know the students' parents and visiting them in their homes at Stony Creek, I

decided to teach teachers, using techniques I used there."

At Gonzaga, he was exposed to a Jesuit faith perspective, which differed from the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who served most parishes in Alberta.

As one example, it was the first time he heard in the parable of the Good Samaritan the difference between the first two, who were constrained by religious dogma, and the Samaritan, who had no bounds and made himself vulnerable to be a neighbor.

"Since 2017, I have taught at The King's University, a small, private Christian College in Edmonton with 1,100 to 1,200 students. Classes I taught included first-year and second-year education students in their practicum," he said, explaining that "The King" refers to God as King.

The college has Dutch Reformed roots and identifies as a Christian university but its students are Catholic, Calvinist, Muslim, Sikh, atheist, agnostic and more.

Nearly 30 percent are non-traditional students who have families and are going to the university after being in the workforce, as he did.

Teaching there, he faced a dilemma teachers face today, when a student teacher suggested an activity, and the teacher said no, because a few parents might be opposed.

"I believe that a small percent of parents should not stop conversations on criminal justice, gun violence, global warming, border issues or other topics," Ivon said. "It's like holding the whole group hostage. Teachers should help children form sound, just opinions."

"Teachers see a lack of social skills in students since COVID. Many have fed on false narratives and are unable to deal with disagreements," Ivon said. "It's important to set boundaries so we can discuss issues."

Ivon reminds his students that there are extremists in every religion.

"As a francophone in Alberta I know what it means not to belong to the larger community," he said. "We need to 'un-other' others, to look at our common ground. If we want to solve the environmental crisis, we need to help people see that political talking points are about winning elections, not solving problems."

He advocates looking at what brings people together rather than what divides them, which is what he did when he knew the students' families.

"We need to be open to listen to each others' stories and ideas," Ivon said.

He said the word, "diverse," can be a problem, because it focuses on differences, but the word, "pluralism," recognizes that people have differences but also have commonalities.

Students go from The King's University to rural Alberta, so he prepares them to have hard conversations.

One dynamic affecting Alberta schools is that money goes with a student, not to a school. It creates tension for teachers, who try to please students and families, resulting in more politically-motivated teaching in the last 10 years.

He likened white Christian nationalist control of political parties in Alberta to the American right wing seeking to gain local control in elections where few vote, such as school board elections.

"That creates tension about what we are or are not allowed to teach in schools to avoid ruffling

feathers," Ivon said.

Students leave The King's University with a sense of purpose, but schools and communities can beat their faith out of them, he said.

To counter polarizing and hateful rhetoric, he calls for those who educate teachers to re-imagine how this is done.

"It is essential to come together, draw on one another and find common ground to offset the vitriol of a minority, understanding there will be differences and disagreements, but despite differences people need to listen, argue, disagree and make peace for there to be education," he said.

Ivon believes hope is essential to counter hate.

"When done with compassion, care, and love, teaching is forward looking, imagining new, hopeful futures, seeking a more just future for all," he asserted.

Ivon is aware that teachers may feel oppressed, afraid because of tenure issues, overwhelming teaching assignments, political machinations, bureaucratic directives and the inability to effectively address the hate, indifference and oppression they meet.

"If hatred is learned, it can be unlearned," he said. "A teacher can intervene to dispel hateful rhetoric cloaked in the guise of free speech."

Ivon believes pluralism is a commitment to communicate with and relate to different neighbors to find what is common to bring people together without denying difference.

He believes hope is what it means "to be human," and thus it counters hate. Because it is fragile, he said hope depends on nurturing a sense of community among teachers so they can be in solidarity with one another.

"Hope is essential to teaching, so children can dream of and live more hopeful futures with clean air, less violence and more equity," he said.

"Hopeful adults—teachers—are needed to offer students hope," Ivon affirmed.

For information, email iprefontaine@zagmail.gonzaga.edu.

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Author's email
risingrivermedia@gmail.com



May brinksmanship on budget not blind us to nuclear brinksmanship

While Congress caught itself up in a kerfuffle over shutting down the government over budget deficits, the House had before it a way to save \$2 trillion. House Resolution 77 would embrace provisions of the “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” to prohibit funding expansion of the nuclear arsenal, which could start another arms race.

Do we really need another nuclear arms race to oblivion and annihilation? Are the upcoming generations as alert to the ongoing need to end the nuclear arms race?

From the 1950s to 1990s in the Cold War, people expressed opposition to the arms race. Enough people spoke out that the nuclear arsenal was decreased by 50,000 bombs. An estimated 14,000 nuclear weapons—still too many—still exist, threatening human survival worldwide today. The U.S. and Russia have 90 percent of them.

HR77 points out that use of even “a tiny fraction of these weapons could cause worldwide climate disruption and global famine,” killing about a billion people immediately and being a “grave risk to humans as a species.”

Have we forgotten?

Not only does tossing another \$2 trillion toward nuclear arms potentially fund suicide for the human race, but also not spending it is an obvious way to cut the budget.

Typically, military spending is off the chopping block for the deficit-worried budget cutters. Most who cry the loudest about how awful it is to overspend would rather take the funds from the poor, the aging, hungry children, house-less people and low-income folks—the vulnerable people in whom Jesus/God calls us to see Jesus/God’s image.

The seeming deficit busters also would rather not tax fairly those whose taxes were cut and who benefit most from military contracts and the economic system that allows them to accrue more and more profits.

Two big areas could balance the budget: 1) taxing those who own 90 percent of the wealth and 2) looking seriously at how much the U.S. *really* needs to spend on rebuilding the nuclear arsenal.

HR77 cites the Congressional Budget Office, which projects that plans for nuclear forces in the defense and energy

department’s 2021 budget requests would total \$634 billion from 2021 to 2030 and more than \$60 billion a year for 10 years.

Instead, HR77 calls for negotiating new arms control and disarmament agreements, renouncing first use, ending the President’s sole authority to launch a nuclear attack, taking weapons off hair-trigger alert and canceling plans to replace the U.S. nuclear arsenal with modernized, enhanced weapons.

The regular use of brinksmanship is a tool of a few in Congress who want to have their way economically. They threaten a government shutdown—which adds to costs—almost as a habit. We must challenge such a habit that dulls us to nuclear brinksmanship on the edge of which we live.

Choices! There are choices for people of faith, for caring people, for people of conscience, for people not willing to be duped or blinded or diverted.

Choices are an opportunity for those concerned to raise their voices.

Voices are heard at more times than at the ballot box. In our country, we can raise voices by writing letters to the editor

or writing letters to or calling elected officials from city hall to Congress. We can raise voices by visiting Representatives and Senators in their local offices or by standing on streets with signs expressing our outrage or support.

No one wins a nuclear war. Climate change may be irrelevant if billions of people are already killed by nuclear war. We can cut \$2 trillion from the U.S. budget by not building more bombs that will destroy life on this planet.

We need more funding for those skilled to lead the world with diplomacy to bring us back from the brink, the edge of the cliff toward nuclear self-destruction.

The debate in Congress over shutting down the government because we are spending too much is a “shell game” diverting attention from where real cuts can be made, cuts that can save lives not further harm those who are already struggling in our military-industrial economy and society.

Mary Stamp in collaboration with Cheryl McDaniel, retired nurse - new member of Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility

A moment beside a lake caught in the ripples is rejuvenating



Photo by Mary Stamp



Reflections

Photo by Cameron Conner

Sounding Board

Evening in Barcelona neighborhood reminds of possibilities at home

By Cameron Conner

As streetlamps burst into life and the alleyway flooded with light, the small table I sat at with six others became part of something larger—250 diners lined plastic card tables down the alley.

The dinner party spanned the width of the street. Red and green paper tablecloths were covered by containers with empanadas, fruit, fried croquettes, *tostas de tomate y jamón* and the rich saffron-yellow of homemade *paella*.

The illumination changed the atmosphere from an intimate conversation with tablemates in the dimming light of a Barcelona evening to that of a public gathering.

This gathering of the Sants neighborhood, a community in the Southern end of Barcelona, was one of many neighborhood feasts during the weeklong Festival de Sants in late August.

Across from me sat Agus Giralt, one of the evening’s main facilitators. Agus grew up in Sants, attending more of these dinners than he can recall. I was his guest. In addition to being a community member, he is coordinator of La Lleidat Santsenca (Loyalty to the Community of Sants), one of the area’s several neighborhood-managed community institutions.

Like U.S. community centers, La Lleidat provides a space for neighbors to create groups of mutual interest—from rock bands and time banks, to dance troupes and robotics clubs. It also gives community members access to resources like computers, transport and language classes.

Unlike U.S. community centers, La Lleidat is democratically managed by neighbors. While Agus facilitates its day-to-day operations, larger decisions are made at quarterly assemblies.

While setting up for festivities, one neighborhood leader said their recent decision to start a small-business incubator program in La Lleidat had led to founding several local, worker-owned businesses.

The celebration, organized by a deliberative process, took place in the alley beside La Lleidat’s main building. Seeing people packed shoulder to shoulder, passing dishes up and down the table and the alley’s walls reminded me of the place I associate with such community gatherings in the U.S.: Church.

It reminded me of the annual Jamaica festival at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, a large Hispanic Parish I worked with in West Dallas. Like the festival in Sants, the Jamaica at Lourdes brought together hundreds of parishioners over food at long communal tables and mixed a cacophony of voices with upbeat summer music on loudspeakers to celebrate a shared community.

I asked Agus if he was happy with the turnout. He looked tired but nodded enthusiastically. “We are still rebuilding from the pandemic,” he admitted, “but tonight we are reweaving the fabric of our community.”

Thinking of my community in Washington, I wondered: How are we reweaving the fabric of our community after the pandemic?

We may host one-off gatherings or see each other spontaneously at activities like “Pig Out in the Park,” but no common institution binds us all together.

An “institution” is characterized by common values. It hosts regular gatherings to spark/strengthen relationships and has a sustainable source of income—dues or tithes—to keep it going over the long-term. An institution provides stability and accountability. It can tell when someone falls through the cracks.

Outside of churches, we have few institutions like this in the U.S.

In my lifetime, I have seen people become increasingly isolated and siloed. This is perhaps the biggest difference I find between the U.S. and Spain. The number of institutions people belong to here, like La Lleidat, is remarkable.

Anyone who has tried to work with other human beings knows that being part of a community is not all fun and dinner parties. Conflict is human and natural. It happens.

Agus did not hide that La Lleidat has its share of fighting, resentment and jealousy—like any space where people gather.

That’s not the point. I am not in Sants looking for a place where everyone gets along. I am here to understand how people can build power and win. Any community that can bring together 250 people on a regular basis has power.

Their power rests in their relationships. These 250 people know each other, but that does not mean they have to like each other.

Over the last 100 years, their relationships have allowed residents of Sants to effectively organize and win victories:

- They pressured the city to build new affordable housing instead of a mall.
- They stopped an overpass from bulldozing through their neighborhood.
- They transformed an old factory into a community park instead of luxury condos.

Festivals at Our Lady of Lourdes in Dallas also have impact. The hundreds of people who show up for the food and festival also show up when we organize neighborhood listening sessions.

When safety was identified as a top shared concern, hundreds of people organized and turned out more parishioners for an accountability session with the Dallas Police Department to win commitments to improve policing. They made announcements at Mass, used church funds to print fliers and connected their mission with the values of Catholic social teaching. All that would have been impossible without an institution.

Strong institutions, like Our Lady of Lourdes and La Lleidat Santsenca, are critical to strong organizing.

The networks of relationships they provide make it possible to identify common issues and mobilize to address them.

In Barcelona, they have built institutions across the city that have made these neighborhoods safer, healthier, happier places to live—not to conduct business, be productive or find convenience, but to live.

What would it look like to do the same in the Inland Northwest?

Calendar of Events

In Fig Tree area codes are 509 unless otherwise presented.

- Oct 3** • **Environmental and Migration Crisis** in the Sahel, Bryan Hall Room 308, WSU, Pullman, 12 p.m., 335-3477
- Oct 4** • **Silent Day of Prayer**, with Bishop Thomas Daly, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC), 6910 S. Ben Burr, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., ihrc.net, 448-1224
- Oct 5** • **Spokane Candidates Climate Change Forum**, Gonzaga University Global Room and livestreaming online, 6 to 8 p.m., gonzaga.edu/events
- Oct 4 & Nov 1** • **Art as Activism Writing Workshop**, Emerge, 119 N. Second, Coeur d'Alene, 6:30 to 8 p.m., 208-930-1876
- Oct 5** • **The Lowdown on Masterworks 2: Symphonic Graffiti**, NW Museum of Arts & Culture, 2316 W. First, 456-3931
- **Lawyer in the Library**, Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program for low-income and affordable services, Coeur d'Alene Public Library, 702 E. Front, 4 to 6 p.m.
- **"A Better Man"**, YWCA Domestic Violence Awareness Month film, Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, 6 to 8 p.m.
- **Whitworth President's Leadership Forum**, Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls, 7:30 to 9 p.m.
- Oct 5 & 6** • **Terrain 14 Main Event**, 314 W. Riverside, Thurs., 6 to 9 p.m., Fri, 5 p.m. to 12 a.m.
- Oct 5, 19, 26** • **Sandy Williams Justice Center** – 30-Minute Consultation, Carl Maxey Center, 3114 E. 5th, 5 to 7 p.m., selfhelplegal@carlmaxeycenter.org
- Oct 6** • **YMCA Fall Open House**, five locations in Spokane and Sandpoint, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., ymcainw.org
- Oct 6-8** • **Good Grief**, Sravasti Abbey with Venerable Sangye Khadro, 692 Country Lane, Newport, 3 p.m., 447-5549
- **Marriage Encounter Weekend**, "Live Your Best Life in Love," IHRC, 7 p.m. to 5 p.m., ihrc.net
- Oct 7** • **Spokane Veterans Stand Down & Resource Fair**, The Salvation Army Spokane, 222 E. Indiana, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 540-3283
- **Diwali Celebration**, River Park Square Mall, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., 928-9664, charitydoyl@yahoo.com
- **Coffee & Trivia**, 350 Spokane, 1011 First, 12 p.m., 350spokane.org
- **Philippine History Month: Unity in Diversity**, West Central Community Center, 1603 N. Belt, 12 to 4 p.m., 724-0048
- **Annual Human Rights Banquet**, Kootenai County Taskforce on Human Relations, Best Western Inn, 506 W. Appleway, Coeur d'Alene, 5:30 p.m., 208-765-3932
- **Spokane Jazz Orchestra** & Joe Brasch, Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., 227-7638
- Oct 7 & 8** • **Spokane Symphony Masterworks 2: Symphonic Graffiti**, The Fox Theater, 1001 W. Sprague, Sat. 7:30 p.m., Sun., 3 p.m., 624-1200
- Oct 8** • **Harlem Renaissance: Reclaiming Cultural Identity**, NW Museum of Arts & Culture (MAC), 2 p.m., 456-3931
- **Something Old, Something New**, Something Borrowed, Something Purple, University of Idaho Admin Bldg, 851 Campus, Moscow, 888-884-3246
- Oct 8-11** • **Green Team Summit**, Faith in Place, Virtual, greenteamsummit.org
- Oct 9** • **"Together for Good"**, Innovia Foundation Annual Reception, Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls, 4 to 6 p.m., innovia.org/events
- **Spokane Big Table Eats Around the World**, Davenport Grand Hotel, 533 W. Spokane Falls, 5:30 to 9 p.m., 800-918-9344
- Oct 10** • **People Who Care**, Transitions Fundraiser, Davenport Grand, noon, help4women.org/pwc2023/
- **Peace and Justice Action Committee**, Zoom, 5:30 p.m., ucarter@pjals.org
- **Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Foster Care** Information Night, Lutheran Community Services NW, online, 6 to 7 p.m., theirhope@lcsnw.org, 747-8224
- Oct 11** • **Sandy Williams Justice Center** – Racial Justice Clinic: BIPOC family law, domestic violence, housing, discrimination, civil rights, Carl Maxey Center, 3114 E. 5th, 5 to 7 p.m., selfhelplegal@carlmaxeycenter.org
- Oct 11-15** • **Social Justice Film Center**, NW Film Forum, online, socialjusticefilmfestival.org
- Oct 12** • **Executive Director Coffee Hour**, Nonprofit Association of Washington, online, 10 a.m., nonprofitwa.org
- Oct 12 & 26** • **Showing Up for Racial Justice**, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, Zoom, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., slchty@pjals.org
- Oct 13** • **Memory Café socialization**, Coeur d'Alene Library 702 E. Front, 10 to 11:30 a.m. 208-769-2315 x 455
- Oct 14** • **Healthy Aging Symposium**, WSU, Spokane Student Academic Center, 600 N. Riverpoint Blvd., 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., 324-1641
- **Fall Clean Up**, Palisades Park, Greenwood & Rimrock Dr., 8:30 a.m. to 12: p.m., friendsofpalisades.com
- **Reforest Spokane Day**, Newman Lake, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 838-4912
- **Over the Edge**, Habitat for Humanity Spokane fundraiser, 601 W. Riverside, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., events.habitat-spokane.org
- **"Preserving Spokane's Black History"**, film, Carl Maxey Center, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 795-1964
- **Spokane Walk for FREEDOM** on human trafficking, Red Wagon, Riverfront Park, 12 to 1:30 p.m. a21.org/spokane
- **Sangeeta Kacheri**, South Indian classical music concert, Unity Spiritual Center, 2900 S. Bernard, 6:30 p.m., 467-5558
- **According to Coyote**, Panida Theater, 300 N. First, Sandpoint, 7:30 p.m., 208-263-9191
- Oct 15** • **North Idaho Philharmonic Orchestra**, Mozart and Schubert, Music Conservatory of Coeur d'Alene, First Presbyterian Church, 521 Lakeside, CdA, 2 to 3:30 p.m.
- Oct 16** • **"Can We Solve the Climate Crisis and Protect Wild Spaces?"** Gonzaga Hemmingson Auditorium and online 6 to 7:30 p.m., climatecenter@gonzaga.edu
- **NAACP General Membership Meeting**, Spokane Public Library, 906 W. Main, or virtual, 7 p.m., spokanenaacp@gmail.com
- **Flannery Lecture**, "Should Christians Forgive the Church," Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga, 4:30 p.m., 313-6782
- Oct 17** • **Medicare Workshop**, Senior Health Insurance Benefits Advisors, Coeur d'Alene Public Library, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., 702 E. Front, 208-769-2315
- **Graduate Program Open House**, Gonzaga Cataldo Hall, Addison & Sharp, 4 to 6:30 p.m., gonzaga.edu
- Oct 17-19** • **Spocanopy Tree Plantings**, Northeast Spokane: Corbin Park, Tues; Hays Park, Wed; B.A. Clark Park, Thurs, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., landsouncil.org/events
- Oct 18** • **"Pathways Forward: Digital Abuse and Domestic Violence"**, YWCA Spokane, online, 12 to 1 p.m., ywcaspokane.org/dvam
- Oct 19** • **DisABILITIES Resource Fair**, SCC Colville Campus, 985 S Elm, Colville, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., dacnw.org/event/2023-disabilities-resource-fair
- Oct 20** • **"The Immigrant Resident"** Film Premiere, Montvale Event Center, 1017 W. First, 5 to 9 p.m., 558-9359
- **Kindness Art Contest**, Emerge 119 N. Second, Coeur d'Alene, 6 to 9 p.m., 208-930-1876
- Oct 20-22** • **Washington State Quilt Show**, Spokane County Fair & Expo Center, 404 N. Havana, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., 477-1766
- Oct 21** • **Nurturing a Faith Your Child Doesn't Have to Heal From**, Meredith Ann Miller, Whitworth Office of Church Engagement, Whitworth Church, 312 W. Hawthorne, 10 a.m. to noon, oce@whitworth.edu
- **"Learning from Other Countries: The Powerful Act of Communal Repentance"**, Gen Heywood, Veradale United Church of Christ, 611 N Progress, 1 to 2:30 p.m., genheywood@gmail.com
- **Ballet Fantastique**, NW Museum of Arts & Culture, 2316 W. First, 2 to 3 p.m., 456-3931
- **SIP (Support Inspire Progress)**, Spokane Regional Domestic Violence Coalition benefit, Highball at Northern Quest Casino, 5 p.m. endtheviolencespokane.org/sip
- **Powwow**, Spokane Convention Center, Exhibit hall A, 9 p.m. to 12 a.m.
- Oct 21 & 22** • **Spokane Symphony Masterworks 3: Morihiro**, The Fox Theater, Sat. 7:30 p.m., Sun. 3 p.m., 624-1200
- Oct 22** • **Solstice Wind Quintet**, Cutter Theatre, 302 Park St., Metaline Falls, 3 p.m., 446-4108
- Oct 24** • **United Nations Day Celebration**, Zoom, taninchev@gonzaga.edu for time and location
- Oct 25** • **Women Lead Fall Luncheon**, "Gender and Social Constructs: How to Be an Ally in a Divided World," Gonzaga's Hemmingson, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., womenlead@gonzaga.edu
- Oct 26** • **Nonprofit Association of Washington**, New Member Call, 12 to 12:30 p.m.
- **Bralloween**, Breast Intentions benefit, Montvale Center, 1019 W. First, 5:30 to 8 p.m., breastintentionsofwa.org
- Oct 27** • **Evening Praise and Worship**, Marty Rotella, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6 to 8 p.m., ihrc.net
- **"Race Amity: The Other Tradition"**, Spokane Public Library Hillyard, 4110 N. Cook, 863-4461, raceamity.org
- Oct 27-28** • **Marty Rotella Concert**, 1 p.m. & 4 p.m., IHRC, ihrc.net
- **Spokane Writers' Conference**: 27th, Central Library, 906 W. Main, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 28th, Spokane Valley Library, 22 N. Herald, 9:30 am. to 5:15 p.m., 444-5336
- Oct 28** • **Soul Collage for All Saints All Souls**, art for healing, West Central Abbey, 1832 W. Dean, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., 389-2851
- **Fall Compost Fair and Leaf Festival**, John Finch Arboretum, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 722-2489
- **Laudato Si Day of Prayer and Action**, IHRC, 459-6174, kparker@ihrc.net
- **El Mercado**, A.M. Cannon Park, 1920 E. Maxwell, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. info@latinosenspokane.org
- **Spark-O-Ween**, Spark Central, 1214 W. Summit, 12 to 5 p.m., 279-0299
- **Diwali Celebration**, Historic Flight Foundation, 5829 E. Rutter, 1 to 4 p.m., open house; 6 to midnight, gala, 928-9664, charitydoyl@yahoo.com
- **The Pumpkin Ball**, benefit, Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery, Grand Hotel, 333 W. Spokane Falls, 5:30 p.m., 800-918-9344
- Nov 1** • **The Fig Tree Mailing and Distribution**, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 9 a.m., 535-4112
- **Silent Day of Prayer**, "The Heaven Club: the Communion of Saints," Sr. Mary Eucharista, SMMC, IHRC, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., ihrc.net
- Nov 3-5** • **Dia De Los Muertos**, Nuestras Raices, 1214 E. Sprague, Times TBA, jennifer.c@hbpafospokane.org
- Nov 2** • **The Fig Tree Meetings**, Zoom, Development Committee, noon, Board, 1 p.m., 535-4112
- **Souport, fundraiser The End of Homelessness**, St. Vincent de Paul North Idaho, Kootenai County Fairgrounds, 4056 N. Government Way, Coeur d'Alene, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., katie@stvincentdepauloda.org
- **Weyerhaeuser Center Lecture**, Lydia Dugdale, director of the Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at Columbia University, dhenreckson@whitworth.edu
- Nov 4** • **"A Story of Addiction, Recovery and Redemption"**, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., 747-7394, director@saifs.org
- **Autumn Splendor**, Shalom Ministries Benefit Gala, 3151 E 27th, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., 710-0204

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Filmmaker believes that 'shalom' is crucial for ending homelessness

Announcing his new book, *A Place to Exist: The True and Untold Story of Camp Hope and Homelessness in Spokane*, Maurice Smith, executive director of Rising River Media and producer of "My Road Leads Home," a documentary film series on homelessness, observed that "some of our homeless friends simply want to know that someone cared enough to allow them to tell their story."

They want to know that they, their struggles and their lives matter, given how people experiencing homelessness are often vilified and blamed for the city's problems of drugs and crime.

From August 2022 to June 2023, Maurice was day manager of Camp Hope, the largest homeless camp in the state. In his 18 years working with people experiencing homelessness, he started creating documentary films on unsheltered homelessness to tell the story "from the perspective of those experiencing it and those who serve them to move them forward to something better."

Maurice said the opening chapter of his book is on shalom—what it is and why it is so important in "building the peace and well-being of both the homeless and the larger community."

One winter evening, he was filming a team from City Church. They saw a man wearing only pants, "dancing in the snow in a drug-induced reality." They approached to see if they could help. Assessing his needs, someone shouted, "He needs shoes. Does anyone have size 10-and-a-half shoes?"

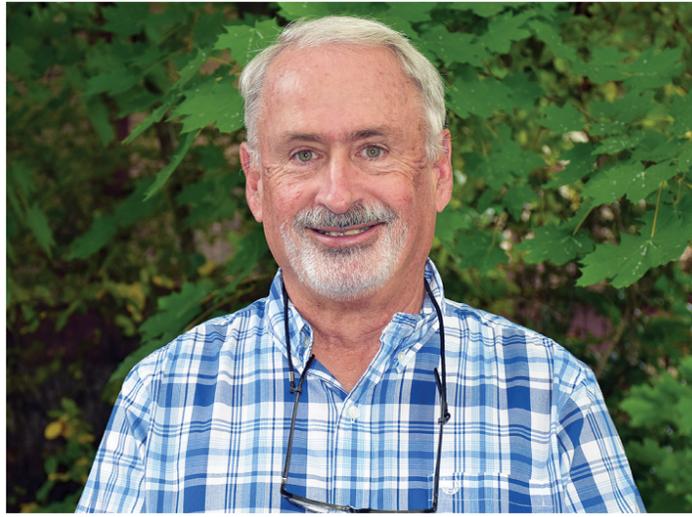
Maurice heard the Holy Spirit whisper, "You do." He took off his shoes and handed them to the team.

"They helped him put on some clean dry socks and the shoes. I had more shoes at home. He didn't. I was in no danger of frostbite and losing toes. He was," Maurice writes.

For the filmmaker, serving the least of these and building the shalom of the homeless meant putting down his camera, taking off his shoes and helping someone survive the night.

To address homelessness, Maurice suggests identifying the destination. His book's thesis is that "addressing homelessness is not simply about housing, but about shalom."

"When we drive through downtown and see someone sleeping on a sidewalk, in the doorway of a business (or dancing almost naked in the snow), we may think or say to ourselves, 'That's not right. That's NOT the



Maurice Smith writes the story of Camp Hope.

way things ought to be!"

That's broken shalom, Maurice said.

"When we see a news story about someone or a group in our community helping an individual or family get on their feet through acts of generosity and kindness, helping them with housing, rent, food or medical expenses, or paying the cafeteria lunch bill for an entire school in a poor neighborhood, we say to ourselves, 'That's the right thing to do. THAT's the way things ought to be!'"

That's shalom, Maurice said.

"True shalom—acts of generosity, kindness, justice or restoration—motivates us to say, 'I want to be part of something like that!' It motivates us to get involved, to help someone in need to better their situation, to bring cosmos (order) out of the chaos of life, and to make a difference in the lives of those around us," he writes. "In the process, the pursuit of genuine shalom changes us, and changes the way we see people."

Maurice said shalom, as "an old, rich Hebrew word," encompasses five ideas: 1) peace, 2) well-being or welfare, 3) prosperity or good fortune, 4) physical health and healing, and 5) restoration. He said that shalom restores "an overall sense of wholeness in mind, body and possessions."

Poverty and homelessness are manifestations of the absence of shalom.

He quoted Marchauna Rod-

gers, an international development specialist, who says poverty is mis-defined "as the absence of material resources."

Most think it's not having money or stuff, just as many think that homelessness is not having a home. Those are symptoms of deeper issues, calling for looking at the root causes.

"A more robust definition of poverty is the absence of shalom, characterized by broken and unjust relationships," said Maurice, emphasizing that "shalom is a result of just relationships."

He calls for combining these perspectives to "see how the restorative nature of shalom-building speaks to the needs of those mired in personal brokenness, poverty and homelessness."

"Shalom-building in the homeless community is about restoring in people a sense of wholeness in mind, body and possessions," he explained.

"Do they need appropriate housing and a home? Of course, but that's the beginning, not the end of our work to build shalom," he writes. "This process of restoration will look different for each individual."

Joe Ader, executive director at Family Promise of Spokane, says "two common denominators of homelessness are deep personal trauma and loss of community."

So, Maurice said, any restorative process must address these issues. The process may "begin in a low-barrier shelter that meets immediate needs of food, sanitation, hygiene and a

safe bed," as first steps toward stability.

"Some will be ready for a transitional living arrangement as a step toward more permanent housing. Others will need treatment for substance abuse or mental health issues. Others may be ready for life-skills recovery or job-training programs," he said.

Addressing diverse personal issues and needs are part of shalom-building.

To do otherwise is to court failure for them and for the community, he said.

One day over coffee at The Gathering House, Mark Terrell, founder and director emeritus of A Cup of Cool Water ministry to youth on the streets, told Maurice, "How we see people is the beginning of how we treat people."

That self-evident statement was like "a personal earthquake with aftershocks that have rolled on during the intervening years, even today," said Maurice, observing that homeless people need the same things—tangible and intangible—that everyone needs.

Believing that seeing people differently "begins by sharing their journey, walking beside them and getting to know them," he began filming documentaries.

"During Camp Hope's existence, our community was exposed to a perspective that sees people experiencing homelessness as less than ourselves, less than human; nuisances, drug addicts, criminals, even garbage," Maurice said.

"If that's how the community sees and talks about them, that's how we will treat them—as garbage to be disposed of," he said. "The homeless, particularly the unsheltered homeless, have become the expendables."

He noted that history teaches about tragedies from "treating people as less than human, less than ourselves and less than how we would want to be treated if our situations were reversed."

For a year, he oversaw organizing and cleaning Camp Hope. As chief garbage collector and overseer of water tanks and porta potties, he saw many needles and

burnt foils—signs of drug use. He asked, "Do we see a drug addict as someone who deserves to be treated as a nuisance, a criminal or as garbage to be swept out?"

Over time he learned to see needles and foils as representing people trapped in a cycle of substance abuse that's out of their control, which is why it's called an addiction.

"I see a person, created in God's image, in desperate need of redemption, treatment and restoration, but trapped in a chemical bondage from which they can't break free without help," he said.

To build shalom among this challenging population begins "when we see people differently, when we see the homeless and marginalized as human beings struggling through a difficult phase of their life," he said.

To be a shalom-builder, means changing "what we see" and then "getting involved to make a difference," because "someone's life and future depends on it," he concluded.

In 20 chapters, Maurice recounts how a peaceful protest in front of city hall grew into Camp Hope, examining the extent of homelessness in Spokane and the shortage of shelter beds. Six chapters share insights of local leaders. The final chapter shares lessons and an appendix frames a new model.

For information, call 475-8797 or email risingrivermedia@gmail.com.

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