



Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

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September-October 2014

Numbers at camps were up slightly in 2014

Camps seek to build pool of people willing and trained to be counselors.

Summer days were hot so campers at N-Sid-Sen spent much of their weeks in the water, said Mark Boyd, managing director.

As a result, at junior high aqua camp, more of the campers got up on water skis than in previous summers.

“The numbers at camp were up slightly, but we still have room to grow,” he added. “Family Camp I, however, was filled and had a waiting list.”

With Western Regional Youth Event, many of the regular counselors gave their time there, so camps had more new counselors.

“We are looking to build our pool of counselors,” said Mark, inviting interested people to let him know of their

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Given the heat this summer, senior high aqua campers at N-Sid-Sen spent much of their time in the water. Tucker Jacobs plays water frisbee.

Photo courtesy of Max Aquino

PNC Board will meet with different congregations

Seeing the Conference as a culture and a community, conference moderator Andy CastroLang reported that the PNC Board will be meeting with congregations to listen to their pressures and issues.

“We want to emphasize relationships and covenants we have as UCC folks and churches,” she said.

The Board, whose 12 members meet quarterly, has scheduled to meet Nov. 1 with the Conference Council—heads of committees—at Horizon House. The Conference Council has 30 members. The winter board meeting is also a Conference Council meeting and will be Jan. 24 at Normandy Park in Seattle. March 21, the board meets at Shalom UCC in

Richland. It will also meet before Annual Meeting April 24 to 26 in Spokane.

“In Ritzville in September, we heard about small town, rural life in an area of dryland wheat farming,” Andy said. “We heard from people who feel disconnected from progressive, Western Washington Democrats.”

Mark Schoessler, who is Republican leader in the State Senate, talked about agriculture, relationships and people. Another member told of how the recent transplanting of wolves is threatening her sheep herd, but she doesn’t feel heard in Olympia.

“We are taking time to meet people and reconnect, rather than say, ‘Here, we have a program for you.’ We are listen-

ing to people and looking them in the eye,” she said.

The board recently adopted a vision of its role: “The PNC lives through its camps, churches and committees by offering God’s welcome to all, listening to one another, bearing witness and working for justice.”

The board decided to put on the Yahoo Group each week the names of two churches for the group to pray for.

Andy also reports that because of some crises in congregations drawing the attention of Conference Minister Mike Denton, the search process for the additional conference staff was slowed.

For information, call 509-625-1366 or email pncucc@gmail.com.

Boundary training reminds pastors of their health

Conference Comments



By The Rev. Mike Denton
Conference Minister

Call agreements require pastors to take time for sleep, exercise, family and social relationships.

Every three years, clergy in the Pacific Northwest Conference are required to take Boundary Training. It's essentially a refresher course about pastoral ethics; stewardship of the power of the pastoral role and what makes healthy church relationships. I am due this year and this is the fourth or fifth time I've taken it now. Every time it rolls around, I would be lying if I said there wasn't a piece in me that groans a little. This is so much a part of my work anyway, I think. Do I really need to do this? Isn't this just common sense, anyway?

Then, every single blooming time, sometime in the midst of the reading or conversations or instruction I have had a realization of the importance of this class. It usually begins with an unspoken "Oops." I am reminded of something I forgot. Maybe something I might have seen as efficient, at the time, might have actually been manipulative in some way. I start to wonder if something I'd been advocating for was getting support not necessarily because others thought it was a good idea but because of how my power in that situation was perceived. I, again, realize I do not have a healthy boundary between my time away from work and my time working.

That last one is one of the hardest for pastors. In the midst of this boundary class, I started thinking of Ron, the moderator at the first church I served after I was ordained. One day, right before worship, he asked for an emergency meeting with me because, as I remember, he said I had violated the conditions of my call agreement. Needless to say, I wasn't all that present for the next 90 minutes as I wracked my brain trying to figure what the heck he could be talking about.

After worship, we sat down in my office. "What's going on Ron?" "Pastor, you have been here a little more than a year and you have not taken your month of vacation time, yet."

I smiled and relaxed, and then he got angry with me.

"You don't understand how serious this is. This is not something we put in the contract just for you. This is for us, too. We need and deserve a well-rested pastor, and you're not providing that to us. I need to know your vacation plans by the end of the week. Am I clear?"

"Yes. Thank you."

"We'll talk in a week." He got up and walked out. I sat there a little stunned. He taught me one of the most important lessons about boundaries, one I need to be reminded of more often than I'd like to admit.

I just finished Tavis Smiley's book, *Death of*

a King: The Real Story of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Final Year. Although its clearly emphasized in the book, the title leaves out that his full title was actually the The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King. During the last year of his life, he was clearly exhausted, anxious and depressed. The book celebrates his courage and calling without over sentimentalizing or excusing the bad decisions he made in the midst of his exhaustion, anxiety and depression. It's a book worth reading both as a piece of history and as a cautionary tale. He is a hero to many—he's definitely one of mine—but not every part of his life can be seen as a model of vocational integrity we should model our own lives after.

No one makes their best decisions when they're exhausted. No one. Although not every bad decision has to do with exhaustion, the worst clergy boundary decisions I've seen, especially the ones that we end up having to deal with through the formal process of the clergy Fitness Review, have been rooted in a series of bad decisions that almost always had some strong correlation to exhaustion and overwork. When pastors don't take the time they need to make sure that they have the rest and time away from work they need, they begin to turn to those they serve to somehow fulfill that need.

The line—the boundary—between the role of the pastor and the person who is a pastor dissolves. That's when things start to fall apart. Yes, the congregation has a role in helping with this, too—as in the example of the church moderator—but the reason pastors are required to take Boundary Training is because it really does start with our own clarity about what healthy boundaries are. In our ordination vows, we promise to keep healthy boundaries. We really do have a unique responsibility to make sure that what seems like common sense becomes common practice.

One of the things Boundary Training has reminded me is that it's time to take a look at my calendar and figure out how to take those last two weeks of vacation time I promised you I would take, as well as what to do about some of those upcoming days where work and my days off seem like they're going to overlap. I need to take a look at my day-to-day schedule and make sure that time for sleep, exercise, family and social relationships is not sacrificed on the altar. Maybe some of you need to do the same.

Maybe some of you who are church moderators need to sit down with your pastors and have a serious conversation about some particular requirements of their call agreement...

Transitions announced

Meighan Pritchard will be ordained at 3 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 5, at University Congregational UCC.

Lauren Cannon will be ordained at 5:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 26, at Keystone UCC in Seattle

Sandy Annette Cheatham is the part-time pastor at Blaine UCC.

Denise Denniston was ordained in August at All Pilgrims Christian Church in Seattle.

Gen Heywood was installed Sept. 28 as pastor at Veradale UCC.

Church Council sets event

The Church Council of Greater Seattle plans a "Weaving Our Strengths" conference from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 4, at University Congregational UCC in Seattle. The day-long event includes fellowship, inspiration, and skill-building to strengthen local churches' efforts for the common good. *For information, call 206-525-1213 ext 105 or visit thechurchcouncil.ejoinme.org/WOS*

Our Whole Lives Training is planned Oct. 3 to 5

"Our Whole Lives" (O.W.L.) Training for facilitators of junior and senior high sexuality education will be held from 5:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 3, through Sunday, Oct. 5, at First Congregational Church at 2401 Cornwall Ave. in Bellingham.

Facilitators are Amy Johnson, UCC O.W.L. coordinator and trainer at elementary and secondary levels, and Anil Oommen, who taught in private and public elementary schools for 14 years and has a master's in teaching from Pacific University.

For information, call 360-734-3720.

Online courses offered

An online course on healthy boundaries for ministry is being offered from Sept. 15 to Oct. 17. The course is offered with FaithTrust Institute and the Center for Progressive Renewal to equip clergy and spiritual teachers to understand the importance of healthy boundaries in ministry and to discern critically the complexities of boundaries in pastoral relationships.

Those who pass the course will receive two C.E.U. credits from Pacific School of Religion and fulfill boundary training requirements for the UCC.

For information, visit progressiverenewal.org/events/.

Conference News Briefs

Clergy boundary training will be held on Oct. 20

The Pacific Northwest Conference UCC Committee on Ministry is offering a day of "Clergy Boundary Training" from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday, Oct.

20, at Fauntleroy UCC, 9140 California Ave. SW in Seattle. Clergy with standing and licensed clergy are required to take a boundary training workshop once every three years to maintain their standing in the conference.

For information, Arlene Hobson at 206-725-8383. The cost of \$100 includes materials and lunch.

Oct. 21 event looks at criminalizing homelessness

The Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness is offering an educational event on Creating the Political Will to End Homelessness called "Homelessness: It's a Crime." It will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 21, at St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 Tenth Ave. E. in Seattle.

The goal of the day with a keynote, panel, lunch, workshops and networking is to lead to action and change to identify and challenge stigma, hear how criminalization happens and make recommendations for long-term change in laws meant to protect but that often harm.

The keynote speaker is Lisa Daugaard of The Defender Association in Seattle. Her primary responsibility there is to direct the Racial Disparity Project.

For information, contact Bill Kirlin-Hackett at kirhac1947@yahoo.com.

'Policies That Protect' event planned at Broadview on Nov. 8

Broadview Community Church is hosting a free workshop, "Policies That Protect," on practices, policies and documents that keep churches healthy. John Pomeroy, western area mission interpreter for the UCC Cornerstone Fund will lead the session from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 8.

He will cover conflicts of interest, documents to retain or shred, financial controls, endowment policy, audits, person-

nel policies, safe church policies, facilities self-inspection, comparing insurance policies and emergency planning.

For information, call Arlene Hobson at 206-725-8383 or email pncucc@gmail.com.

National UCC justice ministry holds Nov. 8 Justice Revival

The national JWM staff is planning to hold its staff meeting Friday, Nov. 7, at First Congregational UCC in Vancouver, Wash., 1220 NE 68th, in conjunction with a Regional Justice Revival on Saturday, Nov. 8, called "Stoking the Fires of Justice."

As part of the Friday agenda, members of the Central Pacific and Pacific Northwest Conference Justice and Witness Committees will join at 3:30 p.m. in a time of sharing about current justice work and possibilities for collaboration.

The proposed purpose of this gathering is to strengthen relationships, learn about what the conferences are doing and provide supportive resources.

For information, call 360-693-1476.

Website has donate button

The PNC website, pncucc.org, now has a "Donate Button" to help churches pay Our Churches Wider Mission and special offerings electronically and so individuals can contribute to the conference, camps or special campaigns.

Donors can pay by electronic transfer from their checking accounts or by credit card. They can set up for recurring monthly payments.

For information, call 206-725-8383 or email michellelynnj@gmail.com.

Annual Men's Retreat is set Jan. 30 to Feb. 1 at Pilgrim

Firs The PNC annual Men's Retreat will feature the Rev. Todd Smiedendorf, senior minister of Washington Park UCC in Den-



Todd Smiedendorf

ver, leading a program on "Exploring the Paths to Mature Manhood." The retreat will be Friday, Jan. 30, to Sunday, Feb. 1, at Pilgrim Firs Conference Center.

Before the retreat, Thursday, Jan. 29 will be a "Day of Silence."

Registration is on the Conference website at pncucc.org.

2014 camps try new ways to address issues

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interest.

“For the 2014 camping season, leaders and counselors saw a video on sexual abuse awareness. We will continue to do that for every counselor,” he said. “It’s a good reminder of what they need to pay attention to and what to report.”

One activity that impressed Mark during senior high aqua camp was when counselor Sheila Thieme made an affirmation teepee. She took a large piece of fabric and had campers write words on it about people they value, admire, trust and love in the camp community.

“Campers couldn’t tell what age, race or gender the people was. Words they used were ‘trustworthy, caring, brave.’ We wrapped that fabric around teepee poles near the campfire and put a light inside,” Sheila said.

“Campers then wrote in black ink on black paper words people used to describe them,” Sheila said. “We taped them over the other words. After the exercise, campers removed the words on black paper and tossed them in the campfire, leaving the lit-up teepee glowing with the important words. It was by the campfire all week.”

“One camper said the black paper and words did not cover up the positive words, which shown in the light,” Mark said. Junior high camp did the exercise, too.

Mark started three activities:

- He invited clergy of the churches campers attend to come to lunch the day before camp ended. They ate with campers from their church.

David Krueger-Duncan of Cheney UCC, Judith Rinehart-Nelson of Ritzville and a United Methodist pastor came.

“It’s a way pastors can see the camp, gain a sense of the experience and get to know the children and youth,” Mark said.



Campers sink canoes in a sunset activity in the cove.

- He invited campers to plan to bring money for offerings to use for camp scholarships so people they know might come another year. They raised \$1,500.

“Let’s use it to bring new campers here,” he said.

During Family Camp, Mark saw that some trees were rotted. A camper, Evan Bombardier, is an arborist and had brought his equipment. He brought down five trees by the chapel.

This year’s full-time staff were the lifeguard, a second cook and four others, including two young women from Poland who came through a program called Camp America.

“They came expecting to eat corn dogs and pizza. They helped people understand that Poland is now a modern nation, not impoverished. One is studying theology and the other attends seminary. They learned of the different expectations of what women who study theology in the U.S. can do. Poland is predominantly Catholic, so she was amazed to learn women can be pastors in the United Church of Christ.

An evening at Family Camp 2, the Polish women cooked Pirrhogies and a Polish crepe, said Mark, adding that overall “we improved our food choices for people on vegetarian, gluten

free and dairy free diets.”

Tony Kliment, co-director of senior high camp, has been part of a counseling team at camp for 10 years. He is impressed how youth may at first be quiet or not know anyone, but in a week form friendships that last for years, and towards the end of camp do an amazing song-and-dance routine for the talent show.

“At camp, the kids can be who they are or are becoming, with acceptance, not judgment,” he said. “They also gain a sense there is something bigger to life, something more than themselves, more than the



Sheila Thieme and senior high camper Briella Gates set up affirmation teepee.

plugged-in world. In nature at morning watch or in small groups through the week, they hear messages and talk about their feelings and about God.”

The irony of the relationships they build at camp being unplugged, is that campers plug in at home to keep up with new camp friends through social media, Tony noted.

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



Rys McKinstry water skis.
Water sports kept junior and senior high campers cool. Girls silhouetted in the sunset.

Photos courtesy of Max Aquino



Camp adventures establish spirit of being at home

Pilgrim Firs used Bob the Sock Monkey as a promotional tool to draw children, youth and families to camp. Deeg Nelson, managing director, took photos of Bob the Sock Monkey in different places around the camp.

"The Western Regional Youth Event used Moses the Sock Monkey for its promotion," he said. "Even with WRYE, our numbers were steady compared with 2013."

One change was that for the first time in the 12 years he has been managing director, Pilgrim Firs combined Kids and Intermediate camps.

"When campers arrived they had photos taken with Bob the Sock Monkey," he said. "It put smiles on their faces. Some cradled it like a baby. Some just held it. Some put it on their shoulders. It reduced campers' nervousness on the first day."

Deeg suggested senior high campers begin to terrace a slope beside the basketball court, so campers could sit on it more comfortably to watch games. The junior high campers finished it up.

This year, campers joined in "Pilgrim Games," which were Olympics style games. They invited campers to make up a game with their team in 15 minutes and then teach it to the others in five minutes.

Katy Lloyd, who co-directed the combined Kids and Intermediate Camps, said it was "the first time we combined these camps at Pilgrim Firs in recent memory.

"There were some logistical issues to figure out to make sure things ran smoothly and each group had their own experience, but we were helped by two things: a phenomenal staff that blended like peas and carrots (Kids staff in orange, Intermediate in green; Camp Grandma Ruth Anne in blue; Nurse Barb in red). We learned from the wisdom of Trudy Lambert



At Pilgrim Firs, Bob the monkey welcomed campers and was in many programs. Photos cour-

Campers sing "Kumbayah," join in field games and terrace hillside for seats.

and Gale Peterson, Kids Camp co-directors at N-Sid-Sen, where they've combined Kids and Intermediate Camps for a couple of years," Katy said.

"It was a fantastic week, filled with fun, sunshine, campfires, singing, incredibly deep sharing from the campers, and enough smiles to make Bob the Sock Monkey proud!" she said.

One meaningful memory was the night campers sang "Kumbayah" around the campfire. This was a favorite song of a camper, who requested it many times during the week.

"One by one the campers got up from their benches to form a swaying circle of song. This song sometimes gets teased among adults for being too 'hippie' or 'new age-y,' but these kids had no sense of irony about it—just a deep love for a meaningful song that may make a well-deserved comeback!" Katy said.

For information, visit www.pilgrimfirs.org.



Alison Stendahl shares power of presence

Alison Stendahl, who is retiring after 34 years as a missionary in education with the Near East Mission in Istanbul, Turkey, is sharing with area churches about history of the Middle East, religion and missions there, and current issues.

Coming from Minnesota, she taught math a year in Zillah, Wash., four years in Tonasket and two years in Seattle before University Congregational UCC in Seattle commissioned her to go to Turkey. She served with the United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ Global Ministries.

She taught math from 1980 to 1985 at the Izmir American Collegiate Institute in Istanbul. Then she transferred to Uskudar American Academy in Istanbul to teach math. She also was academic dean and head of the math department from 1985 to 1989 and from 1991 to 2014. From 1996 to 2001, she helped develop a church history program at Bithynia Bible College.

Interfaith dialogue was always important to her.

“I learned from Muslims, Christians and Jews,” she said.

Alison said her ministry was one of presence and relationships. One thing she learned from the Turks was to take time to be with people.

In relating with people, she did not seek to convert them, but to be present with them and share a common understanding of God as God speaks to them. She helped represent the UCC on the Near East School of Theology Board in Beirut.

“Anatolian history goes back thousands of years. Civilization upon civilization moved across the land,” Alison said. “Romans filled the region with pillars, temples and sculptures. Names of Anatolian cities are in the Old and New Testaments.”

Christianity began to spread rapidly in the 300s after the persecution of Christians by the Roman Empire stopped. They replaced worship practic-

es that had been in place until Constantine made the religion official, she said.

The Roman Empire split between West and East, with the East surviving as the Byzantine Empire until 1453. Christian patriarchates in Constantinople and Rome became predominant as Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch were engulfed after the spread of Islam in the 7th century, she said.

The Byzantine Empire fell when the Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453. The city was renamed Istanbul. The Ottoman Empire ruled for 600 years until 1914, at its maximum, controlled Northern Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Caucasus.

“As that empire grew, bringing Islam to many, churches continued. The empire became complacent and corrupt and fell,” Alison said.

In 1820, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) sent two missionaries, who had no success converting Jewish and Muslim people in Smyrna, a cosmopolitan port. They talked theology with Armenian Orthodox Christians, who liked their theological ideas and became Protestant, Alison said.

“In addition to new churches being formed, they wanted education and health care, so there were opportunities for women missionaries,” she said.

Presbyterians split from the ABCFM in 1870 to work with the Arabic-speaking population. In 1914, the 24 Congregational mission stations had 209 missionaries, more than 400 schools and 1,299 staff members, comprising one-fourth of the American Board budget.

“World War I was pivotal in shaping politics of the Middle East. Turkey had aligned with Germany, which was defeated. The Ottoman, Austrian-Hungarian and Russian Empires fell,” she summarized.

“In 1915, Armenians were



Alison Stendahl met with Westminster, Chewelah, Colville and Veradale UCC churches at N-Sid-Sen.

murdered or deported to deserts of Northern Syria, in what is termed the Armenian Genocide. Turkey still has not acknowledged it was a genocide. More than 1 million Armenians lost their lives,” she said.

Under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, Alison said, Turkey drove out the English, French and Greeks. It established a secular democracy in 1923. Bordering Turkey are Bulgaria, Greece, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Armenia and Georgia.

The American Board closed most of its institutions, but continued to run a few under new secular guidelines. Institutions founded by missionaries in the 19th century continue to operate today under the Health and Education Foundation (SEV), a foundation made up of graduates of American Board schools.

“Graduates of our schools have made a major impact in the society,” she said. In the 1990s, SEV took over financial responsibility for three schools, a hospital and a the publishing company.

When Alison came, she

was one of more than 30 missionaries paid by the church. When she left in July, she was the last one.

“We grew in partnership with the Turks and established a more equal basis for trust and respect,” she said. “SEV upgraded facilities and established strong academic programs to build leaders. Uskudar and SEV continue to be Global Ministries partners.”

Through SEV, school facilities were upgraded as academic programs in the three remaining schools became stronger.

Showing a photo of her last class, Alison said, “All are Muslim, but they ask the same questions about their futures as kids here. They have high academic standards and do social service. The American Board’s spirit lives on in the schools, even without missionaries.”

Turkey’s major problems include refugees, borders with Syria and Iraq, Kurds and other minorities, territorial claims of Cyprus and the Aegean Sea, women’s issues and freedom of the press.

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Westminster UCC active in Spokane Alliance

“We are stronger together,” said Andy CastroLang, pastor of Westminster Congregational UCC in Spokane, which hosted the Spring Assembly for nearly 200 members of the Spokane Alliance. Andy is co-chair of the assembly.

Tom Robinson of Covenant United Methodist Church said that “to create power to usher in change, business, faith, labor, nonprofits and education must be in relationship.”

Conference Minister Mike Denton and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Bishop Martin Wells of the Eastern Washington Idaho Synod were among regional and community leaders of sister organizations.

“The issues hit me personally and as a pastor working with people who are aging in place,” said Mike. “Churches are closing. Mental health care and child care are important.

As Martin visits 92 congregations in the synod, he reminds them: “God calls us into the community to work for the common good, to resist injustice and to struggle in the polarized society and politics to work together.”

Andy and others listed the alliance’s accomplishments:

- seeing the need for job training and negotiating for an apprentice program with Spokane Public Schools;
- urging schools to adopt green building standards that have been adopted statewide;
- encouraging homeowners to install energy efficiency through Sustainable Works;
- promoting a jobs bill that brought 18,000 jobs to the state to stimulate the local economy when the economy tanked;
- drawing a medical school to Spokane.

“The Spokane Alliance listens to members’ hopes, dreams, and fears,” said Andy. “Times are still hard, and we can have an impact on in-home care, mental



Gil Escandon of Westminster UCC, right, in small group discussion with Shelly Kornmeyer, Jody Harmon visits with Stacie Wenzel.

health care and child care.”

Three members shared their stories.

Amelia O’Dean of the Association of Manufactured Homeowners, a nonprofit promoting rights of these homeowners who rent land but own their homes. She has visited many. Some are seniors who downsized to be independent. Cuts of in-home care force some into nursing homes even though it costs less to have home health care. Her father, 60, was a steelworker. She wanted to support him to stay at home.

Gilbert Escandon, a member of Westminster, has worked 24 years in the emergency room. He has seen a rise in people with mental health needs coming. In 1965, when his brother came back from Vietnam, there was no program.

“I held him in my arms as he cried about the horrors of war,” said Gil, who has also been a physician in “the largest mental health facility in the area, the Spokane County Jail.”

“People with mental health, drug and alcohol problems struggle,” he said. “So do agencies and jails that are overtaxed.

“It does not cost less to provide mental health care in a jail or emergency room,” he said. “Funds cuts affect the qual-

ity of care. I want to organize labor, nurses and pastors to research and create a plan to be our brothers keepers.”

Diane Clavel worked before she had four children and became a stay-at-home mother.

Unable to survive on her husband’s salary, she went back to work. Each had a full-time and a part-time job, arranged around caring for preschoolers. She arose at 5 a.m. to take him to work and the children to school. She cared for the youngest at home. She picked up the children and her husband at 3:30 p.m. She worked from 4 p.m. to midnight for four years until the youngest started kindergarten.

“Our family time was poor. I was sleep deprived and stressed,” she said. “Child care is important. We need to organize for child care to happen.”

“**Amelia, Gil and Diane tell** of the world as it is. We need to work together with faith leaders,” said Andy.

She said the Spokane Alliance’s work on these issues is in its infancy, and there is need to listen to stories to create concrete workable solutions.

John Patberg, second year medical student at Riverside, said that in college he burned out by focusing on activism and social justice. He gave up on

community-level changes and decided to focus on changing individuals one at a time. Early in medical studies, he took a community organizing class led by the Spokane Alliance. He learned about the need to address patients’ communities to change their conditions.

That reminded him that of the need to work collectively to build winnable solutions.

Shelly Kornmeyer, who is in the grocery business, said that if her four-year-old child is sick, she or her husband has to stay home and lose pay, and then possibly get sick.

Jody Harmon, an elementary school counselor, hears from staff and families struggling to find child care. If a child is sick, the parent loses pay. One family had an older child stay at home to care for the younger children. The fifth grader was a good student but missed so much that his work fell behind. The mother said it was better than being homeless.

Tom said the Alliance Sick Pay Team met with 12 businesses and nonprofits that offered paid sick safe family leave. The small business owners finds that providing sick leave for employees improves their wellbeing. When businesses that rely on relationships, it means workers treat customers and co-workers well.

Stacie Wenzel of the Spokane Regional Health District said that if food handlers are ill, they spread disease and it is a public health issue.

Tom said that sick safe family “is not a job killer, it’s a common-sense policy.”

Ben Stuckart committed to partner to help make safe sick family leave a policy for the city.

Andy concluded, “The Spokane Alliance dreams big. We organize to improve the quality of life for all.”

For information, call 509-624-1366.

Young Adults are ready for year of service

Justice leadership interns begin at four sites

Four young adult interns are diving into a year of service and learning with the Justice Leadership Program (JLP) of the Pacific Northwest Conference. It is third year in which interns will advocate and organize for faith-inspired justice with partner agencies and UCC churches.

The interns are living in intentional community in an apartment at All Pilgrims Christian Church on Capitol Hill.

"They have created a covenant for their community and been commissioned to serve at their UCC partner churches," said Elizabeth Dickinson, JLP program manager.

"They have already attended City Council meetings, registered people to vote and accompanied people without homes in learning to advocate effectively with policy makers," she said.

As the interns began their 11 months of working with nonprofits doing justice, they had orientations in Seattle with their agency sites, Church Council of Greater Seattle, Faith Action Network, Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness and Washington Low Income Housing Alliance.

The three host churches in which they will serve in leadership positions are All Pilgrims, Keystone UCC and Plymouth UCC in Seattle.

They work with Justice Leadership Program staff, the Rev. Rich Gamble, Lauren Cannon and Elizabeth.

Fall classes with the program begin in October. They will meet weekly with PNC church members and friends in classes to study the intersection of faith and justice.

The interns will also attend The People's Institute Northwest's workshop, Undoing Racism in November.

The new interns are Amber Dickson, who will serve with



Hillary Coleman

Keystone and the Faith Action Network (FAN); Hillary Coleman, who will work with All Pilgrims Christian and Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (SKCCH); Emmanuel Mancilla, who will work with Plymouth and the Church Council of Greater Seattle (CCGS), and Honah Thompson who serves with Plymouth and the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance.

The 2014-15 interns come from varied backgrounds.

Amber attended Seattle Pacific University, graduating with a degree in psychology. While there, she was an academic mentor for college freshmen and a tutor for the general psychology course. These experiences and others have shaped her desire for education reform as well as making higher education more accessible.

She believes this year will be an opportunity to gain practical skills for working towards these changes in education.

Through working with FAN, she seeks to expand her awareness of the issues and policies that impact Washington State.

"I also hope to restore my belief that faith communities can produce great works. The Faith Action Network is a ex-



Amber Dickson

ample of doing just that," said Amber, who anticipates exploring her faith through Keystone UCC.

Emmanuel is looking forward to living in the lively area of Capitol Hill and being part of conversations on justice advocacy issues in Seattle.

He grew up in Tacoma and recently graduated from Seattle Pacific University (SPU) with a major in sociology and minor in theological reconciliation.

At SPU, he was involved in intercultural initiatives and student government as vice president of Intercultural Affairs. He was president of the Latino Club, worked on creating SPU's first Reconciliation Summit, and was involved in both the Multi Ethnic Programs and the John Perkins Center for leadership in community development.

"My hope is to gain a better understanding of how to preach a Gospel that is stronger than race, economic standing and skin color," he said, pointing out that civil rights activist John Perkins urged preaching a reconciled gospel.

Hillary grew up in Lake Forest Park and spent much of her time in Seattle while participating in the life of University Congregational UCC.



Emmanuel Mancilla



Honah Thompson

Photos courtesy of Elizabeth Dickinson

She recently completed a double major in psychology and Hispanic studies at Connecticut College, where she also earned a certificate from a three-year program that focused on Public Policy and Community Action.

Hillary has a passion to work with others to create positive change. She believes in making sure that all community members are involved in policy creation, decision and implementation.

She learned about effective public policy while working with the Statewide Poverty Action Network last summer, where she was able to mobi-

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2013-14 interns shared insights from their year

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lize voters as well as support the SPEAK (Sharing Personal Experience as Knowledge) program, which fosters dialogue between state and local representatives and the people affected by policies voted on in Olympia.

"I hope to continue to learn how to maintain and further such relationships in policy making by collaborating with SKCCH and its member organizations to carry out their mission of ensuring safety and survival for people who are homeless and to end the crisis of homelessness in our region," she said.

Honah is using the internship to fill her gap year after undergraduate studies. She seeks an opportunity that will allow for continued participation in community while doing meaningful work.

She said she found that and more in this program that offers spiritual sojourning, justice leadership classes, church service at Plymouth Church, and an internship at the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance.

A native of Santa Rosa, Calif., she recently graduated from Chapman University with a bachelor's in sociology and religious studies with an emphasis in social work.

The 2013-14 interns are now on to new ventures.

Briana Frenchmore recently joined Plymouth Church and the Church Council of Greater Seattle, where she organized immigration and living-wage education and action programs last year through the Justice Leadership Program.

She is working as a bilingual paralegal with Bishop Legal, a small law firm in Normandy Park. There she helps clients, who have had personal injuries—many are Spanish-speakers or low-income—to recover just settlements for medi-



The 2014-15 spiritual sojourner is Sam Rennebohm of Prospect UCC, Seattle. As a stipended volunteer, he leads a weekly reflection time. Pictured left to right are Alison Eisinger, director of the Coalition on Homelessness, Denise Rodriguez of the Housing Alliance, and JLP staff Lauren Cannon.

Photo courtesy of Margaret Irribarra

cal treatment.

"This past year allowed me see the potential that Christian community has in offering an alternative vision for how we structure our societies: a world where all have enough and where we live together in cooperation instead of competition," she said. "I appreciated opportunities to learn of examples from Jewish and Christian communities throughout history that offer models and compel us to be agents to change unjust systems."

A meaningful part of her year was working with members of congregations to display banners that advocated "A Living Wage For All." The banners represent a congregation's commitment to engage in education and advocacy for a living wage, she said. Congregations are looking at their own living wage practices and engaged in advocacy in the public sphere. During June, 14 congregations in eight denominations lifted banners onto their houses of worship.

Karin Frank is currently in Nashville at Vanderbilt Uni-

versity Divinity School, where she is finishing her master's degree in religious studies and focusing on the intersection of ethics and public policy. Her year interning with Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light convinced her that she is considering environmental policy work.

"What a year! From my second day on the job, testifying at the Longview coal export hearing to touring a wheat farm in Ritzville, lobbying in Olympia, bringing people together around Earth Day at our 'Many Faiths, One World' event at Seattle University, building our new website and testifying at the BP Cherry Point Refinery hearing in Seattle, my time here has been well spent!" she said.

Margie Quinn is the operations manager at Facing Homelessness, a nonprofit in Seattle that seeks to remove negative stereotypes around homelessness. Through art, photo-journalism, storytelling and community support, Facing Homelessness raises awareness for those living without basic shelter. This fall, Margie is also

visiting local faith communities to discern the next step in her faith journey.

"A year ago, I moved from Nashville, Tenn., to Seattle. I was fresh from undergraduate studies, where I had learned to theorize and analyze the injustices in our communities," Margie said. "I had never advocated for these issues myself. The Housing Alliance showed me how to act out and speak up for issues that ignite me. I registered to vote, and voted three times this year."

She also helped facilitate sessions of the first-ever Emerging Advocates Program. From this, she learned how vital it is to build connections with folks affected by homelessness in order to understand the depth of the complexities of issues they face.

"I co-planned an interfaith panel for Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day, and I co-facilitated a storytelling workshop at the Conference on Ending Homelessness," she added.

Interns helped their hosts.

At All Pilgrims Christian, Margie helped develop an evening worship service called Night Song, participated in weekly Community Suppers for the surrounding community, and was an integral part of leading worship.

At Keystone, Karin developed an environmental advocacy curriculum for children.

At Plymouth, Briana organized an education series on immigration and helped spark congregational involvement in the living wage campaign.

Elizabeth invites all PNC churches to ask the JLP staff about starting young adult internship programs in their communities.

For information, call 206-320-0432, email jlp.elizabeth@gmail.com or visit www.justiceleadership.org.

Keystone members join People's Climate March

After a rousing Sept. 21 sermon on climate change by associate pastor Lauren Cannon, 18 members of Keystone UCC rode a bus to downtown Seattle to join the People's Climate Rally and March, said James Little, a member of Keystone's Green Team.

"At the rally, we applauded the speakers urging immediate action to address climate change," he said.

Their signs said: "For Our Kids, Solar and Wind, No Fossil Fuels," "Climate and Jobs, Two Crises, One Solution," "There is No Planet B," "Scientists Agree, Don't Be Fossil Fooled, Action Is Needed Now," "They Shall Not Pass, No Coal, Exports" and "Find a Solution, Not More Pollution."

Jim said their advocacy for urgent action to address climate change that day was inspired by congregational activities over the past nine months.

The congregation's growing involvement with climate change began in February, when Jim and Rich Voget attended a three-day Environmental Justice Conference led by Meighan Pritchard at Pilgrim Firs UCC Camp.

In May, Rich conducted a



Nick and Hannah Lott-Havey hold right side of banner. Dan Smith brought his children, Caleb, left, and Paisley, center.

Photos courtesy of Keystone UCC Facebook Page

study group on "Environmental Justice" for Keystone members.

In June, Rich, Jim and Lauren organized a Keystone Green Team and met weekly for 45 minutes after coffee hour.

The team set up three working groups: Advocacy, Church Sustainability and Personal Sustainability. Each group, plus Keystone pastor Rich

Gamble, and Earth Ministry intern Jessica Zimmerlee contributed elements to a 2014-2015 action plan, online at the bottom of KeystoneSeattle.org.

The advocacy group asked members to identify five friends to contact about advocacy alert announcements.

"When the Seattle People's Climate Rally and March

was announced to support the march in New York City, the Green Team met after church to watch clips of the movie, "Disruption," and plan sign making and logistics," Jim said. "Because our church is small, those marching were about half of those at church that morning."

For information, email littlejamesw@mac.com.

Mission partner lends insights on Turkey, Islam

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Alison said Istanbul has a migrant problem because it is seen as the gateway to Europe, which many consider the promised land. Many of more than 1 million Syrian refugees in Turkey are in Istanbul. Some have apartments. Others sleep on the streets. In the Southeast, they live in refugee camps or cities.

Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant pastors formed the Istanbul Interparish Migrant Program 20 years ago. Turkey's 100,000 Christians need ecumenical ties, she said.

In 2002, Turkey elected

a moderate Islamic party that changed the government from elite secularists, whose rule marginalized religions, including Islam. Turkey is 99 percent Muslim. The economy has grown since 1980, when the average income was \$400 a year. Now it's \$15,000.

Big on capitalism, Turks built thousands of shopping centers. In 2013, massive demonstrations erupted over demolishing a park to build another shopping center. Turkish news ran a documentary on penguins while there was violence in Istanbul.

Journalists were imprisoned. Reporters Without Borders ranks Turkey 154 of 163 countries in press freedom.

The population has exploded from 60 to 80 million with 17.3 percent unemployed.

"Women are still subjected to honor killings and abuse in their homes, and suffer underemployment. In Istanbul, a girl who is covered can be seen walking arm-in-arm with a girl who is not covered, which is encouraging," Alison said.

"Many tenets of Islam are about professing peace, reconciliation and forgiveness.

Christians, Muslims and Jews pray together and talk about God easily. It spreads into hospitality and a ministry of presence," said Alison. "My experience of Islam is Middle Eastern hospitality."

Alison works with Global Ministries until the end of February. Now there are 30 paid missionaries. Some are paid by institutions in their countries. The problem is our economy and diminishing funds in the UCC and DOC.

For information, email astendahl@gmail.com.

Youth event draws 300 to workshops, service, fun

Nearly 300 youth and adults from every conference in the region gathered for the Western Regional Youth Event at Seattle University June 29 to July 3 for worship, workshops, service projects and exploring Seattle.

About 100 youth participants from the Pacific Northwest Conference provided hospitality for visiting youth. The PNC group represented more than 19 churches, reported Tara Barber, who co-coordinated the event with Susan Andresen.

"We had a day of workshops—organized by Margaret Irribarra—that reconnected us to our faith, and challenged us to live our faith in our daily lives," Tara said.

The next day, participants went out into the region to participate in service projects at the Mountains to Sound Greenway, Food Lifeline, Mary's Place, Northwest Harvest and several other sites.

Kathryn Murdock, an alum of the Justice Leadership Program, made the connections with the work sites, and arranged for use of the Metro.

"Our third day was spent having fun in the city and at a local water park," said Tara noting that Audrey Ouellette planned the day.

The Rev. Dee Eisenhauer met a group on Bainbridge and hosted an island visit.

The WRYE Facebook page includes a photo of youth from Northern California Nevada Conference at the Space Needle on their way to the Just Living Farm in the Yakama Valley. They also joined in the Seattle Pride Parade.

Another group went to Pioneer Square, the Underground Tour and Pike Place Market.

"We were inspired by the music and speakers of the event," Tara said. "The band Lost and Found joined us, sharing their fun, faithful music, accompanying worship and offer-



Six Hawaiian participants led a WRYE worship service and taught a Hawaiian song.

Photos courtesy of Margaret Irribarra



Tara Barber, right, with the closing circle for PNC participants, thanking them for helping.



Youth join in games and activities to help them get acquainted with each other.

Photos courtesy of Nathan Fitz

ing a concert as well.

"The Rev. Julian (J Kwest) DeShazer preached and rapped, reminding us why we came—to love, serve, and fight injustice," she said.

Motivational speaker Hoan Do pushed participants past their inner critics to embrace their potential.

"Singer, songwriter Mary Lambert testified to the power of love and faith to carry us through hard times," Tara said.

"Waltrina Middleton, minister for youth advocacy and leadership formation with the national UCC Local Church Ministries, blessed us with her presence and invited us to the next National Youth Event at Walt Disney World in 2016," said Tara.

During the week, Hawaiian youth hosted a worship service teaching participants to sing a song in parts and sing the Lord's Prayer in Hawaiian.

During the Northern California Nevada Conference wor-

ship youth discussed how they "pass the peace" in their different churches. "It was a powerful week.

"A youth-led worship culminated in our closing service, where Liberation UCC sang, led a WRYE choir, the Rev. Brandon Duran preached, and the youth offered their prayers of petition, confession, lament, and praise," Tara said.

"We ended on an emotional high," she said.

"We had been sent out by our local churches to attend the event, and ended with being commissioned to go back out into our communities and change the world with our love and faith," Tara said.

WRYE coordinators Tara and Susan are grateful for all who helped with planning, made donations, participated and "loved this event into being."

For information, email barbertara@hotmail.com.



Youth painted a mural as part of a service project.