Church, ecumenical leader values that Fig Tree links local, national and global

As a storyteller, poet, church and ecumenical leader, Karen Georgia Thompson, general minister and president/CEO of the United Church of Christ connects with The Fig Tree as it writes stories that reinforce her work as a national and global leader.

“Stories make community and help us understand each other,” she said, speaking at The Fig Tree.

Karen Georgia, wondering if the founders knew that fig trees are steeped in ancient meaning and symbolize wisdom, success and abundance.

“The founders dared to dream of this fig tree, which is a blessing and continues to flourish,” she said. “May wisdom and success continue to be present as The Fig Tree continues to provide an ecumenical and interfaith space to support the ministries of many in this area and around the world.”

In 2009, Karen Georgia joined the staff of the United Church of Christ national ministries in Cleveland, moving from sunny Miami to the snowy, cold shores of Lake Erie. Two years later, she was called into ecumenical and interfaith relations. In that role, she became acquainted with Mary and with The Fig Tree, which regularly arrived at her office.

“I had no idea how or why it came, but I would read it through and find nuggets of information,” she said. “It helped me understand how the work I was doing as ecumenical officer was being amplified in the pews and in the world.”

As ecumenical officer, her role was to connect to other faith communities—denominations, church councils, world communities and interfaith partners.

“My work was on the national Continued on page 5

Artist creates graphic for Fig Tree 40th Gala

The Fig Tree partnered with Adam Bodhi, visual artist and Fig Tree advertiser, to design a graphic for its 40th Anniversary Gala. He developed it through a collaborative process with Fig Tree editors.

“It was a different way of working than I normally do. By collaborating, we created a graphic that represents unity, inclusivity, people coming together and building community—things that matter to me,” Adam said.

“It fits where I’m going and what I’m trying to build. It gives a visual of what The Fig Tree is about,” he said.

In using Canvas as a medium, Adam typed key words, then tried to find the images that would represent The Fig Tree vision.

“In the process, we depicted where The Fig Tree has been and where it is going, with people from many races, cultures, genders and ages, and with fruit and leaves in the leaves of the tree,” he said.

The Fig Tree printed it as a banner for the Gala, on the front page of the programs and on mugs for presenters and people honored.

For information, visit diamondandartworkscollective.com.

Staff see beyond teens’ scary ‘front’

By Mary Stamp

Bridget Cannon believes that every person she has met working with Crosswalk and Volunteers of America of the Inland Northwest has changed her in some way. “I have met many young people so that means I have made many changes,” she said in a recent interview marking her 25 years serving with Crosswalk.

Bridget, who is vice president of shelter services, started her career in restaurant, catering and deli businesses in New Jersey, moving every four years because she was looking for the next challenge.

Soon after moving to Spokane in 1994, she began working at a local restaurant and wanted to meet more than the people at work. She saw an ad that Crosswalk was seeking volunteers, so she signed up for Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

She began to volunteer in 1994, and soon moved into a job there. “When I first walked into Crosswalk, I saw young people who had not showered in a long time, had wackadoodle hairdos and body piercings in places I would never think of piercing,” Bridget described.

Bridget Cannon has spent 25 years at VOA’s Crosswalk serving street teens.

As ecumenical officer, her role was to connect to other faith communities—denominations, church councils, world communities and interfaith partners.

“My work was on the national Continued on page 4

Church, ecumenical leader values that Fig Tree links local, national and global

As a storyteller, poet, church and ecumenical leader, Karen Georgia Thompson, general minister and president/CEO of the United Church of Christ connects with The Fig Tree as it writes stories that reinforce her work as a national and global leader.

“Stories make community and help us understand each other,” she said, speaking at The Fig Tree’s 40th anniversary Gala on April 24. “In encounters, we do not remember the details, facts or data, but remember the stories because they humanize us.”

“Even though I live in Cleveland, I have known about The Fig Tree and Mary Stamp,” said Karen Georgia, wondering if the founders knew that fig trees are steeped in ancient meaning and symbolize wisdom, success and abundance.

“The founders dared to dream of this fig tree, which is a blessing and continues to flourish,” she said. “May wisdom and success continue to be present as The Fig Tree continues to provide an ecumenical and interfaith space to support the ministries of many in this area and around the world.”

In 2009, Karen Georgia joined the staff of the United Church of Christ national ministries in Cleveland, moving from sunny Miami to the snowy, cold shores of Lake Erie. Two years later, she was called into ecumenical and interfaith relations. In that role, she became acquainted with Mary and with The Fig Tree, which regularly arrived at her office.

“I had no idea how or why it came, but I would read it through and find nuggets of information,” she said. “It helped me understand how the work I was doing as ecumenical officer was being amplified in the pews and in the world.”

As ecumenical officer, her role was to connect to other faith communities—denominations, church councils, world communities and interfaith partners.

“My work was on the national Continued on page 5

Artist creates graphic for Fig Tree 40th Gala

The Fig Tree partnered with Adam Bodhi, visual artist and Fig Tree advertiser, to design a graphic for its 40th Anniversary Gala. He developed it through a collaborative process with Fig Tree editors.

“It was a different way of working than I normally do. By collaborating, we created a graphic that represents unity, inclusivity, people coming together and building community—things that matter to me,” Adam said.

“It fits where I’m going and what I’m trying to build. It gives a visual of what The Fig Tree is about,” he said.

In using Canvas as a medium, Adam typed key words, then tried to find the images that would represent The Fig Tree vision.

“In the process, we depicted where The Fig Tree has been and where it is going, with people from many races, cultures, genders and ages, and with fruit in the leaves of the tree,” he said.

The Fig Tree printed it as a banner for the Gala, on the front page of the programs and on mugs for presenters and people honored.

For information, visit diamondandartworkscollective.com.

Staff see beyond teens’ scary ‘front’

By Mary Stamp

Bridget Cannon believes that every person she has met working with Crosswalk and Volunteers of America of the Inland Northwest has changed her in some way. “I have met many young people so that means I have made many changes,” she said in a recent interview marking her 25 years serving with Crosswalk.

Bridget, who is vice president of shelter services, started her career in restaurant, catering and deli businesses in New Jersey, moving every four years because she was looking for the next challenge.

Soon after moving to Spokane in 1994, she began working at a local restaurant and wanted to meet more than the people at work. She saw an ad that Crosswalk was seeking volunteers, so she signed up for Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

She began to volunteer in 1994, and soon moved into a job there. “When I first walked into Crosswalk, I saw young people who had not showered in a long time, had wackadoodle hairdos and body piercings in places I would never think of piercing,” Bridget described.

Bridget Cannon has spent 25 years at VOA’s Crosswalk serving street teens.

As ecumenical officer, her role was to connect to other faith communities—denominations, church councils, world communities and interfaith partners.

“My work was on the national Continued on page 4

Church, ecumenical leader values that Fig Tree links local, national and global

As a storyteller, poet, church and ecumenical leader, Karen Georgia Thompson, general minister and president/CEO of the United Church of Christ connects with The Fig Tree as it writes stories that reinforce her work as a national and global leader.

“Stories make community and help us understand each other,” she said, speaking at The Fig Tree’s 40th anniversary Gala on April 24. “In encounters, we do not remember the details, facts or data, but remember the stories because they humanize us.”

“Even though I live in Cleveland, I have known about The Fig Tree and Mary Stamp,” said Karen Georgia, wondering if the founders knew that fig trees are steeped in ancient meaning and symbolize wisdom, success and abundance.

“The founders dared to dream of this fig tree, which is a blessing and continues to flourish,” she said. “May wisdom and success continue to be present as The Fig Tree continues to provide an ecumenical and interfaith space to support the ministries of many in this area and around the world.”

In 2009, Karen Georgia joined the staff of the United Church of Christ national ministries in Cleveland, moving from sunny Miami to the snowy, cold shores of Lake Erie. Two years later, she was called into ecumenical and interfaith relations. In that role, she became acquainted with Mary and with The Fig Tree, which regularly arrived at her office.

“I had no idea how or why it came, but I would read it through and find nuggets of information,” she said. “It helped me understand how the work I was doing as ecumenical officer was being amplified in the pews and in the world.”

As ecumenical officer, her role was to connect to other faith communities—denominations, church councils, world communities and interfaith partners.

“My work was on the national Continued on page 5

Artist creates graphic for Fig Tree 40th Gala

The Fig Tree partnered with Adam Bodhi, visual artist and Fig Tree advertiser, to design a graphic for its 40th Anniversary Gala. He developed it through a collaborative process with Fig Tree editors.

“It was a different way of working than I normally do. By collaborating, we created a graphic that represents unity, inclusivity, people coming together and building community—things that matter to me,” Adam said.

“It fits where I’m going and what I’m trying to build. It gives a visual of what The Fig Tree is about,” he said.

In using Canvas as a medium, Adam typed key words, then tried to find the images that would represent The Fig Tree vision.

“In the process, we depicted where The Fig Tree has been and where it is going, with people from many races, cultures, genders and ages, and with fruit in the leaves of the tree,” he said.

The Fig Tree printed it as a banner for the Gala, on the front page of the programs and on mugs for presenters and people honored.

For information, visit diamondandartworkscollective.com.
Out of 821 entries in 76 cat-
egories, The Fig Tree received a national 2023 Best of the Associated Church Press (ACP) honorable mention award in the category “Religion/Best in Class” for newspapers on May 17 at the ACP Convention in Chicago. Each year, the ACP, which has served religious communicators since 1916, honors faith communicators for the work with these awards for new and established newspapers, magazines, journals, websites, newsletters, books, and blogs. “The religious landscape has changed in recent years,” noted the awards announcement. “With Saints part of this summer and fall to do the scanning.” The Fig Tree is connecting with Shawn Schollmeyer of Washington Digital Newspapers, which invited The Fig Tree to archive its newspaper because of its cultural significance. There are costs for the project, including costs for Shawn to prepare the digital documents for The Fig Tree provides. “We welcome those who wish to help us raise $8,000 to complete the project during the coming year,” said editor Mary Stamp. “The files will eventually be available online to share our coverage since 1984.” For information, call 535-4112.

WorkSource consolidates one-stop aid

WorkSource Spokane One-
Stop Campus, which includes its campus at 140 S. Arthur St. to enhance access to services for customers. Effective May 31, services previously offered at Resource Center of Spokane County will will merge its resources with WorkSource Spokane, said Kevin Williams, division executive for system advancement. By integrating human services into WorkSource Spokane in one place, the program centralizes resources for the community from career development to tai-
ored assistance for re-entry, health care, working parents, job seekers and businesses, ex-
plained Mark Matrake, Spokane Workforce Council, CEO. For information, email kwil-
liams@spokaneworkforce.org.

Srvastvi nuns talk on ‘Choosing Harmony’

Four nuns from Srvastvi Abbey, located in the mountains of Nepal, are participating in a talk on “Choosing Harmony” at CRE-ATE Arts Center in Newport, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Mondays, June 3 to 24. The presenters, Ven-
erable Thubten Kangta, Dekyi, Rinchen and Montlam, have lived and trained with Abbey’s founder—Buddhist teacher and author, Venerable Thubten Cho-
der—“for many years.” In a times of uncertainty, har-
mony seems elusive, and sessions at short supply,” said Thubten. “Thankfully, there are practices anyone can learn to increase con-
nections to others, no matter how distant.” The Abbey monastics will share meditation and thought-training practices that keep the heart open and calm in difficult situations. The sessions include a short, guid-
ed meditation to relax, a talk, and services. Proceeds from the event will help us raise $8,000 to com-
plete the project during the coming year,” said editor Mary Stamp. “The files will eventually be available online to share our coverage since 1984.” For information, call 535-4112.

Fig Tree archiving project seeks funding

The Fig Tree has begun scan-
ning copies of the first 20 years of its issues that are not already in pdf format to make all issues available to the public. Washington Digital Newspapers, which invited The Fig Tree to archive its newspaper because of its cultural significance. There are costs for the project, including costs for Shawn to prepare the digital documents for The Fig Tree provides. “We welcome those who wish to help us raise $8,000 to complete the project during the coming year,” said editor Mary Stamp. “The files will eventually be available online to share our coverage since 1984.” For information, call 535-4112.
YMCA plans Healthy Kids Day on June 7
Healthy Kids Day from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Friday, June 7, is part of a national initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids and families.

For more than 30 years, the YMCA has hosted this free community event to inspire children and families to keep minds and bodies active through the summer and beyond.

The evening includes healthy activities that celebrate kids being kids with organization booths—including Spokane Valley Library, Boy Scouts of America, East Valley Community Action, Spokane Valley Fire Department, Washington Poison Control, S.C.O.P.E with Operation ID and Kids Helmets, Spokane Valley Parks & Recreation, Spokane Valley Fire Department and Second Harvest.

There will be games, prizes, face painting, a bouncey house, petting zoo, kite flying and a climbing wall.

The first 250 kids will receive a free T-shirt.

For information, call 777-9622 x 4290 or jsih@ymcainw.org.

SNAP’s Dad’s Day Dash is June 16
The 12th Annual Dad’s Day Dash, with the choice of a 5K or a one-mile Father’s Day fun run, will start at 9 a.m., Sunday, June 16, at the North Bank Shelter in Riverfront Park in Spokane.

The registration fee helps support SNAP’s more than 30 partners listed on the cover and inside cover of the 2024-25 Resource Directory.

For information, call 456-SNAP or visit snapwa.org/ddd5k.

Synod asks for funds for flood aid in Tanzania
Northwest Internment Synod (NWIM) Bishop Meggan Manlove is appealing for $34,000 to assist the companion synod, Ulanga Kilombero Diocese (UKD) in Tanzania, in recovery from a flood affecting much of East Africa.

Synod heard heavy rainstorms from March to early May led to losses of lives and livelihoods, displacements, evacuations and disease because of destruction of homes, crops, roads, schools, power lines and water contamination, according to UKD Bishop Renard Mtenji.

Meggan asked the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) congregations in the synod to take a special offering on June 9 for UKD Flood Relief.

“The funds will help pastors replant crops in the next growing season, help schools retain students whose parents have no room to shelter a family at that time, lift Lugula Lutheran Hospital resupply, fix inaccessible roads to the hospital and provide water treatment in nearby communities,” she said.

The Kilombero River Valley is a major agricultural region. Towns, homes, schools and churches that usually don’t flood in a rainy season became inundated. Fields at the Tumaini Semi-nary were submerged and buildings and roads were washed out.

In 2023, nearly 400 families were rehoused in new homes, but the road to the hospital is impassable, Meggan said.

For information, visit nwimsynod.org/tanzania-companion-synod-ukd.

Salvation Army collects funds for backpacks
The Salvation Army’s 15th Annual Backpacks for Kids event, with NomNom Convenience Stores, collects funds through June 30 to provide 4,000 K-12 students with free backpacks and school supplies.

Customers may donate when they make purchases or by adding their name to a flyer at stores in Spokane, Spokane Valley, Airway Heights, Mead, Deer Park, Liberty Lake and Coeur d’Alene.

Over the past 14 years, NomNom has raised $600,000 for Backpacks for Kids. Captain David Cain, corps officer of The Salvation Army Spokane, is impressed by the response.

Since the inception of Backpacks for Kids in 2010, The Salvation Army Spokane has distributed 57,000 backpacks to local young people. Backpacks will be distributed Aug. 14 at The Salvation Army, 222 E. Indiana Ave. in Spokane. For information, call 325-6810 or visit makingspokanette.org.

Habitat Blitz Build is demonstration project
For 23 years, Habitat for Humanity Spokane’s Blitz Build has drawn hundreds of volunteers for a two-week accelerated build that is also an opportunity to raise funds and awareness.

An event unique to Spokane, Blitz Build offers camaraderie to professional builders, sponsor groups and volunteers work with Habitat families to build safe, healthy and affordable homes.

Volunteer individuals and groups will join Blitz Build June 3 to 14 in the city of Spokane Valley.

“Blitz Build is an exciting time at Habitat for Humanity,” said downtown Spokane’s first-ever Pride Build Day at Blitz Build on June 10.

We invite local members of the LGBTQIA+ community and allies to help build inclusivity while we highlight the need for affordable homeownership for all,” Michelle said.

For information, call 534-2552 or email volunteer@habitat-spokane.org.

Second Harvest partners with food processors in the next few months.
For information, call 524-6678 or visit 2-harvest.org.

YMCA plans Healthy Kids Day on June 7
Healthy Kids Day from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Friday, June 7, is part of a national initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids and families.

For more than 30 years, the YMCA has hosted this free community event to inspire children and families to keep minds and bodies active through the summer and beyond.

The evening includes healthy activities that celebrate kids being kids with organization booths—including Spokane Valley Library, Boy Scouts of America, East Valley Community Action, Second Harvest, Washington Poison Control, S.C.O.P.E with Operation ID and Kids Helmets, Spokane Valley Parks & Recreation, Spokane Valley Fire Department and Second Harvest.

There will be games, prizes, face painting, a bouncey house, petting zoo, kite flying and a climbing wall.

The first 250 kids will receive a free T-shirt.

For information, call 777-9622 x 4290 or jsih@ymcainw.org.

SNAP’s Dad’s Day Dash is June 16
The 12th Annual Dad’s Day Dash, with the choice of a 5K or a one-mile Father’s Day fun run, will start at 9 a.m., Sunday, June 16, at the North Bank Shelter in Riverfront Park in Spokane.

The registration fee helps support SNAP’s more than 30 partners listed on the cover and inside cover of the 2024-25 Resource Directory.

For information, call 456-SNAP or visit snapwa.org/ddd5k.

Synod asks for funds for flood aid in Tanzania
Northwest Internment Synod (NWIM) Bishop Meggan Manlove is appealing for $34,000 to assist the companion synod, Ulanga Kilombero Diocese (UKD) in Tanzania, in recovery from a flood affecting much of East Africa.

Synod heard heavy rainstorms from March to early May led to losses of lives and livelihoods, displacements, evacuations and disease because of destruction of homes, crops, roads, schools, power lines and water contamination, according to UKD Bishop Renard Mtenji.

Meggan asked the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) congregations in the synod to take a special offering on June 9 for UKD Flood Relief.

“The funds will help pastors replant crops in the next growing season, help schools retain students whose parents have no room to shelter a family at that time, lift Lugula Lutheran Hospital resupply, fix inaccessible roads to the hospital and provide water treatment in nearby communities,” she said.

The Kilombero River Valley is a major agricultural region. Towns, homes, schools and churches that usually don’t flood in a rainy season became inundated. Fields at the Tumaini Seminary were submerged and buildings and roads were washed out.

In 2023, nearly 400 families were rehoused in new homes, but the road to the hospital is impassable, Meggan said.

For information, visit nwimsynod.org/tanzania-companion-synod-ukd.

Salvation Army collects funds for backpacks
The Salvation Army’s 15th Annual Backpacks for Kids event, with NomNom Convenience Stores, collects funds through June 30 to provide 4,000 K-12 students with free backpacks and school supplies.

Customers may donate when they make purchases or by adding their name to a flyer at stores in Spokane, Spokane Valley, Airway Heights, Mead, Deer Park, Liberty Lake and Coeur d’Alene.

Over the past 14 years, NomNom has raised $600,000 for Backpacks for Kids. Captain David Cain, corps officer of The Salvation Army Spokane, is impressed by the response.

Since the inception of Backpacks for Kids in 2010, The Salvation Army Spokane has distributed 57,000 backpacks to local young people. Backpacks will be distributed Aug. 14 at The Salvation Army, 222 E. Indiana Ave. in Spokane. For information, call 325-6810 or visit makingspokanette.org.

Habitat Blitz Build is demonstration project
For 23 years, Habitat for Humanity Spokane’s Blitz Build has drawn hundreds of volunteers for a two-week accelerated build that is also an opportunity to raise funds and awareness.

An event unique to Spokane, Blitz Build offers camaraderie to professional builders, sponsor groups and volunteers work with Habitat families to build safe, healthy and affordable homes.

Volunteer individuals and groups will join Blitz Build June 3 to 14 in the city of Spokane Valley.

“Blitz Build is an exciting time at Habitat for Humanity,” said downtown Spokane’s first-ever Pride Build Day at Blitz Build on June 10.

We invite local members of the LGBTQIA+ community and allies to help build inclusivity while we highlight the need for affordable homeownership for all,” Michelle said.

For information, call 534-2552 or email volunteer@habitat-spokane.org.

Second Harvest partners with food processors
Second Harvest is committed to leveraging the region’s agricultural abundance to end hunger, said Carrie Perry, senior leader at Second Harvest, in the recent newsletter.

“Our partnerships with local food processors enable us to transform perishable produce into shelf-stable foods, which are desirable for their ease of handling and shelf life,” she said.

“These collaborations are vital. Fresh produce is abundant but perishable and can be challenging to distribute before it spoils.”

By working with processors, Second Harvest ensures more food reaches people in need.

A partnership with Tree Top provides 120 tons of apples and converts apples into four semi-truck loads of applesauce that is shelf-stable, so it can be distributed over a longer period.

Another collaborative project was with potato farmers who donated 375,000 pounds of bulk potatoes to American Potato Company. They process them into two truck-loads of dehydrated, shelf-stable potatoes that are easy to store and use, she said.

Second Harvest seeks to increase production with Tree Top in the coming year and has a second round of processing planned with Basic American Foods in the next few months.

“We hope both ventures will continue to thrive for years to come,” said Carrie.

These partnerships exemplify our strategy to harness the abundance of local agriculture while addressing the shortage of shelf-stable food producers in our service territory. We are continually seeking to forge more collaborations to provide healthy, long-lasting food to those who need it.

For information, call 524-6678 or visit 2-harvest.org.

Family Promise seeks hidden homeless
Family Promise of Spokane is starting a monthly donation program, Homer’s Helpers, to help assure predictable finances for the program to provide the families it serves with a stable future.

Homer is also the name of the Family Promise truck that moves families into their new homes.

In 2023, 46.5 percent of homeless persons who were rehoused in Spokane County came through Family Promise of Spokane. That’s 193 kids and 102 families who now have a place to call home.

“Nearly one in three households in our service territory—reducing its carbon footprint,” Michelle said.

We invite local members of the LGBTQIA+ community and allies to help build inclusivity while we highlight the need for affordable homeownership for all,” Michelle said.

For information, call 534-2552 or email volunteer@habitat-spokane.org.

You donate $10.
We feed a family of 4.
It’s that simple!
To feed hungry Spokaneites, go to https://donordanor.org/carecampaign

PARTNER DONATE ORDER COPIES
There is still time to be part of the 2024-25 Resource Directory!
Crosswalk move near SCC was choice of the kids in the program

On its second floor of the new building, there will be a Supportive Independent Living program for 16-to-20-year-olds who need foster care but cannot find foster homes. Foster parents do not want older teens, and teens do not want to risk another foster family. We will serve 18 young people in transitional housing that is like a college dorm, where they have their own bedrooms but share living and kitchen space,” she said.

Those in the program, who are studying or employed, can live in a more stable situation than a night-by-night shelter. They can build adult skills in one to two years until they find an apartment and full employment.

For Bridget, the new building is her next challenge. She plans to assist through the construction, while funds are raised, and as the program is established.

“When I eventually retire, I’ll likely continue to volunteer with Crosswalk,” she said. Bridget has served on the Crosswalk board and as a program director. She has also worked on the new center’s design.

Bridget is now the executive director of the new center, which is a two-story building with 30 apartments. The center opened in December 2023.

“Crosswalk broke ground for the new building last year, and we have been working on it ever since,” Bridget said. "The new center is one block from the Young Adult Shelter.

“Crosswalk last year served 800 in the drop-in center with case management and in the school where they can earn a GED. In 2023, about 130 stayed in the night shelter’s 18 beds. The Young Adult Shelter housed 200 last year.

Crosswalk broke ground for Crosswalk 2.0 on May 28 to serve youth at a location across from Spokane Community College on East Mission, rather than downtown.

The new center is one block from the Young Adult Shelter. “When we started talking about Crosswalk 2.0, we consulted with the kids. I invited them to join me for coffee. I asked if we build a new Crosswalk, what would they want,” Bridget said. “They all said they did not want to be downtown where they are among people dealing drugs,” she said. “They wanted to be near parks and green space. They helped pick the spot, plan the architecture and programs, and design our logo.”

Bridget experienced many turnaround stories. In fact, many who once came seeking shelter are now employees.

Recently, she had a phone call from one of the first people she worked with as a case manager in 1999. He had been at Crosswalk for the age of 13 until he was 18, living on and helping take care of his mother. He and his wife chose to give a donation to Crosswalk, she said.

Very soon after, Crosswalk moved near SCC was choice of the kids in the program.

On its second floor of the new building, there will be a Supportive Independent Living program for 16-to-20-year-olds who need foster care but cannot find foster homes. Foster parents do not want older teens, and teens do not want to risk another foster family. We will serve 18 young people in transitional housing that is like a college dorm, where they have their own bedrooms but share living and kitchen space,” she said.

Those in the program, who are studying or employed, can live in a more stable situation than a night-by-night shelter. They can build adult skills in one to two years until they find an apartment and full employment.

For Bridget, the new building is her next challenge. She plans to assist through the construction, while funds are raised, and as the program is established.

“When I eventually retire, I’ll likely continue to volunteer with Crosswalk,” she said. Bridget has served on the Crosswalk board and as a program director. She has also worked on the new center’s design.

Bridget is now the executive director of the new center, which is a two-story building with 30 apartments. The center opened in December 2023.

“Crosswalk broke ground for the new building last year, and we have been working on it ever since,” Bridget said. "The new center is one block from the Young Adult Shelter.

“Crosswalk last year served 800 in the drop-in center with case management and in the school where they can earn a GED. In 2023, about 130 stayed in the night shelter’s 18 beds. The Young Adult Shelter housed 200 last year.

Crosswalk broke ground for Crosswalk 2.0 on May 28 to serve youth at a location across from Spokane Community College on East Mission, rather than downtown.

The new center is one block from the Young Adult Shelter. “When we started talking about Crosswalk 2.0, we consulted with the kids. I invited them to join me for coffee. I asked if we build a new Crosswalk, what would they want,” Bridget said. “They all said they did not want to be downtown where they are among people dealing drugs,” she said. “They wanted to be near parks and green space. They helped pick the spot, plan the architecture and programs, and design our logo.”

Bridget experienced many turnaround stories. In fact, many who once came seeking shelter are now employees.

Recently, she had a phone call from one of the first people she worked with as a case manager in 1999. He had been at Crosswalk for the age of 13 until he was 18, living on and helping take care of his mother. He and his wife chose to give a donation to Crosswalk, she said.

Very soon after, Crosswalk moved near SCC was choice of the kids in the program.
Continued from page 1

level and through Fig Tree articles, I had a glimpse into what was happening in Spokane. I realized our work in the national settings was making sense in a local community,” Karen Georgia said.

“I am grateful for that glimpse.”

Thirteen years later, The Fig Tree still comes to that place. Someone else is there, but she discovered she could read it online, so she stays connected to how the Inland Northwest “is living and creating the beloved community the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed about.”

Karen Georgia shared stories of being present for historic moments from 2011 to 2019, where there were stories of people talking about global, “I am grateful for that glimpse."

Karen Georgia pointed out that our experiences are more than local. “We are part of a global community and contribute to the experiences of others in the world,” she said.

In 2013, she organized the UCC delegation to the 10th Assembly of the WCC in Busan, South Korea. From Oct. 20 to Nov. 8, 25 from the UCC around the U.S. participated in meetings, worship and plenaries with 4,000 others.

“The power of a story and the emotion it can carry is so profound,” she said.

Karen Georgia shared one of her poems, “painting pictures to give insights on words and stories. Here is an excerpt: “Let them fly these words that are important,” she said, noting they are important.

Karen Georgia believes both written and spoken words have power and “the stories we tell create something as they go out.”

“We leave voice messages, trust to set a time to talk and manage voyeuristic living through multiple social media platforms, scratching at the surface of knowing each other and creating relationships for our lives,” she added.

“In so doing, we have lost some of the connections needed for creating a better world,” she said, returning to the power of story to paint pictures with words. “When we tell a story, we hope for safety. We hope to be heard. We hope the story will be received and affirmed.”

Karen Georgia pointed out that the power of a story and the empowerment that comes for both the storyteller and the listener. “Where do we tell our stories as the faith community? Who do we tell? What do we say? How does the story make meaning in our need to be present to challenge injustice as advocates, allies and activists?” she asked.

“Our ability to stand against injustice as people of faith is supported by stories,” she said. “Movements for justice in this country and globally are captured in stories of coalitions built, relationships forged and communities transcending differences to ensure that all are treated with respect and are able to live lives with full human dignity.”

UCC archives are full of stories about the civil rights movement, the Black Lives Matter movement, the women’s movement, the poor people’s campaign, the March on Washington and more.

“In these stories, we hear ways people came together to make a difference—stories of communities of faith answering the call to love faithfully,” Karen Georgia said. “In such moments, the hope for a world to come is made manifest. One of the most powerful places for stories is in places we experience as different. If we share our deepest learnings when we sit with others and listen to stories others share about their life experiences, we learn and we are transformed.”

“We get safety and value when we are nonjudgmental in the presence of a story and allow ourselves to be in the moment, listening to make meaning of what we hear,” she said.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.

Karen Georgia believes both written and spoken words have power and that “the stories we tell create something as they go out.”

“We leave voice messages, text to set a time to talk and manage voyeuristic living through multiple social media platforms, scratching at the surface of knowing each other and creating relationships for our lives,” she added.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.

Karen Georgia Thompson also spoke at Pacific Northwest UCC.
Elise DeGooyer seeks new avenues to continue commitment to justice

After 10 years as co-director and then executive director of the Faith Action Network (FAN) of Washington, Elise DeGooyer is seeking a new way to continue her commitment to justice. “Like any position we hold, it will likely be a calling in human services and justice work,” she said. “As executive director, I worked with the staff and board to gather people of faith and conscience to have impact on politicians and communities,” she said, “helping FAN live into being statewide and multifaceted.” The FAN Board will work with a transition consultant, Rose Waterstone, to survey the FAN network stakeholders and determine future leadership and directions with the goal of having new leadership in place by fall.

In 2014, Elise started working with FAN as co-director with Paul Benz, who focused on public policy. He has formed Partners for Social Change to continue his work. Her role with FAN has focused on administration, fundraising, development and finance. Motivating her desire to change policies, she brought passion from being program manager for children’s nutrition at Northwest Harvest statewide, from working with unhoused women at the Church of Mary Magdalene’s Mary’s Place and from a degree in liberation theology at Maryknoll School of Theology in Ossining NY, in 1991. “I have always sought to combine my faith with social justice and social change,” she said.

At FAN, Elise worked with Paul Benz and Kristin Ang, who built relationships with legislators to drive policy changes based on values and priorities the FAN board and staff established. To accomplish that, she helped FAN expand staff to 10—six full-time equivalency—to live into its goal of being statewide by hiring part-time regional organizers. They have expanded FAN’s presence in Spokane, Tri-Cities/Yakima and Wenatchee.

The idea to have regional organizers developed when FAN helped with the 2020 census outreach, and identified trusted local people as messengers to promote COVID vaccinations. Elise is proud of political changes she worked on with FAN, representing decades of advocacy. For her, ending the death penalty and removing it from Washington state law was a major effort of the faith community for many decades.

“The governor called for a moratorium. The Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional, but we needed to take it out of the law so another governor could not come and reinstate it,” Elise said. She was with a group of faith-based lobbyists when that law was signed, noting that one who had worked for that goal for 30 years sobbed at the accomplishment. “It shows the power of persistence,” she said. “Systemic change takes time and hard work.”

Another long-term effort bore fruit in 2024. The Working Families Tax Credit passed 10 years ago but was not funded until last year and has provided much needed cash to people.

“For many, they have been so many victories over the years, and it has been worth the effort,” she said, referring people to the accomplishments listed at fanwa.org/advocacy/legislative-agenda. In addition to reviewing action related to priorities of protecting the safety net, advancing immigrant and refugee rights, promoting economic justice, increasing affordable housing, addressing environmental justice, fostering civil rights, expanding access to health care and persevering for criminal justice reform, the page lists past legislative successes back to 2011. Those include passing police accountability bills in 2018, supporting missing and murdered indigenous women, and protecting renters from eviction and rent increases.

Every year, FAN requests more money for the Housing Trust Fund, money faith communities can access when they build housing on their property. FAN addresses many issues, Elise said. “The agenda develops out of conversation with FAN’s network, which is how we added climate change and environmental justice, youth mental health issues and gun responsibility,” Elise said. “We are responsive to what faith communities are most interested in.”

“It has been energizing and invigorating working with FAN,” Elise said. “I have met amazing people across the state whose vision and faith inspires us to do incredible things.” For information, call 206-625-9790.

Race Amity Day Picnic
Sunday, June 9, 2024
Spokane Grant Park
101 S. Arthur St., 99202
Garden Drive and S. Perry St.
11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
All are welcome - Come join us
Sponsored by The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Spokane

Elise DeGooyer reflects on her 10 years at Faith Action Network.

cause there was limited time for other social services to address systemic causes. More churches opened doors as food banks and shelters, and joined coalitions to address systemic issues,” she pointed out.

She returned to Seattle to work in human services and run a food bank at the multicultural St. Mary’s Catholic Church where many came for food and emergency services. After that, she helped start Sojourner Place, a shelter-to-transitional living program, sponsored by the Sisters of Providence.

Elise completed a master’s degree in liberation theology and cross-cultural ministry at Maryknoll School of Theology in Ossining NY, in 1991. “I have always sought to combine my faith with social justice and social change,” she said.

At FAN, Elise worked with Paul Benz and Kristin Ang, who built relationships with legislators to drive policy changes based on values and priorities the FAN board and staff established. To accomplish that, she helped FAN expand staff to 10—six full-time equivalency—to live into its goal of being statewide by hiring part-time regional organizers. They have expanded FAN’s presence in Spokane, Tri-Cities/Yakima and Wenatchee.

The idea to have regional organizers developed when FAN helped with the 2020 census outreach, and identified trusted local people as messengers to promote COVID vaccinations. Elise is proud of political changes she worked on with FAN, representing decades of advocacy.

For her, ending the death penalty and removing it from Washington state law was a major effort of the faith community for many decades.

“The governor called for a moratorium. The Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional, but we needed to take it out of the law so another governor could not come and reinstate it,” Elise said. She was with a group of faith-based lobbyists when that law was signed, noting that one who had worked for that goal for 30 years sobbed at the accomplishment.

“It shows the power of persistence,” she said. “Systemic change takes time and hard work.”

Another long-term effort bore fruit in 2024. The Working Families Tax Credit passed 10 years ago but was not funded until last year and has provided much needed cash to people.

“There have been so many victories over the years, and it has been worth the effort,” she said, referring people to the accomplishments listed at fanwa.org/advocacy/legislative-agenda. In addition to reviewing action related to priorities of protecting the safety net, advancing immigrant and refugee rights, promoting economic justice, increasing affordable housing, addressing environmental justice, fostering civil rights, expanding access to health care and persevering for criminal justice reform, the page lists past legislative successes back to 2011. Those include passing police accountability bills in 2018, supporting missing and murdered indigenous women, and protecting renters from eviction and rent increases.

Every year, FAN requests more money for the Housing Trust Fund, money faith communities can access when they build housing on their property. FAN addresses many issues, Elise said. “The agenda develops out of conversation with FAN’s network, which is how we added climate change and environmental justice, youth mental health issues and gun responsibility,” Elise said. “We are responsive to what faith communities are most interested in.”

“It has been energizing and invigorating working with FAN,” Elise said. “I have met amazing people across the state whose vision and faith inspires us to do incredible things.” For information, call 206-625-9790.

Race Amity Day Picnic
Sunday, June 9, 2024
Spokane Grant Park
101 S. Arthur St., 99202
Garden Drive and S. Perry St.
11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
All are welcome - Come join us
Sponsored by The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Spokane

Elise DeGooyer reflects on her 10 years at Faith Action Network.
Lutherhaven campers encounter creation and create community

A new climbing tower, a summer full of youth and family camps, 600 youth groups serving in the Silver Valley and new facilities are among the ways Lutherhaven will offer opportunities for campers of all ages to “encounter creation, create community and commune with Christ,” summarized Rebecca Smith, who is in her second year as executive director of Lutherhaven.

The 2024 summer theme is “Together!” “In life, one of the best sources of joy, authenticity and the formation comes from being in healthy community with one another, from being together,” said Rebecca.

The theme is inspired by Colossians 3:12-14: “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you; and over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

Rebecca commented that “some days, our world feels like a place where there can be more division than unity, and camp will always be a place where the mission remains the same. It is a space where all may gather to reconnect and experience abundant life, as together we encounter creation, create community and commune with Christ.”

“The Pacific Northwest Conference and the United Church of Christ receive funds to attend the camps.” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

Details on camps and dates are at lutherhaven.com/programs/summer-camps.

Rebecca expects that students from youth groups across the United States will come to Shoshone Mountain Retreat, Shoshone Creek Ranch and Camp Lutherhaven programs this summer.

“Last year, 521 participants volunteered more than 5,336 hours of simple, significant service through Idaho Servant Adventures,” she reported, referring people to learn more about Idaho Servant Adventures at lutherhaven.com/isa.

The new eight-bedroom lodge is a waterfront retreat center for board, pastoral and other weekend retreats, for community and environmental gatherings, and for day events such as family reunions and parties. It accommodates groups with eight to 38 guests.

For information, call 208-667-3459 or visit lutherhaven.com.

Lutherhaven campers gather by the lake for evening worship. Photo courtesy of Lutherhaven

N-Sid-Sen camp worship, discussion will focus on ‘Linked by Love’

N-Sid-Sen Camp and Retreat Center, a ministry of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC), is again planning its aqua and adventure camps as part of the 2024 summer sessions.

For four weeks, the camp is directed by volunteers from conference churches in the setting of woodslands, creeks and meadows with miles of shoreline along the east side of Lake Coeur d’Alene.

“We will welcome children, youth, families and adults from infancy to senior adults who come to explore, grow and renew in groups of 16 to 150,” said Pam Peterson, designated managing director. “Guests and campers come from a wide variety of backgrounds, faith traditions and community groups.”

Woven in with the year’s theme, “Linked by Love,” each camp will have morning watch, evening vespers and a closing worship. Activities include swimming, boating, kayaking, canoeing, paddleboarding, tubing, water skiing, hiking, field games, wacky games, arts and crafts, campfires, sing-a-longs and star gazing.

The first week, July 14 to 21, junior high campers in grades 7 to 9 will do a float trip down the Spokane River—an aqua camp tradition—and the fifth and sixth grade intermediate campers will have a Float day in the swim cove.

“Junior high campers come to rekindle old friendships and discover new ones, plus engage in meaningful conversations on the summer’s theme with peers and leaders,” she said.

To introduce camping to young children, N-Sid-Sen offers two camps: You and Me Camp from July 22 to 24 for an adult family member with a child or children in grades 1 to 4. Kids Camp from July 24 to 27 is for children in grades 2 to 4. You and Me campers in grades 2 to 4 can opt to stay the full week.

Both camps share meals and campfire time with Senior High campers, who are there July 22 to 27 and overlap with both camps to maximize use of the facilities.

Senior High camp also features the “aqua camp” Spokane River Float trip, tubing, boating, swimming and campfire time.

When multiple age groups are in camp at the same time, the sessions operate separately, and kids are in cabins with their age group, but there is mixed interaction during meals and campfires,” said Pam.

“Making a new friend, exploring trails, jumping into the lake may seem like simple fun, but, in reality, the campers are gaining critical social skills, independence and awareness of God and creation.”

The third and fourth weeks—July 26 to Aug. 4 and Aug. 4 to 10—are “Family Camps” for family members of all ages and generations.

In addition to the camps for children, youth and families, N-Sid-Sen has an Emerging Young Adults Camp June 14 to 17 for ages 19 to 35, a long weekend retreat for young adults to play together and explore ways God is moving in the world. It also includes time to do an optional service project, as ways to free time to enjoy the site.

“The Pacific Northwest Conference offers scholarships for those needing financial assistance,” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit website N-Sid-Sen.org.

Lutherhaven campers encounter creation and create community

N-Sid-Sen camp worship, discussion will focus on ‘Linked by Love’

The third and fourth weeks—July 26 to Aug. 4 and Aug. 4 to 10—are “Family Camps” for family members of all ages and generations.

In addition to the camps for children, youth and families, N-Sid-Sen has an Emerging Young Adults Camp June 14 to 17 for ages 19 to 35, a long weekend retreat for young adults to play together and explore ways God is moving in the world. It also includes time to do an optional service project, as ways to free time to enjoy the site.

“The Pacific Northwest Conference offers scholarships for those needing financial assistance,” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit website N-Sid-Sen.org.

N-Sid-Sen camp worship, discussion will focus on ‘Linked by Love’

Youth join game to keep their arms linked while eating a meal. Photo courtesy of N-Sid-Sen

The third and fourth weeks—July 26 to Aug. 4 and Aug. 4 to 10—are “Family Camps” for family members of all ages and generations.

In addition to the camps for children, youth and families, N-Sid-Sen has an Emerging Young Adults Camp June 14 to 17 for ages 19 to 35, a long weekend retreat for young adults to play together and explore ways God is moving in the world. It also includes time to do an optional service project, as ways to free time to enjoy the site.

“The Pacific Northwest Conference offers scholarships for those needing financial assistance,” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit website N-Sid-Sen.org.

Youth join game to keep their arms linked while eating a meal. Photo courtesy of N-Sid-Sen

The third and fourth weeks—July 26 to Aug. 4 and Aug. 4 to 10—are “Family Camps” for family members of all ages and generations.

In addition to the camps for children, youth and families, N-Sid-Sen has an Emerging Young Adults Camp June 14 to 17 for ages 19 to 35, a long weekend retreat for young adults to play together and explore ways God is moving in the world. It also includes time to do an optional service project, as ways to free time to enjoy the site.

“The Pacific Northwest Conference offers scholarships for those needing financial assistance,” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit website N-Sid-Sen.org.

Youth join game to keep their arms linked while eating a meal. Photo courtesy of N-Sid-Sen

The third and fourth weeks—July 26 to Aug. 4 and Aug. 4 to 10—are “Family Camps” for family members of all ages and generations.

In addition to the camps for children, youth and families, N-Sid-Sen has an Emerging Young Adults Camp June 14 to 17 for ages 19 to 35, a long weekend retreat for young adults to play together and explore ways God is moving in the world. It also includes time to do an optional service project, as ways to free time to enjoy the site.

“The Pacific Northwest Conference offers scholarships for those needing financial assistance,” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit website N-Sid-Sen.org.

Youth join game to keep their arms linked while eating a meal. Photo courtesy of N-Sid-Sen

The third and fourth weeks—July 26 to Aug. 4 and Aug. 4 to 10—are “Family Camps” for family members of all ages and generations.

In addition to the camps for children, youth and families, N-Sid-Sen has an Emerging Young Adults Camp June 14 to 17 for ages 19 to 35, a long weekend retreat for young adults to play together and explore ways God is moving in the world. It also includes time to do an optional service project, as ways to free time to enjoy the site.

“The Pacific Northwest Conference offers scholarships for those needing financial assistance,” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit website N-Sid-Sen.org.

Youth join game to keep their arms linked while eating a meal. Photo courtesy of N-Sid-Sen

The third and fourth weeks—July 26 to Aug. 4 and Aug. 4 to 10—are “Family Camps” for family members of all ages and generations.

In addition to the camps for children, youth and families, N-Sid-Sen has an Emerging Young Adults Camp June 14 to 17 for ages 19 to 35, a long weekend retreat for young adults to play together and explore ways God is moving in the world. It also includes time to do an optional service project, as ways to free time to enjoy the site.

“The Pacific Northwest Conference offers scholarships for those needing financial assistance,” said Pam. “Campers do not need to be associated with a United Church of Christ to receive funds to attend the camps.”

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit website N-Sid-Sen.org.
Camp Sanders’ new canon invites participatory leadership

Alex Flannagan, the new canon for camp, youth and family ministry for the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane, started two months ago and spent his first weeks at Camp Cross for the May 17 to 19 Labor of Love and May 24 to 26 Youth Love of Love camps.

As he worked with the volunteers to de-winter, clean and spruce up the camp for the summer season, he heard their stories of Camp Cross on the western shore of Lake Coeur d’Alene.

With registration numbers on trend with recent years, he is focusing on the June training of 12 staff members who will be there all summer.

“Leveraging our well-trained directors and volunteers who are leaders in their fields and consider themselves leaders of leaders,” he said, “is the creative sharing of how they can make it happen.”

Campers will enjoy hiking, boating, swimming, singing and campfires while building relationships with new and old friends and learning values of relationships, prayer, discipleship and service.

Previously, Alex worked 10 summers at Camp Huston with the Diocese of Olympia. He came there through the Camp America international exchange as a counselor and guitar player.

Alex, who grew up Methodist near Manchester, England, had studied politics and sociology for a year at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, when he met two young men with Camp America. After a summer at Camp Huston, he returned to study international hospitality and management at the University of Central Lancashire, graduating in 2013.

He returned summers to Camp Huston for 10 years and moved in 2018 to work as youth ministry coordinator with the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia.

During COVID, he worked as a camping consultant, advising Camp Blue Spruce, an overnight camp for children with food allergies; assisting Episcopal churches in youth ministry; leading two-mile Holy Hikes in Western Washington, and working with monthly Anti-Racism Collective Circles of Color on Zoom.

Alex said Camp Cross offers a two-night mini-camp session for young campers early in the summer.

July and August include one-week Intermediate Camp, Arts Camp, Outdoor Adventure Camp, Mid-High Camp and Senior High Camp, plus a Labor Day Family Camp and an Adult Weekend in September.

For information, call 624-3151 or visit campsross.org.

Camp Sanders will repair its tabernacle

By Sofia Sanchez - intern

This year Camp Sanders is raising money to refurbish and restore the camp’s 89-year-old tabernacle, which is used for gatherings. As of May 24, they had raised $104,990, two-thirds of the $150,000 needed.

Christy Gallogly, the executive director and manager of Camp Sanders for more than three years, hopes to have the tabernacle finished by next summer.

The walls are leaning and the building needs a new foundation.

Repairs are important because the camp will celebrate its 90th anniversary in 2025.

“We’re trying to have that tabernacle completed for a homecoming event next July,” said Christy, whose connection to the camp goes back to when she was a child.

She moved to Kansas City for a year at the University of Central Lancashire, studied politics and sociology, and moved to Kansas City for a year at the University of Central Lancashire, studying politics and sociology, and moved to Minnesota to study international hospitality and management at the University of Central Lancashire.

She returned summers to Camp Huston for 10 years and moved in 2018 to work as youth ministry coordinator with the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia.

During COVID, he worked as a camping consultant, advising Camp Blue Spruce, an overnight camp for children with food allergies; assisting Episcopal churches in youth ministry; leading two-mile Holy Hikes in Western Washington, and working with monthly Anti-Racism Collective Circles of Color on Zoom.

Alex said Camp Cross offers a two-night mini-camp session for young campers early in the summer.

July and August include one-week Intermediate Camp, Arts Camp, Outdoor Adventure Camp, Mid-High Camp and Senior High Camp, plus a Labor Day Family Camp and an Adult Weekend in September.

For information, call 624-3151 or visit campsross.org.

Tabernacle at Camp Sanders needs major renovations.

Photo courtesy of the camp

near Tensed, Idaho, plans a variety of camps, including a men’s camp and a women’s retreat held in April; Kids Camp, July 8 to 11, and Family Camp, July 4 to 7. In the fall, Camp Sanders hosts a 55+ Adult Retreat.

These events highlight the camp’s commitment to serving people of all ages and backgrounds, and providing opportunities for people to enjoy the rustic rural setting on 90 acres with a creek and small recreational pond.

The camp accommodates up to 175 people in dorms, cabins and bunkhouses. It also has 10 RV spaces. It rents the facilities to a camping consultant, advising Camp Blue Spruce, an overnight camp for children with food allergies; assisting Episcopal churches in youth ministry; leading two-mile Holy Hikes in Western Washington, and working with monthly Anti-Racism Collective Circles of Color on Zoom.

Alex said Camp Cross offers a two-night mini-camp session for young campers early in the summer.

July and August include one-week Intermediate Camp, Arts Camp, Outdoor Adventure Camp, Mid-High Camp and Senior High Camp, plus a Labor Day Family Camp and an Adult Weekend in September.

For information, call 624-3151 or visit campsross.org.
Ross Point engages, encourages and equips campers

Ross Point Camp and Conference Center continues its mission of engaging, encouraging and equipping people through Christ-centered hospitality in affordable facilities, be it for summer camps or the year-round use of lodging, meeting rooms, recreation facilities and community building. A ministry of Mission Northwest, serving the American Baptist Churches USA, the camp welcomes other denominations and nonprofits to the site purchased in 1948 on the Spokane River.

The age-group church camps run from July 14 to Aug. 3, with Middler Camp on site from July 14 to 17 simultaneous with Junior High Camp, which runs to July 19, followed by a weekend “My First Camp.” Junior Camp and Senior High Camp are July 21 to 26. Family Camp is July 28 to Aug. 3. Youth camps combine outdoor adventure with Christian growth, Christian education in the midst of God’s creation. Ross Point also offers fall and spring youth retreats for sixth to 12th graders plus couples, singles, men, women, family weekends and church retreats, along with renting its facilities to community groups.

Camp Journey, which is for children and families experiencing cancer provides a fun outdoor camp experience in a setting with trained oncology staff onsite. Camp Journey has a resident camp Aug. 4 to 10, day camps Aug. 5 to 8, and a family camp Sept. 14 to 15. For information, call 208-773-1655 or visit rosspoint.org.

Enrollment normalizes at UMC camps

Final preparations are underway to open the doors to summer programs in June at the four United Methodist camps—Twilight in North Idaho, Lazy F outside Ellensburg, Indianaola and Twinlow in North Idaho, Lazy F outside Ellensburg, Indianaola.

“Enrollment continues to normalize after the effects of COVID closures,” said Alan Rogstad, executive director of camping and retreat ministries. “The 2020 and 2021 seasons, when we canceled all programming, created an interruption in the continuity of families sending their kids to camp. We are still seeing effects of that. It is also manifest in hiring the 50 seasonal staff we need for our four camps,” he said. “As for many service industries, hiring enough staff is a challenge. Many camps underestimated the impact of the closures, but 2024 has been a return to our pre-2020 numbers.”

This year the popular programs include day camps, family camps and specialty programs, which have filled quickly.

“Traditional week-long overnight camps are slower to fill, but doing well, which is a good trend,” Alan reported.

“Nationwide, camps report a shift,” he said. “Families seem to want more flexibility in programs for their kids. Week-long or longer sleeper programs seem less popular than day camps, which have the option for parents to have their children opt-out for a day or two, then come back.”

In addition, he sees a trend for kids being enrolled in day camps for several weeks or more.

Another trend is for specialty programs offering a specific experience, as well as family camps where families come to share the camp experience together.

The PNW-UMC 2024 theme is “Building Blocks of Faith.” “The purpose is to give campers some context on why we believe what we believe,” Alan said. “Each day has a construction theme starting with the foundation and ending with an open house, because God’s love is meant for everyone. Along with a daily theme to do with construction is a Bible story. Campers have practical biblical stories to teach them the foundations of our faith.”

Children join in a team building activity at Ross Point.
Camp Spalding fills camps, plans to expand its facilities for more

Andy Sonneland, executive director of Camp Spalding for 34 years, reported that more campers were registered for this summer than ever before. Within the first 24 hours of camp registration opening on March 11, 850 registered.

“We have sold out camps and waiting lists without advertising,” he said.

As a result, Camp Spalding on Davis Lake near Newport is expanding its facilities to accommodate more campers. Last year they covered and screened a dining deck to seat 50 more people, adding to the existing seating of 250 in the dining hall.

“We are working on our waterfront area to expand usable space with 5,000 square feet of tiered patios, restrooms, a snack bar and new boat house,” Andy said.

In addition, Camp Spalding is planning to raise money from donors and camper families to build two more cabins next year.

“The Gospel is still good news, and it’s what we continue to share,” he said. “We continue to pursue the mission of this camp established long before I came.

“Young people still want to know and follow Jesus,” Andy continued. “Yes, camp is a blast. It’s a super fun week, but kids come back because they experience the presence of Christ and community with others who follow Jesus.

“It’s not the facilities or toys, but it’s coming to know Jesus more deeply and follow him more closely,” he affirmed.

Brief messages shared at campfires and follow-up cabin discussions look at life’s questions and “how the words and life of Jesus are relevant to the campers’ world.”

Andy said 83 percent of campers last year came from other than the historical constituency of the camp, the Presbytery of the Inland Northwest. Twenty years ago, most came from Presbyterian churches in the region. Most are from communities in the Inland Northwest. Camp Spalding offers two sessions for every age group. There are half-week sessions for second- to fourth-graders, and full-week sessions for grades five and six, seven and eight, and nine to 12. Other camps include a leadership camp and a family camp.

“We have nine weeks of programs for children, youth and families led by summer staff of 40 college and post-college individuals who serve as role models and mentors. For information, call 731-4244 or visit campsps.org.

Camp Gifford invites low-income kids

Ron Molina, Camp Gifford’s business manager and camp director since June 2023, is an ordained Church of the Nazarene elder who supports the camp’s mission of bringing low-income and struggling children and youth to a week of camp where they can experience God’s love and the Gospel message.

Thirty-four years ago, he moved from Southern California to the Inland Northwest to be manager of Pinelow Park Camp, operated by the Church of the Nazarene. He worked there 18 years, then 11 years as men’s chaplain with Union Gospel Mission and several years in the auto industry.

Brian Pickering, communication specialist at The Salvation Army Spokane, said that William Booth, who founded The Salvation Army in England in 1865, advocated for justice for those who are neglected, abused, poor and oppressed.

“We work on empowering children and youth through creating a safe and sacred space at camp, giving them refuge, shelter and respite where they can come to a saving knowledge of Christ,” said Ron.

Brian said The Salvation Army recruits children ages seven to 17 from its programs—Sally’s House and Stepping Stones—and impoverished communities to come to camp with scholarships that cover on a sliding scale, half of the $400 cost for a week.

For the last four years, The Spokane Review has helped raise funds through “Send a Kid to Camp.” Funds also come to The Salvation Army all year from donors.

The goal is to support 700 to 1,000 kids for six weeks of camp from June 24 to Aug. 2. Brian said that before COVID, 1,000 kids often came to camps.

“We are rebuilding the numbers, aware parents are slowly sending kids back to camps,” he said, noting that other camps are experiencing the same post-COVID dynamics.

Ron said that Camp Gifford has Discovery Camp sessions each week for children ages seven to 12 to spend time swimming, being in nature, doing arts and having community time.

Each week there is also a Wilderness Camp for 24 youth ages 13 to 17 who stay in a remote area of the camp in rustic shelters with no running water. They learn survival skills, do team building, hike, swim and worship in an outdoor chapel. Each week, there is space for 12 girls and 12 boys.

Ron, who is responsible for the program development, said there are openings for some of the 50 staff roles as program directors and counselors. Staff orientation is June 17.

Camp Gifford is open year-round for school groups, church retreats, business groups, outdoor education and more. Those groups renting the camp help support it.

Memorial Weekend, 260 of the camp’s 294 beds were filled with members of Pilgrim Slavic Baptist Church coming for a retreat. Brian noted that at 102 years old, Camp Gifford is the oldest Salvation Army camp in one location in the U.S.

For information, call 223-2511 or visit campgifford.com.

Emmanuel Family Life Center

“People Matter and We Care”

***Space Available***

Office Spaces/Meeting Rooms

Gymnasium Usage/Special Events

(In South Perry Neighborhood)

631 S. Richard Allen Ct., Spokane, WA 99202

Call (509) 443-4884 for additional information

Email: pbenjamin.eflc@gmail.com

NMC

509-456-0103

nwmediationcenter.com

info@nwmediationcenter.com

Have a Conflict?

We can help you work it out. Book a mediation today!

Mediation is for everyone. We can mediate many types of disputes.

- Divorce
- Parenting
- Neighbor
- Tenant-Landlord
- Business
- and many more

The Inland Northwest Unitarian Universalist Community

We are an intergenerational, progressive, and socially responsible congregation. Multipurpose services at 10:30 a.m. Sundays. Visit our website for locations and Zoom links. You are welcome here!

imuncc.org

Emmanuel Family Life Center

“People Matter and We Care”

Host Homes, Housing, Employment, www.nwmediationcenter.org

418 E Pacific Ste #102

SPOKANE, WA 99202

(509) 385-5286

Emmanuel Family Life Center

“People Matter and We Care”

909 W. 5th Ave.

Spokane, WA 99201

(509) 534-0370

info@nwmediationcenter.com

Call (509) 443-4884 for additional information

Email: pbenjamin.eflc@gmail.com

We can help you work it out. Book a mediation today!

Mediation is for everyone. We can mediate many types of disputes.

- Divorce
- Parenting
- Neighbor
- Tenant-Landlord
- Business
- and many more
Drummers and Dancers build legacy of cross-cultural understanding

By Marijke Fakasiekil

Grant Elementary School Drummers and Dancers celebrate their 50th anniversary of commitment to cross-cultural understanding and creativity from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Friday, June 7 at the school, 1300 E. Ninth Ave.

“It’s an important part of the East Central neighborhood, which has been and still is one of the most diverse in Spokane, with more and more recent students coming from around the world as refugees and immigrants,” said Kevin Cope, who has been Grant’s music teacher and leader of the Drummers and Dancers program since 1999.

In a video released in May, the founder, Margot Dries, who started the program in 1974, said she wanted children in Grant Elementary School to gain cultural experience, have a sense of belonging and set lofty goals.

For 25 years, Kevin, who was recruited to teach at Grant Elementary School from Glover Middle School because of his drumming experience, has trained several generations of students to work hard, set goals, practice weekly and perform authentic African dances comfortably in front of audiences.

At first Drummers and Dancers was for fourth to sixth grade students. Now third graders can join.

The program has grown over the years, using more African instruments and importing African fabric for dresses for girls and dance skirts for boys.

Performances take the group to the Fall Folk Festival, the Martin Luther King Jr. March, the Junior Lilac Parade and four to five school cultural events a year. They will perform for the 50th Celebration of Expo ’74.

The group, which includes 48 students this year, performs a diverse set of dances from cultures throughout Africa. They are accompanied by Kevin and students drumming—not a recording.

At performances, former students join the dance, “Vanati Go!”

The kids meet after school weekly to learn and practice dances.

“We make rehearsals positive. I have students stretch and work hard, and I tell them, ‘Well done!’ It’s a thrill to see the kids respond to applause and see their faces beam when high schoolers from Lewis & Clark cheer for them,” Kevin said.

While the group once learned from the leaders only, now they also watch videos of African dancers online. They are able to mimic them and use more authentic gestures and movements.

“We’ve added more energetic dances. Videos help with African dance warmups and help the kids understand what they should look and feel like, so they are now less stiff. They shake their bodies, lift their chests and move as African dancers,” said Kevin.

With Internet, they have also been able to share. Seven years ago, with the help of the Spokane Symphony, they did a live conference call with Kamehameha School in Honolulu, and shared dances with each other.

“They’ve also made the dances and program more interactive, inviting audience participation, teaching words of songs, children’s games and stories about African culture, and explaining what the dances mean and what culture they come from,” said Kevin.

Kevin believes education is important because there is much ignorance in the community and America in general about Africa and its people. Many learn misinformation from movies.

“It is easier for us to be kind to people if we understand where they are coming from,” said Kevin.

“For Africans, family is important and children are important. In many African cultures, taking care of children is the responsibility not just of parents, but also the whole community,” he said.

“Drummers and Dancers has introduced kids to the responsibility of family, showing how the custodian had let the kids in. After Kevin arrived at 9:30 a.m., he learned that the sixth graders ran the rehearsal, and the principal had watched them.

As adults, former students have ledjet students know the goals instilled have been crucial in their success.

One former student said it inspired her to study at Gonzaga University.

Because it is an important program for Grant Elementary School, Kevin always has taught new principals about Drummers and Dancers. He especially has to do that when there are budget cuts, and school administrators are tempted to cancel all school arts activities.

Several years ago, when it seemed that was going to happen, TEAM Grant, the Parent Teacher group, funded the program so it would keep going.

They have bought uniforms, provided support for participating in parades and volunteer as chapter presidents.

“It makes a difference to keep the program,” Kevin said.

The pandemic also had an impact. The program was not able to practice together for almost two years, so when they came back together, only two students had performed in public.

“We basically started over from zero by using videos of prior years,” said Kevin.

Joelene Garland, assistant director, and Kevin, taught the kids, but the kids also taught each other, showing how the dance movements should look.

“I believe in giving everyone a chance, no matter what their background is or where they come from,” Kevin said, “the kids just need someone to show them we are brothers and sisters.

With events in recent years, we need to celebrate our differences,” he said.

Kevin now also teaches music in some other schools, but he knows that at Grant Elementary he’s making a difference and having an impact on the kids’ lives, giving them something to work for.

This reporter, her two siblings and their third child were among others who have participated for two generations of Drummers and Dancers from the 1990s to 2019.

For information, call 354-2800, email grantdrummersdancers@gmail.com or see facebook.com/GrantDrummersDancers.
Thrive and library collaborate on housing and community services

Thrive International in Spokane launched a housing partnership with the Spokane Public Library in Northeast Spokane to provide 48 affordable one- and two-bedroom apartments for refugees and to respond to the local housing crisis.

On May 15, Thrive and the library announced plans to develop affordable housing and a shared library facility on 1.62 acres at 6980 N. Nevada St. in Northeast Spokane. The library plans programs to engage the community and provide services for residents.

“The partnership is a unique way to welcome refugees while addressing our affordable housing crisis,” said Lidia Pauline, director of housing at Thrive. “We seek to broaden our mission of empowering refugees to move from surviving to thriving while also contributing a community asset to enhance the lives of residents in Northeast Spokane.”

Elected officials, project investors, community members and representatives of partner organizations attended an event. “Innovative collaboration, like that between Thrive and the library, is what will help solve our affordable housing crisis,” said Mayor Lisa Brown.

Thrive, which was founded in Spokane in 2022, serves several thousand refugees and immigrants annually with housing, education and empowerment programs. In addition, the center offers women’s and youth programs.

For information, email nara@thriveinternational.org or visit thriveint.org.
Son being shot involves mother in efforts for police accountability

By Catherine Ferguson SNJM

Some people have a day in their lives that changes everything—their view of life and what is important, their understanding of their life’s work and their daily activities.

For Debbie Novak, a part-time real estate broker, wife and mother of four and grandmother of 10, who lives near Nine Mile Falls, that day was Jan. 7, 2019, when her unarmed 35-year-old son, David, was shot by a police officer.

To this day, hanging from the second story of her home is a banner saying, “Justice for David.”

The story of that night is similar to the stories of others who have been shot and killed because of police action. It occurred in a poor neighborhood. There was also alcohol involved. There was the suspected presence of a gun.

It was about 10:30 p.m. David and a neighbor didn’t know well were playing baseball in his front yard. David got a baseball bat and was hitting his beer-put truck making loud noises that some reports claimed sounded like gunshots. The neighbor called the police and said David had a gun.

Several officers responded to what they thought was an “active shooter” call. At a press conference later, the county prosecutor said the first officer heard what sounded to him like the blast of a loud shotgun.

When the officer arrived, he said he heard what sounded like three gunshots. Debbie said these sounds did not show up on his body cam footage, and neighbors interviewed later said they did not hear gunshots other than the officer’s shot.

He told David to drop the gun. David dropped the bat and turned to go inside his house. From 78 feet away, after being there less than eight seconds in the dark, the officer shot him in the back. David fell through the front door of his house and died.

In the investigation weeks later, the police said they thought there might be hostages or more people in the house.

What changed that day for Debbie was the loss of her son, and, perhaps as important as time went on, she had a growing sense that God was calling her to make a difference saving lives of others by researching how such tragedies happen, then working to make a change in police procedures and policies.

“I don’t know someone without faith and something to fall back on can face something like this. My family and my church have been so supportive. I feel God has put me here to do this work. The Bible quote ‘I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith’ inspires me,” Debbie said.

At first, she felt anger and frustration trying to figure out what actually happened.

In August, seven months later, the county prosecutor held a press conference to deliver his findings and announce that the officer would not be charged with any crime. The prosecutor did not notify her family of the press conference. Devastated, the Novak family filed a civil lawsuit, which eventually was settled for $4 million.

At a press conference announcing the lawsuit, Debbie said, “The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team had not released its findings to the family, nor had the prosecutor turned our phone calls, despite requests to be informed of findings prior to his press conference. One of the most difficult things was the lack of transparency of the Spokane Police Department. We couldn’t see the complete records, the body cam pictures or even the names of the other officers present.”

Through efforts since then, Debbie has hoped to see more changes in statewide policies to reduce police violence and increase police accountability.

Recently, however, she was appalled to read the report from the “Mapping Police Violence” Official Police Violence Database with data from 2013 to 2024. It ranks the Spokane Police Department as number 2 out of the 100 largest cities in the U.S. for average police killings.

This report indicates that the average number of police killings per million in those years was 10.0 in Spokane, Seattle, the only other Washington city listed, had an average rate of 3.9. Although David was white, the database indicates that in Washington State, Native Americans and Blacks are each four times more likely to be killed by police than are whites.

Workings through the Washington Coalition for Police Accountability (WCPA) for several years, Debbie said, “The coalition advocated for statewide policies to reduce police violence and increase police accountability.

The coalition, formed in June 2020, grew out of advocacy for Initiative 940, approved in November 2018. It changed laws related to police behavior. It changed the standard for justifiable use of force, put training standards for de-escalation into state law, required first aid to be rendered at the scene, required that criminal investigations of police use of force be separate from the involved agency, and mandated that implementing these policies include the impacted community.

The coalition provides Debbie with a place to work with other advocates and with families of others killed by police to make changes needed to save the lives of people at risk of police violence.

Her research into changes in policies related to policing follows the work of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission.

“Two of the main issues in police accountability are training for de-escalation and lead-ership,” she explained. “There is no single training class on de-escalation. There are classes on different aspects of de-escalation, like crisis intervention and shoot-don’t shoot situations but no class brings all the elements together.”

Debbie believes that, if the officer involved had been better trained in de-escalation, her son would not have been shot and killed in the few seconds after the officer arrived.

“If police would use tools they have on hand, which taxpayer money has purchased—tasers, rubber bullets and pepper spray—lives would be saved,” she said.

Debbie highlighted some legislation she believes helps decrease police violence in Washington, legislation the WCPA promoted.

In 2021, Senate Bill 5951 added more civilians to the Criminal Justice Training Commission and gave them more oversight for use-of-force incidents.

In 2021, House Bill 1054 limited police to engaging in a high-speed pursuit only if there is “probable cause” to arrest a person in a vehicle for committing a specific violent crime such as murder, kidnapping, drive-by shooting or rape.

“This restriction helped decrease death and injury caused by chases,” Debbie said. “In this law, was weakened to allow chases there was a ‘reasonable suspicion.’”

In 2024, Governor Jay Inslee signed into law a bill prohibiting hog-tying, a practice that can cause death by suffocation.

Debbie pointed out that for the third year in a row the legislature failed to pass legislation to establish an independent prosecutor at the state level when police violence occurs.

Now, when a death follows a confrontation with a police officer, it prompts an investiga-
tion by the county prosecuting attorney and that prosecutor determines if charges are warranted.

“There is a conflict of interest,” Debbie said. “The local prosecutor usually works closely with and has a relationship with police officers. We want an inde-
pendent state prosecutor.”

A state prosecutor would share authority with county prosecuting attorneys to charge police officers with misuse of deadly force. If both offices seek jurisdic-
tion in a case, the bill calls for instructing the courts to determine “whose prosecution will best promote the interests of justice.”

“We will bring this bill back next year. It failed by only three votes in 2024,” she said.

Meanwhile, Debbie and other advocates for police accountability continue to raise conscious-
ness in the local community.

They are holding a march from noon to 1:30 p.m., Friday, June 7, at the Spokane County Courthouse to call for police accountability.

For information, email debnok-
vakcreel@gmail.com.

Delve deeper... Explore and discover...
When the Church shows up in concrete acts are targeted toward any community, we of Spokane would match donations to and violence. I said the Episcopal Diocese stand together in love against acts of hate day. I was happy to do this. At the press mural in Spokane and a request that I invite proposals during May. She also (HEART) to use the HB-1590 funds for to fill budget gaps.

The Church does not always show up with concrete acts of love. At times, It is about anyone who recreates or think about it, even myself. As we joined, the municipality showed us a different mindset.” The frequency of evictions, I have written to The Fig Tree for its approach. They don’t just point out problems or conflict that is happening in Spokie and the larger community but also focus on the idea of peace or solutions journalism. This journalism offers some solutions. It helps the reader understand a full picture. Emma Maple Whitmore

I recently wrote a book called, What Faith and Its current chapter on “What Faith Is.” Mitch Finley-ditor, counselor and author

I can’t take care of all the problems in the world, but I can do something. The Fig Tree shows us that God has many people doing what needs to be done in this world to give people hope. It helps us see how many people are trying to bring shalom to the whole community. I’m not the only one. It gives me hope to know that people is taking to correct the injustices and things bringing strife to people’s lives. We’re called to be God’s servants. There’s plenty of freedom and plenty of ways to get involved. Marilynne Mueller - Shalom United Church of Christ/Mennonite

The Fig Tree does a remarkable job of being a bridge— with inspirational stories. It has been a gift to the religious communities here in the Inland Northwest as well as the people and families of Spokane. It helps us see how many people are trying to bring shalom to the whole community. I’m not the only one. It gives me hope to know that people is taking to correct the injustices and things bringing strife to people’s lives. We’re called to be God’s servants. There’s plenty of freedom and plenty of ways to get involved.

In my ministry with couples and families, it’s easy to feel I’m in the wood—acting alone. It’s good to know I am not alone, that we are all doing similar work. The Fig Tree gives me a way to virtually visit many churches and nonprofit to find information I would otherwise not know. I know many people are asking about somebody I know, I learn more than I knew before about who that person is and what they are going through. I am amazed in faith makes a difference and is part of a larger picture.

Kathy Finley - Spiritual director. counselor and author

I can’t take care of all the problems in the world, but I can do something. The Fig Tree shows us that God has many people doing what needs to be done in this world to give people hope. It helps us see how many people are trying to bring shalom to the whole community. I’m not the only one. It gives me hope to know that people is taking to correct the injustices and things bringing strife to people’s lives. We’re called to be God’s servants. There’s plenty of freedom and plenty of ways to get involved.
June 2-8: Spokane Folklore Society presents Samba to the Beat, 8:30 p.m. to 4 a.m., 509-221-1643.
June 2-3: Spokane Valley Eagles 11th Annual Fly-In, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., 456-8038.
June 2-4: Art on the Green, North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene, 5:30 to 9 p.m., 661-2424.
June 2-7: July 19, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., for rentals of the 50th Anniversary Community Stage & Vendor Village, Riverfront Park, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., 625-6600.
June 2-8: 50th Anniversary Celebration, Central Library, 906 E. Main, 1 to 3 p.m., 543-3300.
June 2-10: 1906 E. Mission Ave.
June 2-11: Meditation Retreat with Ajahn Nisabho, Harmony Woods Retreat Center, 11507 S. Stone, M-Th 8:30 to 3:30, F 8:30 a.m. to 1:30, 509-662-8701, keey@harmonywoods.org.
June 2-17: The Fig Tree, 1906 E. Mission Ave.
June 2-23: 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., 456-8038.
June 2-24: 2010 W. Sprague, 4:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
June 2-30: Freedom Fair, West Central Human Relations Coalition, 25 W. Main, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 509-922-8428.
June 2-30: Echoes of Expo, Spectrum Center, Community Building, 25 W. Main, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 509-662-6036.
June 2-30: Summer Luncheon, Best Western Plus Coeur d’Alene, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., 661-2424.
June 2-30: South Perry Farmer’s Market, 924 S. Perry, 3 to 7 p.m., 990-2924.
June 2-30: Five Steps to Courageous Communication, South Perry Business District, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
June 2-30: IFRP Meet & Greet, Sravasti Abbey, Newport, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
June 2-30: Borrowing from the Earth, Idaho Penitentiary, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
June 2-30: Elephant Sighting, Adult Books, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 
June 2-30: Meditation Retreat with Ajahn Nisabho, Harmony Woods Retreat Center, 11507 S. Stone, M-Th 8:30 to 3:30, F 8:30 a.m. to 1:30, 509-662-8701, keey@harmonywoods.org.
June 2-30: South Perry Farmer’s Market, 924 S. Perry, 3 to 7 p.m., 990-2924.
June 2-30: Five Steps to Courageous Communication, South Perry Business District, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
June 2-30: IFRP Meet & Greet, Sravasti Abbey, Newport, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
June 2-30: Borrowing from the Earth, Idaho Penitentiary, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
June 2-30: Meditation Retreat with Ajahn Nisabho, Harmony Woods Retreat Center, 11507 S. Stone, M-Th 8:30 to 3:30, F 8:30 a.m. to 1:30, 509-662-8701, keey@harmonywoods.org.
June 2-30: South Perry Farmer’s Market, 924 S. Perry, 3 to 7 p.m., 990-2924.
June 2-30: Five Steps to Courageous Communication, South Perry Business District, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
June 2-30: IFRP Meet & Greet, Sravasti Abbey, Newport, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
June 2-30: Borrowing from the Earth, Idaho Penitentiary, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
June 2-30: Meditation Retreat with Ajahn Nisabho, Harmony Woods Retreat Center, 11507 S. Stone, M-Th 8:30 to 3:30, F 8:30 a.m. to 1:30, 509-662-8701, keey@harmonywoods.org.
June 2-30: South Perry Farmer’s Market, 924 S. Perry, 3 to 7 p.m., 990-2924.
June 2-30: Five Steps to Courageous Communication, South Perry Business District, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
June 2-30: IFRP Meet & Greet, Sravasti Abbey, Newport, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
June 2-30: Borrowing from the Earth, Idaho Penitentiary, 500 N. Division, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., 622-0869, stonerecep@mlkspokane.org.
It is also on the historic registry.

Wendy said, the church continued Assisi and asked Cutter to build it.

build the present building at 33rd Ave., across the street from Amsterdam, NY, donated $30,000 and three lots to Spokane from Amsterdam, NY, and Mary Birch, who came to Center, Leadership Spokane, the years, the space was used by

Seymour and Mary did not live to see it. The large, south-facing rose window is dedicated to Mary,” said Wendy.

In 1906, a group of Baptists founded not just as a church but as a church and community center.

In 2016, Wendy, whose home is on the historic registry, put the church on the registry as a Spokane Historic Landmark. What it summarized the church’s history.

In 1906, a group of Baptists and Methodists started a Sun- day school. They met in a small, wooden schoolhouse at 37th and Hatch. In 1906, Methodists outnumbered Baptists and voted to organize a Methodist Episco- pal Church, which built a white frame house at 301 E. 33rd Ave., across the street from the present building.

By 1921, the church outgrew that building. Members Seymour and Mary Birch, who came to Spokane from Amsterdam, NY, donated $30,000 and three lots to build the present building at 33rd and Grand. From their travels in Europe, they envisioned a church like the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi and asked Cutter to build it.

Construction began in 1923 and was completed in 1924, but Seymour and Mary did not live to see it. The large, south-facing rose window is dedicated to Mary,” said Wendy.

With the post-war baby boom, Wendy said, the church continued to grow and raised funds to build its mid-century modern style education wing in the late 1950s. It is also on the historic registry.

Plans for a new sanctuary to seat 500 to 700 people ended because the church split. Some members in the John Birch So- ciety (no relation to Seymour) thought the Methodist Church was involved in communism. Other members said their Book of Discipline called Meth- odists to support widows and orphans, said Wendy. Many left the church and the funds were not raised for the new sanctuary.

“Now we are an older con- gregation and have no Sunday school, but many people use the church and education wing. Renting rooms out helps keep us afloat. The chapel in the educa- tion wing is good for small wed- dings,” said Wendy, who moved to Spokane when her father was at the Naval Supply Station.

She returned in 1972, trained as a medical technologist at Deaconness Hospital and served there 38 years until retiring 13 years ago. She has been a volunteer since 1966, and since sixth grade in Boise, where she attended Boise State University and earned a bachelor’s in art. After that, she earned a bachelor’s degree in microbiology at the University of Idaho in Moscow. There she met her husband.

After moving to Spokane, they visited churches and chose Manito Methodist.

Sue and Greg became active while their two children were in the parent-child cooperative pre- school. After moving to Spokane from Phoenix, they built a home four blocks from the church.

Sandy, who grew up in Illi- nois, Michigan, Iowa and Mis- souri, entered ministry late, studying mostly online at Iliff School of Theology in Denver and graduating in 2014. She served a church in Gird- wood, Alaska, for two years and then a church in Tumwater near Olympia for six years.

Her previous career, after earn- ing a master’s degree in business in 1988 at Loyola University in Chicago, was as a business manager for Michigan State Uni- versity’s College of Osteopathic Medicine. She grew up Baptist but became Methodist after mar- rying her husband, Paul, 33 years ago. He is a retired physicist.

Sue repeated that Manito United Methodist Church was founded not just as a church but also as a community center.

“We always have community groups using the building. We have rented to nonprofits and others who pay as they are able, even when our Sunday school rooms were packed on Sundays,” Sue said.

“We look for ways to connect with the community.

“Now we seek to be ecologi- cally minded, reducing use of paper products and caring for our land by converting a por- tion to SpokaneScape to reduce grass, use less water and create habitats for birds and insects,” she continued.

A city designer is proposing ways to make the land eco- friendly. Boy Scouts will help to redo the landscape with native plants, a dry creek bed with rocks and a drip irrigation system.

“It’s part of our ministry to embrace creation care and cli- mate justice,” said Sandy.

Five homes on 33rd are on the SpokaneScape program.

“It has been a learning experi- ence for members,” she said.

Sandy led a class series in December and January on the book, Wake Up World by Robert and Anita Gearhart.

For the class, Sue offered a session on SpokaneScape. She and two others reported on a three-day Global Board of Dis- cipleship Earthkeepers class on creation care and climate justice they attended in October.

“We seek to understand about greenhouse gas, to mitigate the damage and do better for the future,” she said.

“We want to be better stewards of our natural resources and pro- tect the earth,” said Sandy. “We are recycling more trash and no longer use paper plates, cups and napkins, and plastic utensils.

Sue sewed 80 napkins, which members take turns laundering.

“We invite those using the building to follow our example, ” she said.

Sandy said 400 people use the buildings weekdays.

Manito United Methodist modeled on St. Francis Basilica.

• Manito Coop, an ECEAP program and M & M Tots use space on different floors and share an outdoor playground.

• The Spokane Youth Sym- phony practices three Mondays.

• A GA groups use the church at different times on different days.

• The YMCA has a summer youth program.

“We’re a busy place during the week,” she said. “Part of our mission is to be a place where people can come and feel, the people where we model a culture of abiding and belonging to one another and to Christ. We seek to nourish people’s bodies, minds and souls by being a place that reflects Christ’s love.”

“Like most churches, we seek to be fiscally responsible. We have an endowment but seek to live within our budget, so we do not deplete our reserves,” Sandy said.

Sue said many but not all groups using the building pay what it costs to use the rooms as part of Manito’s ministry.

Sandy said another part of the church’s outreach is its music program, offering concerts. Gonzaga assistant professor of voice Jadrian Tarver is Manito’s music director. He leads the choir of 12 that includes two SpokaneScape groups.

On Sunday, May 19, the church hosted a concert featuring