



Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

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Fall 2019

Pastor gathers faith leaders to speak out

Gen Heywood coordinates vigils with Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience

On Truthful Tuesdays, Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience (FLLC) bring a witness against white supremacy at the Spokane Valley City Hall.

At an April 22 and an Oct. 6 Vigil for the Healing of the Earth, FLLC called and calls for participants to grieve the devastation of the environment and invites them to find ways to join efforts to heal the Earth.

FLLC's mission is to gather people of faith and non-faith to speak with a moral voice to overcome racism, poverty, militarism and ecological devastation. It started in January 2018 to support the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, to invite witness on those four principles of the campaign to local and state efforts.

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Gen Heywood, second from right, joins readers from her church, the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John, the Sisters of the Holy Names, Unity Spiritual Center, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and Sravasti Buddhist Abbey to lead prayers and readings at the April 22 Vigil for the Healing of the Earth beside Spokane City Hall.

Fall Gathering carries conversations on justice

"Weaving Together to Win: Progressing from Value Statements to Concrete Action" is the theme for the PNC Fall Gathering from 9:30 a.m., Friday to 3 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 18 to 19, at Shalom UCC, 505 McMurray St. in Richland.

"The Pacific Northwest Conference has been learning tools of faith-based organizing to change the world," said Courtney Stange-Tregear, minister for church vitality. "This programmatic event will be an opportunity to take our learning to the next step and apply it to our setting.

"A lack of affordable housing, environmental degradation, racial inequity, abuse of immigrants—all of these big scary problems have local, specific man-

**Fall Gathering 2019
will be held
Friday and Saturday
Oct. 18 and 19
at Shalom UCC-Richland.**

ifestations," she said. "Weaving ourselves together, we can make real, concrete, important change in our churches and communities across the Pacific Northwest."

This event continues conversations and learnings of the last two Annual Meetings and more.

"We will practice the tools and strategies available to guide our Conference from learning and caring about the systemic problems that matter, to taking action about the issues that matter," said Courtney, who is heading the team planning the event. "It is not an exact continuation of Annual Meeting conversations, but continues working on justice issues."

Meals are included in registration and there is child care.

For information, call 206-725-8383 or 800-954-8777, or email pncucc@gmail.com. Registration will be available online only at <https://bit.ly/2zuPU29> Please register by September 30th. On October 1st a \$15 late fee will be added.

Sabbath is act of resistance and act of devotion

Conference Comments



By The Rev.
Mike Denton
Conference
Minister

**It's
obvious
we're
doing
more
than
we
were
created
for.**

As with most folks who have a sabbatical (a gift I truly recognize is too rare), I went into this time with a few lists: a list of some of those books I wanted to read; a list of some of those things I hoped to write; a list of those things I wanted to do.

I did some of that and you'll be hearing more about it in the coming months.

In the back of my mind, I also carried with me a Huffington Post article I read a few years ago titled, "Three-Day Week Could Be Best for Workers Over 40, Study Suggests."

The article is best summed up in these three points:

- "...workers over 40 perform better if they only work a three-day week."
- "...working for more than 25 hours a week resulted in fatigue and stress for most middle-aged participants."
- "Experts suggest that people in middle and older age should work part-time if they want to maintain a healthy brain."

I couldn't find the citation in time for this piece, but last year I read a couple reports on a related study that found similarities between overworked brains and brains that have suffered a traumatic brain injury. (Please email it to me at mike@pncucc.org if you happen to be familiar with it.)

We might think we're doing as much as we can but it's becoming obvious we're doing more than we were created for.

During the first three weeks of my sabbatical time, the emotional and spiritual impact of these articles really began to settle in.

As I began to rest, and my own unsustainable work habits became clearer, it got all wrapped up in a general sense of clarity about the un-sustainability of so much more, including our use of natural resources, our decreasing social connections, the commodification of relaxation, the increase in productivity

enhancement products, increasing depression and anxiety, the decline in religious affiliation, etc., etc., etc.

Most forms of oppression are rooted in some exploiting the resources and productivity of others in order to receive all the benefits from the resources and productivity of others.

In his 2014 book, *Sabbath as Resistance*, Walter Brueggemann wrote this:

"Thus I have come to think that the fourth commandment on sabbath is the most difficult and most urgent of the commandments in our society, because it summons us to intent and conduct that defies the most elemental requirements of a commodity-propelled society that specializes in control and entertainment, bread and circuses ... along with anxiety and violence."

I appreciate this idea of sabbath as resistance and believe it to be true.

However, as people of faith I wonder if we have to be careful with it and see sabbath keeping not just as another thing to do but as an act of devotion, stewardship and gratitude that is, in and of itself, a gift from God that we've strangely made the decision to disguise as a nearly unattainable requirement.

I recognize its not as simple as that in practice.

We've made it more endlessly more complicated and created systems than value mammon over humans.

I recognize that, in that light, saying "No" can only seem like an act of resistance but what if we could also deeply accept it as an act of devotion, instead?

What if saying "No" was part of a prayer of devotion, stewardship and gratitude for the lives we have been given?

Transitions announced

Tamara Roberts will be ordained Oct. 27 at University Congregational UCC in Seattle.

B. Yuki Schwartz was ordained Sept. 8 as pastor of Keystone United Church of Christ in Seattle.

Allysa De Wolf was installed Aug. 18 as pastor at Wayside UCC in Federal Way.

David Nelson, a graduate of Andover Newton Theological School who served UCC churches in Tonasket, Ferndale, University Place, Cathlamet and Newport, died July 22 at Horizon House in Seattle. He also served churches in Colton, Calif., and Hooksett, N.H., and was an annuitant visitor after retiring from Newport UCC. Services were Sept. 8 at Horizon House.

Kunnan Chen, who passed away on June 14, was called as the first pastor of at the Taiwanese Christian Church (UCC), serving from 1991 until his retirement in 2004. A memorial service was held on July 13, at Bellevue Taiwanese Christian Church.

Gerald Montgomery, an ordained UCC pastor whose professional life included working with military personnel returning from conflict in the Middle East, died on June 19. His memorial service was Aug. 3 at University Congregational UCC in Seattle, where he was active.

Boundary Training is Sept. 23

The PNC Committee on Ministry has added another Boundary Training for clergy 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Monday, Sept. 23, at the Congregational Church on Mercer Island, 4545 Island Crest Way.

Clergy and members in discernment who have not done Boundary Training since 2015, except inactive retired clergy, are required to take this training or an approved alternative Boundary Training this year to maintain ministerial standing.

Registration is available online at <https://bit.ly/31xqkWz>.

For information, call 425-495-0628 or email Westside Committee on Ministry co-chair Peggy Derick at peggy.derick@gmail.com. Members in Discernment contact Courtney Stange-Tregear at 206-725-8383, ext. 103, or email Courtney@pncucc.org.

Justice Jubilee seeks people

Justice Leadership Jubilee is a program of the PNCUCC designed to help people

grow in their justice advocacy skills and focus. Jubilee is an intentional 10-month commitment for adults who want to develop their faith and learn systemic change skills with a community of their peers and connecting with a community justice agency and involvement with their local church.

Christine Hanson, the program manager for Justice Leadership Jubilee invites people to apply.

For information, call 509-679-7430, email justiceleadershipjubilee@gmail.com or visit [justiceleadershipjubilee](https://www.facebook.com/justiceleadershipjubilee) on Facebook.

National Youth Event set

United Church of Christ's 2020 National Youth Event will take place July 22 to 25 at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. This four-day event for young people ages 12 to 22 is the largest denominational gathering, often bringing in 4,000 participants. The time together is centered on faith, leadership, service and social justice to empower our youth and young adults.

Organizers seek youth and young adults to submit original pieces by Sept. 15 for use in worship materials—poems, prayers, song lyrics, devotions, reflections, drawings, paintings and other art, said Trayve Potter, UCC minister for youth and young adults.

For information, email potter@ucc.org or visit <http://nye.uccpages.org>.

Women's retreat is Nov. 1-3

The Northwest Regional Women's Retreat XII on the theme "Wade in the Water" will be held Nov. 1 to 3 at the Oregon Garden Resort in Silverton, Ore.

The Central Pacific Conference and Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ gather women for a regional fall retreat, meeting at a new venue to share renewal, spiritual growth and fellowship.

The keynote speaker will be Kristy Haines, coordinator of spiritual formation at Forest Grove UCC.

For information, visit www.nrwr.us

Mediation training offered

Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders (MSTI), a practical workshop for clergy and other church leaders that teaches participants how to deal with interpersonal, congregational and other

forms of group conflict, will be hosted from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., from Oct. 14 to 18 at Calvary Lutheran in Federal Way.

Early-birds registering by Sept. 13, save \$200 off the \$895 registration.

For information, call 630-627-0507, register at brownpapertickets.com/event/4056198 or visit Impeacecenter.org/events-page/msti/.

CROP Walks mark 50th

CROP Hunger Walks have involved people in PNCUCC congregations in stepping up to end hunger since 1969.

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the national CROP Hunger Walk movement, CROP Hunger Walks continue to raise millions of dollars each year to help end hunger and poverty through long-term sustainable approaches to significantly reduce or eliminate hunger.

In each CROP Hunger Walk community, 25 percent of money raised comes back to local agencies. Across the country, more than 1,600 local agencies receive funds from CROP Hunger Walks.

This year some 800 communities nationwide are joining in interfaith CROP Hunger Walks around the theme "Stepping up to End Hunger Since 1969." The CROP Hunger Walk was started in 1969 by a group of energized young people in Bismarck, North Dakota who wanted to mobilize their community to fight global hunger.

Today, the CROP Hunger Walk is a national movement raising funds for the global hunger-fighting work of Church World Service and local hunger-fighting agencies. Last year, events raised more than \$8 million dollars.

The Eagle Harbor UCC participates in the Bainbridge Island/North Kitsap Walk on Sept. 22, the same day as the Snohomish CROP Hunger Walk. Northshore UCC is in Woodinville's walk on Sept. 28. First Congregational UCC joins Bellevue's walk Sept. 29. The Fautleroy and Alki UCC participate in the Seattle and the Kent CROP Hunger Walks are Oct. 6.

United Christian joined Renton's walk May 6. **For information, visit crophungerwalk.org.**

Clergy robes, books free

Clergy robes, Gabelein commentaries and some liturgical color stoles are available for someone 6-foot 4 tall with broad shoulders. They will be available Oct. 18 at the PNC Fall Gathering or call Becky Anderson at 509-770-3830 or email becky.52@gmail.com.



FLLC challenges racism, poverty, militarism

Continued from page 1

Gen Heywood, pastor of Veradale UCC, went to a meeting for organizing the Poor People's Campaign (PPC) in Spokane called by the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane. While the PPC is faith based, she was the only person of faith at that meeting.

"I have been at Veradale in Spokane Valley for more than five years," said Gen. "Through a photographic project to show people of different faith traditions in the area, I had become acquainted with people of different faiths. I had started to build relationships."

She reached out to involve people of faith and no-faith to support the Poor People's Campaign. The FLLC has become a diverse group that includes Atheists, Baha'is, Buddhists, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sufis, Unitarians, Unity and Wiccans. The group continues to grow. Some join in some statements but not other statements.

"They collaborate with Riverkeepers, 350 Spokane, the Tenants Union, Spokane NAACP, Peace and Justice Action League, Spokane Citizens Against Racism, the Spokane Tribe SHAWL Society, Youth Strikes for the Environment, the Sierra Club, The Fig Tree, The Black Lens, Gonzaga Hate Studies, Responsible Growth Northeast Washington and the Silver Valley Community Resource Center collaborate to create a unified moral voice," said Gen, who provides leadership, keeping participants and the community informed.

"Our statements, vigils and programs have input from all in our coalition through emails and meetings. We model unity in the effort to overcome poverty, racism, militarism, and ecological devastation and move toward developing the Beloved Community," she said.

The FLLC has written letters to the editor, to elected of-

ficials and to government entities on such issues as the area's superfund sites—from silver and uranium mining—the separation of children at the border, white supremacy in local government and schools.

"We have shown up and spoken at city council meetings, rallies and vigils. We collaborated and read statements in solitary and grief at vigils at Temple Beth Shalom and the Spokane Islamic Center after mass shootings," she said. "At the Gonzaga Hate Studies Conference, we gave the invocation and opening words."

Twice a year, FLLC gathers communities on each end of the largest superfund site in the nation to hold vigils "For the Healing of the Earth."

They also hold monthly vigils for the healing of Spokane Valley because of its connection with white supremacy and Christian Dominionism.

"These vigils will continue until 1) the city council makes serious steps to include marginalized people in discussions and show genuine effort to serve all the citizens, and 2) the political and community leaders speak against State Representative Matt Shea's "Biblical Basis for War," Gen said.

Plans for the next three years include quick response to immoral acts in the government and community by putting out statements after an act of racism, harm to the poor, militaristic zeal or environmental devastation.

That includes the monthly vigils at city hall, building relationships with area tribes related to ecological devastation on their reservations, healing the earth vigils, participating in meetings on the four emphases and participating in the 10-session "Stand on Sacred Ground" that addresses racism.

In 2020, the plan is to continue those events, write letters to the editor, offer a workshop



At the Earth Day Vigil, Spokane Tribal Chair Carol Evans and SHAWL founder Deb Abrahamson told of the Superfund cleanup after uranium mining on their reservation.

at the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference, begin a collaborative Rosa Parks Day to celebrate black history.

Gen relates this effort with her congregation.

"Our church leaders agree we must take our faith out into our community," she said. "The PNC and the national UCC see acting for justice as an act of faithfulness to Christ."

The FLLC is accountable to its coalition partners and the Veradale UCC, which exposes the community to a Christian church that is built on love, justice and inclusion," she said.

That contrasts with many churches that grow membership through placing "bigoted proclamations in God's mouth, teaching that women are to be silent, whites are superior and violence in God's name is righteous."

Veradale UCC, through the FLLC, speaks for the LG-BTQAI, people of color, Jews, Muslims and other marginalized people.

After Gen graduated from Emmanuel College in Boston and graduated in 1989 from Andover Newton Theological School, she was as a music therapist. Her first church was in Durham, Maine. She later served the UCC church in Sunnyside, Calif., 20 years before coming to Veradale.

"The FLLC is a model of trying and trying again, being willing to fail and meet dead-ends," she said. "Some groups do not sign on to all the PPC principles, but agree children should not be separated from their families."

Over her 30 years as a pastor, Gen has seen people seeking magic formulas to grow churches, but has found there is no easy answer.

"We need to be involved in our community, meeting needs that emerge," she said. "Being out in the community, we hear what is needed and how a church response fits the need. Sometimes, we just show up."

"It's powerful to return to our moral center, to do what is right, not what is left or right, Christian or non-Christian, Democrat or Republican," she said.

The next Vigil for the Healing of the Earth is at 3 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 6, at Cataldo Mission, which is on the Silver Valley Superfund Site.

Spokane and Coeur d'Alene tribal leaders may offer prayers to express the grieving for the damage to creation and community organizations will have booths to give people a way to act.

For information, call 408-593-9556 or email genheywood@att.net.

Michael Joseph informs churches of Colombia

By Ed Evans

Global Ministries mission co-worker Michael Joseph will be visiting churches in the Pacific Northwest Region and Conference Sept. 14 to 30. He is hosted by the Pacific NW Global Ministries Committee, which is developing a partnership with the Colombia peace organization Justapaz.

He has been serving in Colombia on behalf of Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church Disciples of Christ for the past 12 years.

As he ends his service in Bogota, Michael will visit churches across the UCC Pacific Northwest Conference and Disciples Northwest Region to share stories about his work and experiences with peacemaking organizations in Colombia. The Global Ministries Committee has been recruiting volunteers to host housing, provide transportation and offer invitations to speak.

Michael has been working as the coordinator of the CaféPaz Peace Studies Center in Bogota, Colombia, in partnership with Justapaz, an important peacemaking organization. His work has focused on conflict transformation, restorative justice and human rights in the midst of Colombia's armed conflict.

Justapaz, which means a just peace, was created by the Colombian Mennonite Church in response to violence and injustice across Colombia.

It was and continues to be, a necessary religious response from the church. Justapaz focuses on the practical training of like-minded churches, communities and individuals in the practice of non-violence. It seeks to enable the creation of structures and ways of life it believes can ultimately lead to real peace in Colombia.

Michael brings knowledge



Michael Joseph has served 12 years in Colombia, where the NW Disciples and PNC Global Ministries Committee is developing a partnership with the peace organization Justapaz.

Photo courtesy of Global Ministries

and experience with peacemaking efforts in Colombia. He will provide updated information about the progress, or lack thereof, of implementation of the Colombian Peace Accords adopted by a vote of the people in 2016.

Quoting Cornel West, Michael writes in his Global Ministries profile, "To be a Christian is to live dangerously, honestly, freely—to step in the name of love as if you may land on nothing, yet to keep stepping because the something that sustains you no empire can give you and no empire can take away."

The Global Ministries Committee, a shared ministry of the Pacific NW Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Northwest Region of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ is exploring the possibility of forming a partnership with Justapaz, the Christian Centre for Justice, Peace and Nonviolent Action in Colombia.

Members of the Pacific NW Global Ministries Committee

have been participating in the Colombia partnership calls.

Martin Nates, Justapaz executive director, said during a Colombia partnership conference call April 30, that implementation of the Peace Accords has not been going well. He said 2018 was the most violent year in recent years with 155 killings of community leaders, members of social organizations, human rights defenders and people associated with the peace process. The killings have been orchestrated by military and paramilitary organizations.

The 2016 Peace Accords had brought an end to decades of war and upheaval with the country's main rebel group agreeing to lay down their arms. However, *New York Times* reporter Nicholas Casey reports that the militants are beginning to pick up their arms again after many of the promises made by the government are not being honored making the prospect of a true, lasting peace appearing far from certain now. (*NY Times*: "Colombia's Peace

Deal Promised a New Era. So Why Are These Rebels Rearming?" May 17, 2019.)

When the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known as FARC, reached a peace agreement in September, 2016 after years of negotiation, much of the world applauded. Colombia's president at the time, Juan Manuel Santos, won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Casey reported in the May 17 article that the head of Colombia's army had recently ordered troops to double the number of criminals they kill. Two days after publication of the article, Casey left the country telling Colombian newspaper *El Tiempo* he left following "false accusations" published by lawmakers on Twitter. He said such accusations are serious due to the lack of security and safety in Colombia for journalists.

With that as a backdrop and in the midst of such rising tensions, it has become increasingly apparent for the need for church to walk alongside and be in partnership with peace making organizations like Justapaz and CaféPaz in their journey towards reconciliation.

Partnership can provide a broader understanding of the many ways in which God is at work in the world and challenges people of faith to expand their vision of the church in order to help make a just world for all.

To volunteer to provide housing and/or transportation for Michael, along with invitations to speak during his visit to the region, contact Ruth Brandon at arembe@me.com

For more information on Colombian peace initiatives through the Global Ministries Caribbean Initiative: <https://www.globalministries.org/caribbeaninitiative>.

Moderator Wendy Blight reports on Board news

In the midst of many preparations for the fall season, I hope you are able to take a quick look back at your summer and give thanks for the refreshment it provided. I don't have a favorite season of the year, but I do relax when autumn comes, knowing that the weather will cool, and the soft rains will begin. It's a time of coziness and a time when I can come inside after summer activities and take up the work that needs to be done.

In the last edition of the PNC News I reported on the five tasks that the Board of Directors intends to make progress on this year. We'll need your help in this endeavor. Thank you to those who have already begun to lean in with their interest and expertise! Here are some updates:

Communities of Practice: The Board affirmed the value of the CoP program and its importance in deepening relationships between clergy and other collegial groups. Thanks to the Committee on Ministry task force, the program is continuing this year! Administrative tasks and funding issues have been addressed for the short term. A subcommittee of CoM will continue to work on a long-term solution so that the program is sustainable for future years.

Missional Partner Churches: Working toward the goal of deepening relationships between churches, the Board identified a goal of creating Missional Partner Churches similar to our Sister Church program of some years ago. Courtney Stange-Tregear has been working on a pilot program with



Wendy Blight, board moderator, outlines what's underway.

Plymouth Church and Veradale UCC. Both churches have a common interest in dismantling racism but they come at the issues from slightly different approaches. This pairing is full of potential for enhancing ministry in both settings.

Bylaw Revisions: We will intensify our work this fall on updating our bylaws. The Board will be putting a small subgroup together to work on suggested revisions. If you have an interest in this work, email me at blightwk@hotmail.com. One of our top priorities is to have our bylaws reflect

our desire to dismantle racism in our institution. We will be working with JWM's Dismantling Racism group to incorporate people of color in this revised draft which we hope to have ready by this year's Annual Meeting.

Database: We have done some work this summer related to a database for the Conference. We currently have an Excel spreadsheet of information about our churches and clergy that Arlene maintains. Some of that information comes from the UCC Datahub, to which our churches submit data annually.

Arlene maintains additional information such as birthdays and anniversaries. There will be a renewed effort toward maintaining and updating this information throughout the year. (Note from Arlene: The data hub was started a few years ago and the national office has slowly migrated that workload over to the conferences and local churches.)

Policy Updates: We have made some progress on policies this summer. Kevin Peterson, Outdoor Ministries, has worked on a Safer Camp policy that is now in its final revision. Our treasurer, Martha Baldwin and our accountant, Andy Warren, are reviewing and updating our Fiscal Policy Manual and preparing it for review by others. Our Personnel Committee is just beginning its review of the Personnel Manual.

Much of this work is not inspiring in terms of ministry, but it is the work that I believe needs to be done so that the Conference can more effectively support churches and clergy in all settings.

More exciting are the conversations that will happen at the Fall Gathering, when we will move beyond education into action. Together we will identify a concern we all share and what steps we are ready to take to address it. I encourage you to register at pncucc.org and join us at Shalom UCC in Richland on October 18 and 19.

For information, call 425-213-9313 or email blightwk@hotmail.com.

Admiral presents 'Whiteness and Idolatry,' invites RA

Andrew Conley-Holcom, pastor of Admiral Congregational UCC in Seattle, is promoting two ways to overcome white supremacy and racism.

This summer Admiral UCC launched a six-week study series of modern prophets on white racial identity, looking at "whiteness" through the lens of biblical idolatry.

For six weeks from late June to early August, he taught a course on "The Idolatry of Whiteness," exploring the intersections of the Hebrew prophets' calls to reject idolatry and modern prophets' calls to dismantle whiteness and white supremacy.

Seventeen participated, including two community members. Because of their positive response, he is offering the six-part study series he developed again from 1 to 2:30 p.m., Sundays, Oct. 13 to Nov. 17, at Admiral UCC, 4320 SW Hill St.

"Using the Golden Calf of Exodus 32 as the exemplar of idolatry, we examined how whiteness uses similar techniques to move people toward false beliefs about themselves and others that 1) minimize personal responsibility, 2) gather resources for group benefit, 3) re-write history to justify white status, 4) pervert or hijack worship of God, and 5) numb the suffering that whiteness inflicts on its adherents as well as its victims," said Andrew, who developed the series.

"I'm not racist" is the quintessential idolatrous statement in this course, because it hides the historical and present reality, Andrew said.

"We live in a racist society, so how could we possibly be free of racism?" he asked.

He introduces about 50 pages from each of 10 books for people to read, such as *Raising White Kids* (Harvey), *Stamped from the Beginning* (Kandi) and *White Fragility* (DiAngelo). His idea is that no one book is a



Andrew Conley-Holcom offers two efforts to challenge racism.

Photo courtesy of Andrew Conley-Holcom

complete picture, and he hopes to invite people to read more.

The first session establishes the group and introduces idolatry. The other sessions look at idolatry and materiality/wealth, history and memories, transcendence and objectivity, exile, justice and seeing anew, and liberation and renewal through the power of repentance and the need for relationship.

"Our goal is to start a conversation that needs to continue. I hope to open doors. The course is a 30,000-foot view of the creation of the white racial identity.

"What is white identity? What does white mean? Whiteness is not equivalent to the concept of black, Latino or Asian, because 'white' is a political category unique to the U.S., not a race or ethnic identity," he said.

Andrew shares historical information to contextualize the purpose of whiteness.

"The concept of white racial identity was created to determine who was deserving of having rights and who was not. The Naturalization Act of 1790, for example, said that only white men of good moral character were welcome to be citizens of the U.S. Other laws codified white as a political category.

The 3/5 rule discussed beginning in 1783 was adopted by the 1787 Constitutional Convention that the census for representation would tally slaves as 3/5 of a person so the South would have better representation.

"We unravel the mythology that America was begun as a place with freedom for all. White racial identity was central to be an American. So there is reason for anxiety among the white male conservative patriot movement, because historically the U.S. was a white male, patriarchal society. That's why some are threatened by inclusion of women and people of other races and ethnicities," Andrew said.

"Enfranchising others, women's rights, civil rights and immigrants' rights mean white males may lose property, privileges and power," he said.

The class also looks at how the category of white changed over time. At first, Italians and Irish were not considered white. They negotiated to be accepted as white by capitulating to racism against black and brown people, he said. They had to give up their national ancestries and identities to be white.

"It was harmful to all, because many forgot or re-wrote their immigration stories. Many do not know about the generation before their grandparents other than that they were Irish or Dutch.

"What does liberation look like?" Andrew asked. "It's an alternative. It's to be anti-racist. How is being anti-racist different from being not racist? It involves repenting from internalized racial superiority, being willing to identify and address the prejudices we hold. Once we are willing to humble ourselves off the altar of being 'not racist,' then we can do the real work of addressing racist systems in our society."

Andrew seeks other PN-CUCC churches who are ready

"to try something risky and join in an Anti-Racist Lent," using Racist Anonymous (RA) resources offered by the Rev. Ron Buford, who has been offering RA for three years in his church in Sunnyvale, Calif.

"While we may talk about white supremacy and equity in our mostly-white churches, often we do so at the 30,000-foot level. Rarely are we confessional or repentant in a way that is both courageous and healing," said Andrew.

Racists Anonymous uses the familiar 12-step recovery model. It gives participants the opportunity to let go of their ego-attachments to being "not racist" so they can unearth, address and recover from internalized racial biases.

"We live in a prejudiced society and can never be totally free of racism, but we can address our racial superiority and work to be anti-racist," he said.

"A segregationist believes individuals are created in an inherent hierarchy of inferiority to superiority, so races should be separate. Assimilationists believe the reason for inequality is cultural and behavioral differences that can be changed.

Anti-racism recognizes systems and structures in place are designed to disenfranchise people from access to resources and power. It sees all people as one, and inequality is created in history.

Andrew seeks to organize a coordinated launch of RA groups in the PNC during Lent.

"If the groups find traction, maybe we could start a revolution. At least we can give up the notion of being 'not racist' for Lent in 2020," he said.

Registration for the six study *idolatry series is limited to 20 and the fee is \$20. For information, call 206-932-2928 or email officemgr@admiralchurch.org or email pastorandrew@admiralchurch.org.*

Doors and signs are witness of love in Renton

United Christian Church of Renton has turned what could have been discouraging vandalism of rainbow doors it set outside in May in preparation for Pride Week into a witness of love.

Each door displayed one word to say, “God’s doors are open to all.”

“In less than a week after putting up the doors, we heard words of heartfelt appreciation from cyclists passing by, received many messages of support and encouragement, and were covered in the local paper,” said Cynthia Meyer, the pastor.

“One night the doors were knocked down, but early the next morning Good Samaritans had them up again, speaking love to all. We will persist!”

They were knocked down twice and put back up by people passing by or neighbors.

One of the teachers at Phoenix Montessori School, which rents the church’s building, made the replacement “All” sign.

“Then there was a “Chalk-In” initiated by folks from the neighborhood, many of whom brought their young children and wanted to engage them in learning to stand up for love and inclusion,” said Cynthia.

They decorated the sidewalk in front of the church with chalk messages and art to express that they cared.

The vandalism that damaged the front of the doors and attempted arson is being investigated as a hate crime.

That led to an outpouring of prayer and support. Members and neighbors worked together to replace and repaint the doors.

“We created an additional door to say thank you to our neighbors and all who offered support and assistance in so many ways,” Cynthia said.

The vandalism led to an outpouring of prayer and support, so the church, with atten-



Church set up display of “God’s Doors” in their yard.

Photos courtesy of Renton United Christian



Door with “all” damaged. Other doors damaged later.



Church and neighbors repair and reinstall doors.

dance of 40 to 50 on a Sunday, repaired/replaced the doors and later displayed them in the Renton River Days Parade.

Cynthia said the damage done to the doors reflects the damage that those in the LG-BTQ+ community experience far too regularly. So while she was sad it happened, she was not surprised

The response has been heartening, encouraging people to be active in their support and care.

Following on Facebook,

it’s clear the congregation affiliated with the United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ, continues to find creative ways to express love in the community.

Monday, June 17, staff found damage on the door that said “All”—a rip in it and signs of an attempt to set it on fire. After the damage to two other doors—“Leviticus” was written on one, a firecracker taped to the back of another and a possible explosion attempt of another— on Wednesday, June

19, a GoFundMe was started to fund security cameras after a second round of damage was being examined as possible arson. It raised \$1,393 in one day.

In early June, a neighbor commented that the church is sharing “brave love.” Cynthia commented that said, “We do our best to live it out in and outside our doors.”

She added that the city of Renton “did some wonderful things to celebrate Pride this year, including flying the Pride flag for the first time over City Hall June 17 to 23.

Members appreciated that so many neighbors and people in the community shared the message of love, giving the church new doors, offers of their time, skills and financial support, and so many other kind gestures.

“Our message of open doors remains and our love for all God’s children is stronger than ever,” said Cynthia.

The church held a community prayer vigil the evening of Friday, June 21, gathering people on the church lawn. Many from across the community and region, including many UCC, ecumenical and interfaith leaders and laity.

In late June, the church decided to offer a simple ministry to care for neighbors through a Little Free Pantry.

They built a structure with shelves and doors and set it on a pole. The congregation collected food items, single serve or pop-top for those who might not have access to a kitchen, along with toiletry items and other items. People in the church and community are invited to simply put what they can in the Pantry itself, or to call with a larger donation, like funds to cover the minimal construction expenses.

Most of the materials were donated, but they bought items to build the door.

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Little Free Pantry is another outreach of church

Continued from page 8

Much like a Little Free Library, anyone is welcome to “Take what you need. Leave what you can.”

On July 15, a day after opening, the pantry was serving neighbors.

July 27, members put God’s doors on wheels lined up and walked in the Renton River Days Parade.

On Aug. 25, the church affirmed that their doors are open to all as they welcomed teens looking for a safe place to be themselves and enjoy Game Night.

Since the crime, they set up a new security system.

They have painted their sanctuary entrance to be more welcoming and hung the “Be the Church” banner to “keep our broad commitment to love and justice visible to all,” said Cynthia.

On Sept. 1, they posted a video of the Burma Shave style road signs they planted along the street in the church’s front yard. In rainbow colors, the read: “Love your neighbor who doesn’t look like you, think like you, love like you, speak like you, pray like you, vote like you. Love your neighbor. Embrace them as your own, no exceptions. Be the church.”

Cynthia preached one recent Sunday about the call to build a longer table. Immediately after worship, members put the tables in the fellowship hall into one long table for a potluck.

“**We are proud** to be affiliated with both the UCC and Disciples, two Jesus following, justice seeking denominations,” she said.

Members of the UCCs ecumenical partner, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), took social-justice actions at their July General Assembly similar to those taken a month earlier by the UCC General Synod on global migration,



Renton United Christian Church members walk with doors in River Days Parade July 27.



Free Little Pantry is yet another community outreach.

private prisons, interreligious relations, plastic use, energy innovation, denouncing hate,

Latinx ministries, sexual violence, nuclear war, climate justice, immigrant children, opioid

addiction,

Vice-Moderator Jolynn Kenney and Property Chair Cameron McLaughlin are coordinating various follow up efforts.

They are part of the church’s new Innovation Team, inviting visitors and others into the life of the church, and creating new opportunities for service, outreach and fun—like the teen game nights.

“We are seeing new visitors every week, with quite a few becoming integrated into the congregation. Soon we will have new members. We are appreciative of the Spirit’s work in our congregation and community and for the many expressions of support we have received,” Cynthia said.

The vandalism and developments were covered regularly in the local newspaper, The Renton Reporter, drawing wider awareness and attention to the church’s witness and the community’s response, she added.

The doors are part of a national movement among UCC churches with information at GodsDoors.org.

For information, call 425-226-3080, email rev.cynthiameyer@gmail.com, or visit uc-crenton.org.

Tolt in 34th year of serving July 4 pancake breakfast

Since the mid-1980s, Tolt United Church of Christ in Carnation has held a pancake breakfast along with the town's 4th of July celebration.

Situated on main street at the beginning of the parade route, Tolt is the go-to place that morning. As the primary source of funds for the Tolt Good Neighbor Fund, the breakfast has raised nearly \$80,000 over 34 years and serves 400 to 600 breakfasts each year, said Judy West, breakfast chair.

"Townfolk love the breakfast, the welcoming atmosphere and the local, homemade strawberry jam," she said.

One pancake eater tweeted: "The 4th would not be the same without it and you and other volunteers giving up your morning and more. Your work is truly appreciated!"

Another commented that her granddaughter, a Seattle



Homemade strawberry jam is a draw for the pancake breakfast.
Photo courtesy of Judy West

resident, always asks to go to the breakfast.

Tolt is celebrating its 125th anniversary. It started in a small wooden chapel that burned down. E.A. Stuart, founder of Carnation Farms, built the stone Scottish style chapel in memory of his wife.

Soon after, the congregation built the two-story Pilgrim

House, with a basement dining room and kitchen big enough for two stoves and a three-section sink.

Up to 600 people move through the 1980s main-level addition, down the hall and stairs to the dining room.

Seating 96 people at a time, the dining room fills and empties all. A crew of 10 fill the

kitchen, plus servers, bussers and others mingle.

A small upstairs kitchen dishes up pancakes, sausage and eggs for the accessible street-level fellowship hall.

Judy said at least 50 Tolt members and friends help: picking berries, making jam, setting up, shopping and planning, cooking, serving, cleaning up and other tasks.

The Good Neighbor Fund, listed in the 211 helpline, serves Snoqualmie Valley towns. With few barriers, people can receive help for gas, groceries, utilities and other needs.

Once a request is made through the church office, a helper arranges to meet in person and helps as needed with small grants. Each year about 60 individuals and families use the funds," she said.

For information, call 425 223-6033.

PNC youth help organize Climate Strike in Seattle

PNC youth are helping organize and will participate in the global Youth Climate Strike on Friday, Sept. 20.

Youth around the world have been striking for their right to a healthy future. They call others to join them on Friday, Sept. 20

"We will be walking out of our schools, workplaces and homes to join millions of people around the world demanding climate justice and an end to the age of fossil fuels, said youth organizers," said Grace Lambert, Washington State co-lead, who is helping organize events statewide.

In Bellingham, Tanner Rapp from the First Congregational UCC is the city lead and has been working to make sure the event runs smoothly.

That day, people around the world will strike from school and jobs for the Global Youth Climate Strike. Most events are

being organized primarily by youth with adult support, said Grace of Kirkland UCC.

Washington Youth Climate Strikes plans events in Seattle, Kirkland, Bellingham, Wenatchee and Olympia. Events in the state are listed at <https://strikewithus.org/>.

"While youth organizers invite you all to our events, we also are looking for volunteer peacekeepers and would like pastors to help," she said. "Clergy and others interested in helping at events in Seattle, Wenatchee, Bellingham, Olympia or Kirkland may contact me to learn about trainings."

Grace also asks for help to amplify the event on social media. She has a toolkit for that.

The Seattle Climate Walkout Event will include three hours of climate justice workshops from 9 a.m. to noon at Cal Anderson Park, followed by a march to City Hall from

noon to 1 p.m., when there will be a rally there.

The UCC held a webinar on the Climate Walkout, "The Climate Strike: Faiths for the Future: A Webinar in Preparation for September 20," said Meighan Pritchard, pastor, Prospect UCC, Seattle.

The Global Climate Strike is shaping up to be the largest climate mobilization in history. It kicks off a week of global action that will use art, music, stories and nonviolent direct action to disrupt business-as-usual and create the climate justice future we need.

"It is a peaceful, powerful youth-centered mobilization. We are a broad coalition of youth leaders and adult allies all across the Seattle area, and we are demanding climate action at scale with the crisis: no new fossil fuel projects, just and equitable climate solutions to transition to 100 percent re-

newable energy, and holding those most responsible for the climate crisis accountable," said Grace.

"Everyone can be an activist! Come to learn, engage, and form real connections to many of the organizations involved with the climate crisis in the Seattle region. We will take over the park with each partner organization in the coalition bringing their skills and voices and contributing in ways that help them shine, and help you learn about their crucial work and powerful stories," she said.

This is an interactive, playful, festival learning environment with trainings, games, music, art, street theater demos, teach-ins and chances to connect with the movement, said Grace.

For information, visit Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/724142398026618/>

Weekend family retreat connects four churches

About 40 members of Chewelah, Colville, Newport and Westminster UCC churches spent the weekend of Sept. 6 to 8 together in a family retreat at N-Sid-Sen, the PNC camp and conference center on Lake Coeur d'Alene.

There were art projects, crafts, storytelling, children's activities and beach time, as well as evenings socializing and playing games.

Patty Ferguson of Westminster and Liz Gill of Colville provided activities for the children, aged six and younger.

They included a stained glass art project, a scavenger hunt, glow stick games at night, water/beach games, playground time and sinking-and-bailing a canoe.

The children concluded their time together with impromptu dancing during songs of closing worship.

Pastors Jim CastroLang of Colville, Andy CastroLang of Westminster and Jess Peacock of Chewelah led the closing worship, which reflected on the body of Christ having many parts that need to come together, connect and work in unity, even though they may experience brokenness and separateness at time.

Andy repeated the Scripture, Cor. 12:12-27, emphasizing that there is one body that has many parts and it's the same with Christ being formed in one body with the same spirit, one body with many parts. The foot cannot say it's not part of the body because it's not a hand.

If all the parts were the same, it could not be a body. The body needs its many parts. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honored, every part shares in its joy.

"It takes a toll when we lose part of the body because someone is mad at us," Jim said. "As we broaden beyond



Children dance, choir sings, clergy share preaching at four-church retreat at N-Sid-Sen.

our church, do we feel suffering within the body of the local church from brokenness between us and other churches."

He said he felt suffering when the Open Door UCC in Deer Park and the Cheney UCC left the PNC. He wondered what he could have done.

"To feel such pain, suffering and loss when another part of the body is lost," he said, "is key if we are to rejoice together when one part rejoices."

At General Synod, he was in a discussion about what to do if a UCC church does not come to any conference or national events.

"What do we do with that relationship? The whole UCC is dealing with suffering. We need to feel it in our bones if we are to have a new day to rejoice," he said.

Jess led a meditation calling participants to still their bodies and be mindful of its parts—fingers, toes, jaw—and to feel the chair they sit in, letting tense, tight parts loosen, and be aware of their breathing oxygen in and out.

"When part of the body hurts, like an ankle, the other ankle compensates. It does it naturally," he said. "We each have 10,000 species of microorganisms living in and on our 37 trillion cells that operate together.

"Envision your body as the church, your arms as limbs of the church, microorganisms as members. How can another church help your body? Can it be the load bearing ankle if one ankle hurts? How can Eastern Washington churches compensate for each other and help

each other? What are the challenges for one church as part of the body?" Jess asked.

He listed and elicited some challenges for Eastern Washington churches connecting: distance, being tired and sustaining one's own church.

They he asked what brings churches together: sharing stories, working together on children's activities and sharing in creating a watercolor mural of the N-Sid-Sen view.

That mural will travel to the four churches.

"We need to understand we are together as churches, facing similar struggles, finding commonality that we are not alone and sharing stories so we are aware we feel the same human experiences," Jess said.

For information, visit n-sid-sen.org.

Solar panels will provide 40% of energy for church

First Congregational UCC in Walla Walla's Adopt a Panel campaign "generated a lot of energy," said Nathaniel Mahlberg, pastor, and now the solar panels are installed and generating electrical energy for the church.

"It took passion and leg-work on the part of a few core people, to find panels that were more affordable for us," he said.

Erik Gryler, a church member catalyzed the project, with assistance of the church moderator J.R. VanSlyke.

They made a flier with a photo of some members holding a solar panel and asking: "Let's Raise this Solar to the Roof," inviting people to adopt a solar panel to help keep on lights for the "life-saving work" at the church.

They asked for donations of \$155.67 to cover the cost of a panel—or donations of any amount.

"The fundraising was a moving outpouring of generosity," Nathaniel said, sharing some of the "cool stories":

- A couple recovery groups who meet at the church each adopted a solar panel as a group.
- A few college students who were graduating threw in together to adopt a panel.
- Some people, who don't attend the church but support what it does in the community, have adopted panels.

• The church found a local grant, which it will receive.

• They have also applied for a grant with Pacific Power, and will hear back early next year.

"Every Sunday as part of our statement of identity, we say, 'It is our mission to enable personal spiritual growth, col-



Crew mounts solar panels on the roof of First Congregational UCC in Walla Walla.

Photo courtesy of Nathaniel Mahlberg



Group unloaded the panels from a truck that shipped them from a warehouse in Boise, Idaho.

lective outreach to the community, and stewardship of God's creation," Nathaniel said.

"Folks are happy for how this is a real expression of our commitment to be good stewards of Creation," he commented.

"It's also stewardship of our church building, because this will save the church thousands of dollars on utility bills for years and years to come," he said.

When the panels wear out in several decades, they can be

replaced with panels that will likely be more effective and less expensive.

"Now we'll work step by step to improve the efficiency of our lighting and heating/cooling," he said.

The church's consultant on the project said that with modest improvements they should be able to break even between solar generation and total electricity usage.

Right now they estimate that the panels will cover 40 percent of their usage.

"We'll throw a Solfest party the first Sunday in October after worship to celebrate and to thank all the donors and community partners," Nathaniel said.

One church member is proclaiming: "We're powered by the Son in more ways than one."

For information, call 509-525-8753, email pastor at fcc.net or visit firstchurchuccww.org.

Fourth, fifth campers share injustices, solutions

Intermediate camp co-directors Steve Haddan, pastor, and Kaila Russell of Tolt UCC in Carnation, took an idea in the junior high curriculum on the 2019 theme, “Peace Works,” and modified it for their fourth and fifth grade campers.

Steve drew the figure of a tree with trunk, roots and bare branches.

They then asked campers to name injustices they are aware of. They wrote those on the trunk.

The campers listed people without family or parents, being selfish, different treatment to different religious groups, sexism, lack of education, prejudice; differentially-abled, bullying, using too many resources, privilege, being greedy, hunger, racism, homelessness, lack of clean water, lack of health care, and not treating others like you want to be treated.

Then campers shared “ways we can help” and wrote these in green in the branches to represent leaves.

This list was pool resources; share and create awareness; start a non-profit; save resources, and donate, money, clothes and food; spread kindness, do a food drive and volunteer, and fill other’s buckets.

Steve said they asked the campers to think about why the injustices they named exist. They wrote these on the roots as the roots of injustice.

The list included: treating people the way they have been treated; lacking education or having inadequate education; acting out of anger and being afraid of change; using difference as a weapon; abusing drug; acting out of jealousy; having a lack of leadership; learning handed-down, generational learning we have been taught and shown; having parents unable or unwilling to give support; parents kicking children out or being too busy; having traumatic experiences;

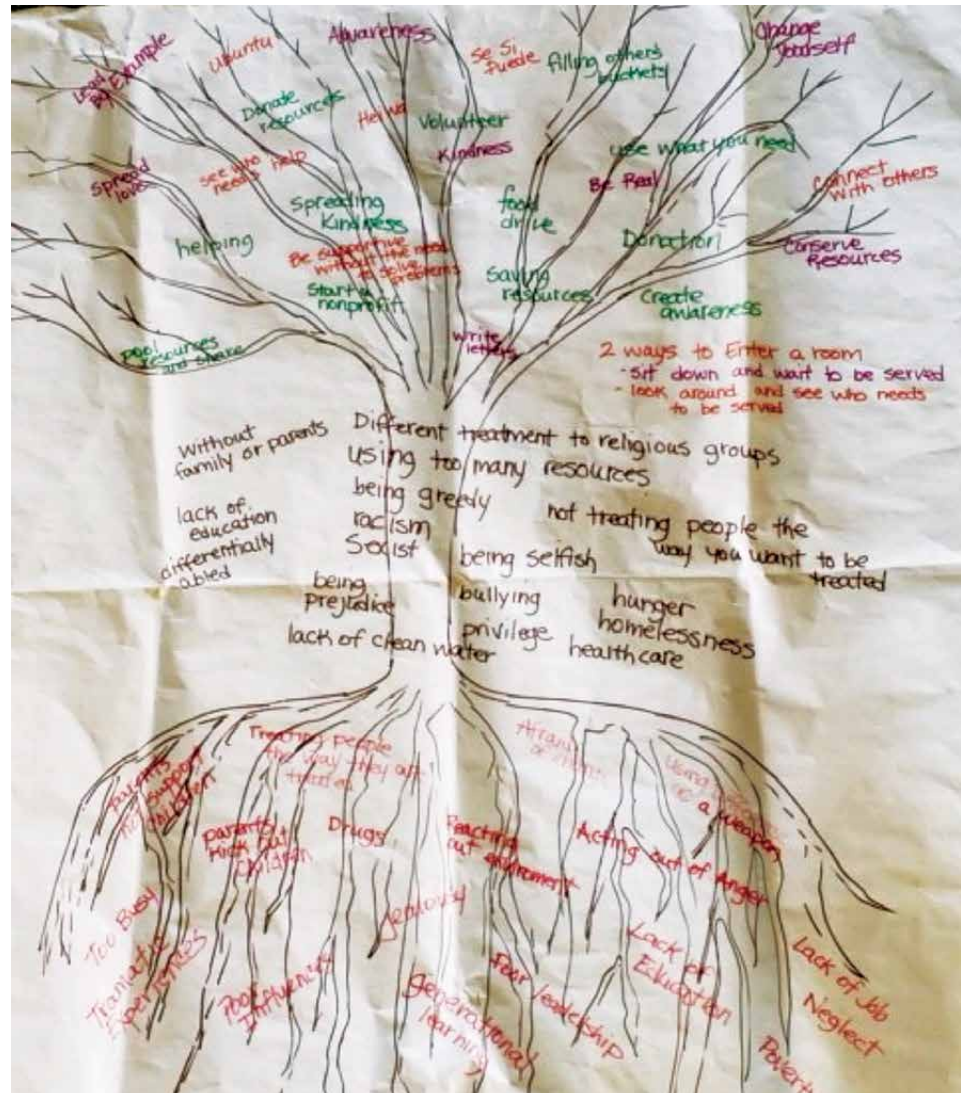
or having poor or bad influences of role models.

“After we asked them to think about the roots of injustice, we asked them to go a little further out on the limb and list how we can address the roots of injustice,” Steve said.

“We wrote these in the branches with red or pink to represent the fruit,” he said.

They listed;

- Lead by example, spread love and Ubuntu (African for “I am because we are”);
- Awareness, see who needs help and Heiwa (Japanese weaving peace and harmony together);
- Write letters to make change, change yourself and Se



Fourth and fifth graders at N-Sid-Sen shared roots of injustice to fruitful actions.

Si Puede (meaning “Yes, it can be done);

• Show real support without taking over and making decisions for others—including and hearing voices to make real change;

• Connect with others, conserve resources and be a real presence;

• One camper shared what he has been taught at home: “There are two ways to enter a room: 1) sit down and wait to be served, or 2) look around and see who needs to be served.”

“Our fourth and fifth graders get it,” Steve said.

“Kaila and I were honored, humbled, and again forever blessed and changed by

what the camping program in our conference creates for our children, and how our children respond, learn, grow, share and transform during their time at camp,” he said.

Steve directed Kids camps four years in the Central Pacific Conference and has directed Intermediate camps in the PNC for six years.

“I feel revitalized working with children and youth, sharing the message of love, grace and inclusion,” he said. “We need to do all we can to get more children and youth to go to our camps.”

For information, call 425-591-3745, email revhad@tolucc.org or visit www.n-sid-sen.org.

N-Sid-Sen had one-acre fire, continues fire management

About 3 p.m., Friday, Aug. 16, Mark Boyd, managing director at N-Sid-Sen Camp and Conference Center of Lake Coeur d'Alene, and Skip Dean, maintenance coordinator, saw smoke on the horizon. They walked to the cove where they met the East Lake Fire District (ELFD) chief Dan Currie, who was at the boathouse. He also saw the smoke.

They determined it was on N-Sid-Sen property along the highway north of the cove. Dan called in the crews from the ELFD and the Idaho Department of Lands to fight the fire.

Mark, Skip and some of the fire crews diverted traffic coming from the south to turn around in the parking lot to go around the fire.

"A tree had fallen and hit another tree that fell on a power line and sparked the fire," Mark said.

He then went to the cove and helped the pump truck pump water out of the lake and take it to fill fire trucks on the road. They fought the fire from the road and one of N-Sid-Sen's service roads.

The fire started about 3 p.m. and power was restored by 5 p.m., so they could cook dinner for about 120 people at the Lady of the Lake family camp's last evening.

The fire crews did cleanup into the evening, said Mark.



About an acre of N-Sid-Sen's forest burned Aug. 16, but it was out in a few hours.

Photo courtesy of Mark Boyd

They came back for the next few days to check.

"We lost about an acre of timber. Surrounding timber was also affected by smoke damage and the smoke drew bugs—pine and fir beetles," he said.

Mark has been working with forester Steve Bloedal of Inland Forest Management for several years deciding what trees are beetle infested, diseased and dying.

They arranged with the state entomologist to set up posts with pheromones, repellent scents, to repel the bugs from the fire area.

Steve also has worked with Mark to bring in a state grant for \$23,000 to help cover \$26,000 to pay contractors to do fire breaks—removing shrubbery, flammable vegetation and small trees between big timber across the highway behind Sy-

ringa and on the camp side of the highway.

"That is part of managing the land for fire prevention and control—to slow the spread of any fire with the fire breaks," said Mark.

He is also working with a logger at the south end of the property above the old Inspiration Point to remove dead and damaged trees, which can be sold to mills or chipped for use on the property.

In addition, in mid-September he was overseeing drilling a new well in the cove, replacing one built in 1969 that had silt seep in recently. The water from the new well will also be piped up to the reservoir. Once it is hooked up, the water system will be flushed, he said.

Mark added that N-Sid-Sen has space reserved by many groups steadily into the winter.

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit www.n-sid-sen.org.



N-Sid-Sen fireboat and fireboat house is now an established part of the scene in the cove.