Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation. There’s also more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.

Darlene McCarty has Z-fans from around the world, but there’s more to her than her fame having played Nana Anuk, an Alaskan grandma, for three seasons, beginning in 2016, in the SyFy TV show Z Nation.
The Fig Tree

Lohre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America spoke at Cooperation, the event built on a meeting in Cardiff, Wales, in 2020 with 20 advisers from WCC member churches from across the world. The theme of the event is “The Language of Faith: How Language of Our Faith Can Actively and Prophetically Engage the Public Life”

The publication on the theme offers biblical and theological reflections inspired by 2 Cor. 5:14 — “For the love of Christ urges us on” — amid critical issues confronting churches and humanity.

“While the language is our faith can actively and prophetically engage the public life, the language of our faith can also be a means for us to confront and engage the public life,” said the Rev. Ioan Sauca, the WCC’s interim general secretary. “It opens possibilities and concentrates on what it means for churches and for Christian unity to confront together the world’s challenges and witness to Gospel values. It does not stop there, as the purpose of God’s love in Christ is for the whole world. It means open and care for the whole world, and dialogue and cooperation with people of other faiths or of no faith who share the same values.”

Corbin Center plans events for 2023

In 2023, Corbin Senior Activity Center plans to engage community members to enrich and empower their lives through wellness, social, educational, and cultural programs while breaking down barriers to health, social, and inclusion of people of all ages, races, and abilities.

The Salvation Army has funds for utilities

Gonzaga University’s School of Law and Environmental Studies is seeking proposals for the 2021 Environmental Justice Symposium on “Environmental Justice: Race, Power, and the Environment,” from 1 p.m. Tuesday to 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 23 and 24.

Environmental Justice Symposium set

In honor of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day in 2020, Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson launched an Environmental Justice Initiative for the state. The initiative convenes an Environmental Justice Symposium with Gonzaga University to discuss the environmental justice issues affecting various communities in the state and work to address these issues.

In addition to bringing together academics, scientists, legislators, and legal professionals, the symposium will be a platform for communities that have been impacted by structural racism and will shine a light on the hard work these communities across the state are doing to pursue environmental justice.

Salvation Army has funds for utilities

The center has applied for a grant to buy tablets and Wi-Fi access to share with members at no cost to give them the opportunity to participate in classes, social hour discussions, and more. Plans include 1) a to-go Free Soup and Social Hour—since Jan. 19—from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Those wearing masks can say “hi” and pick up a bowl of soup in Phase I. In Phase II, they will begin safely, social distance, in-person social hour.

2) With other senior community centers in the area they are setting up an online Zoom bingo.

3) As travel resumes, Corbin will bring people out of their homes to see the world with various tours.

For information, call 327-1854.

Online benefits gather people in new way

Salvation Army helps fund utilities

The Great Northern Spokane County (GSC) Meals on Wheels March for Mitts MWD Crawl is Friday, March 5, for a limited number of walkers at the Spokane Salvation Army. Participants can choose a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.

BECOME A SPONSOR!

SPOKANE ARTISTS

GRANTS FOR SPOKANE ARTISTS AND ARTS PROGRAMMING REQUESTS UP TO $10,000

WHO

WHEN

APPLY NOW! www.spokanewa.org/grants

Applications are due online before FEBRUARY 1, 2022, and OCTOBER 1 every year.
Housing equity action effort expands funds for affordable housing

By Catherine Ferguson SNJM

The Spokane Alliance’s Housing Equity Action Team (HEART) efforts to expand affordable housing in West Central Spokane exemplify how community organizers can engage volunteers and stakeholders to attempt to create a sustainable, equitable solution to address a community’s needs.

Five members of HEART, Lynda Maraby, a governing board member of the Faith Action Network of Washington; Franciscan Sr. Kathryn Roberg FSP; Chloe Sciamma, community organizer at Spokane Alliance; Katy Shedlock, co-pastor of West Central Abbey, and Katie Zinler, lead organizer at the Spokane Alliance, recently shared insights and achievements on affordable housing.

Their campaign grew from community organizing work at the West Central Abbey. In 2019, guests at the Abbey’s Wednesday night free Dinner Table identified the lack of affordable and dignified housing as their top concern.

Maraby highlighted the problem from a personal perspective.

“The warming shelter run by Salem Lutheran Church, there were a number of people who had housing vouchers, but they couldn’t find housing,” she said.

The group’s next steps were for 10 members of HEART to explore the West Central neighborhood, identifying vacant lots and buildings that could be turned into affordable housing. They discovered 33 homes alone in one block that had been boarded up or vacant long-term.

Then, even though he is not part of HEART, Rob McCann, president and CEO of Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, inspired the group to articulate the issue by telling them that Catholic Charities can build an entire new building faster than someone with a housing voucher can get off the waitlist for affordable housing.

“My ‘aha’ moment came when I heard about the issue, saying we cannot solve the housing problem until we have money to build affordable housing,” said Shedlock.

A local source of funding was present: the West Quots Tax Increment Funding (WQTIF), a local funding mechanism intended to create improvements in West Central, Riverside and Emerson-Garfield neighborhoods. Zinler explained.

The group’s proposal was built on local property taxes and reinvest those funds directly into the neighborhood instead of in the city’s general fund. The group then learned that Washington was the only state in the country that allowed to be spent on affordable housing.

In October, Spokane Alliance hosted a candidates’ forum for those running for Spokane City Council and Mayor. Each candidate was asked to pledge their support to workers to increase affordable housing in the neighborhood. Specifically, they were asked to support the use of TIF money for affordable housing.

In the winter of 2019-2020, HEART successfully worked with District 3 state legislators and expanded the allowable uses of TIF funding to include affordable housing. Shedlock said. That year, the alliance worked with a number of neighborhood partners including REACH and the Neighbor- hood Council to incorporate this change into the WQTIF and to extend the TIF for an additional 15 years. After 2032, half of the WQTIF funds will be used for affordable housing, she said.

Next, the team turned their eyes to a potentially greater source of funding for affordable housing in Spokane. In 2020, the Washington State Legislature passed HB1666, which allows the city and county the ability to create a small sales tax increase if the funds are committed to affordable housing. Shedlock said.

In October 2020, the Spokane Alliance gathered more than 50 people and three members of the Spokane City Council to solidify public support for 1590 and to gain commitments from the council members to bring the issue to a vote before the end of the year. Shedlock said that Council Members Karen Brattton, Betty Wilkerson and Kate Burke committed their support and promised to bring the measure before a vote in December. On the night of the vote, the majority of people testifying on 1590 supported the measure and the Council approved it by a 6 to 1 vote.

On Dec. 3, 2020, the Spokane Journal of Business reported that the Spokane City Council approved a measure that will impose 0.1 percent sales and use tax, the revenue from which will be dedicated to providing for the construction, acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing, as well as housing-related support services—such as more affordable housing with the city.

Even though the measure passed the City Council, results will not be seen immediately. The City of Spokane will notify the State Department of Revenue of their approval of 1549 in April and funds will begin to be collected in July.

According to council, the tax increase raises the sales tax rate from 8.9 to 9 percent. It is estimated to cost an average family $25 per year and raise about $5.8 million for the city to distribute to help not only in building and obtaining new units, but could also be used for programs designed to help people move into housing, said Shedlock.

HEART members see their success as a source of hope about the power of a group of ordinary people to contribute to a solution to a community problem. They also stress the need for more work to ensure that the distribution of funds has wide participation and contributes to racial equity in housing.

Shedlock affirmed that there needs to be strategic conversation because so often people of color are on the margin or are left out. Council Members Stratton and Wilkerson both voiced this concern in comments on the bill, suggesting that the council put together a community committee to look at applications from nonprofits and for-profit builders for wide participation.

They want to be sure that the city does not continue to stand by and pretend not to see the large number of people who have been most negatively impacted by the present housing crisis.

“The historical patterns of discrimination in housing markets and housing policy, including families at risk of homelessness, has gone on for far too long and it is time we change that pattern in eliminating those barriers so that everyone has a fair and equitable opportunity at safe, clean and affordable homes,” Wilkerson said about the bill.

HEART members believe that the equitable implementation of 1590 can be a step on this path. For information, email action@spokanealliance.org or visit www.spokanealliance.org.

Note: because of the similarity of their names--Katy and Katie--we chose to use last names for this article.

---

Group plans essay contest, video on Holocaust survivors

The organizers at the 2021 Spokane Community Observance of the Holocaust are proceeding with their 15th annual Eva Lassman Memorial Writing Contest, which is open to middle and high school students in the Inland Northwest. Because of the pan- demic, the in-person Holocaust Observance and the Art Contest will be on hiatus for this year.

They are inviting submissions on the theme, “When Character Matters: Preventing Genocide,” with a deadline of May 2. Writers are asked to focus on the character traits of the “RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS,” individuals who protected their Jewish friends and neighbors during the Holocaust, and to identify traits they that would enable them to intervene when they witness hate crimes. School essays of 75 to $400 will be awarded.

To inspire the essays, they quoted a character trait of the Righteous Educator Elie Wiesel, who said, “We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must intervene.”

Hershel Zellman, co-chair of the committee, encouraged faith leaders to promote the contest to their youth groups.

In addition, the organizers are partnering with KSPS Public Television to create an educational video preserving the stories of local Holocaust survivors and their families, as well as the stories of those who founded Spokane’s Jewish community.

For information, visit neveragain.spokane.wixsite.com/2021-contest or email neveragain-spokane@comcast.net.

---

Join Us March 5 or 10

Deepening Our Roots

Lunch-time Virtual Benefit

Friday, March 5, 2021

Group Gatherings begin 11:30 a.m. - Program begins noon on Zoom

Breakfast-time Virtual Benefit

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Group Gatherings begin 7:30 a.m. - Program begins 8 a.m. on Zoom

CALL 535-4112 or 535-1813

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Beyond Words:

Deepering Our Roots

Deepening Our Roots

Lunch-time Virtual Benefit

Friday, March 5, 2021

Group Gatherings begin 11:30 a.m. - Program begins noon on Zoom

Breakfast-time Virtual Benefit

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Group Gatherings begin 7:30 a.m. - Program begins 8 a.m. on Zoom

CALL 535-4112 or 535-1813

email mary@thefigtree.org

www.thefigtree.org

---

March 2021 - The Fig Tree - Page 3
Faith, spirituality helps Terri Anderson face opposition she meets every day

Continued from page 1 stimulus checks mostly go into landlords’ pockets, Terri said. “The $600 checks mostly went to fill cupboards.”

Half of Spokane residents—110,000 people—rent, she said, and half of them are “rent burdened,” paying more than 30 percent of their incomes on rent. About 25,000 pay more than 50 percent of their incomes, she said.

“With one major illness, they could lose everything,” Terri said.

The City Housing Action Plan indicates that 62 percent of renters are vulnerable to being displaced compared to only 38 percent of homeowners because of evictions, 20-day no cause notices, high rents and landlords converting property from rental housing, she said.

According to the City of Spokane Housing Plan, 80 percent of all black households and more than 60 percent of indigenous and immigrant households are renters, while only 30 percent of white households rent and 70 percent are homeowners.

Terri explained that “housing and racial inequality go hand in hand.” With access to jobs and education causing housing inequities.”

She also reminded that recent Spokane Regional Health District research showed an 18-year gap in life expectancy between areas where people own single-family homes and neighborhoods where most rent.

New rentals are now being built south of 57th Ave. and on N. Nevada in areas without parks, sidewalks or access to jobs, Terri said.

COVID has exposed such weaknesses in society, she said. For example, renters are at the top of the list of those in essential jobs facing more exposure to COVID and unable to work at home.

She expects that the expected massive economic recovery will uplift homeowners, but not renters.

“My work has mostly been in communities of color,” she said.

Terri was born in Tokyo, Japan, the daughter of an American in the U.S. Army and a Japanese woman who met during occupation after World War II. Her mother had become a teacher, and because of the use of atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Both Terri and Deb, who died in January, were from radiated communities.

Terri then worked 11 years as coordinator of multicultural student services at Spokane Community College, where she was advisor for the Native American Student Organization and Black Student Union, providing recruitment and retention services for students of color.

After working for years providing services, Terri wanted to be an organizer. So in 2010, she joined AmeriCorps and worked as an organizer for a year with the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane. She helped them promote the Police Accountability Coalition.

She was then a labor organizer with the Service Employees International Union, which “deployed” her to work in Yakima, Seattle and other communities.

“Preparing to live in one place, she applied in 2013 when the Washington State Tenants Union announced a job in Spokane to work under a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant.

Her role was to preserve HUD Section 8 project-based affordable housing, which was at risk of being converted to market-rate housing, because as mortgages expire, units can be converted to market-rate housing. “My job was to identify buildings that were at risk of losing HUD status and to organize tenants to keep rent affordable,” Terri said. “In 2014, rent went up as vacancy rates dropped, so homelessness increased. In 2016, when the Tenants Union made Spokane a permanent office, Terri hired Amber Abrahamson through AmeriCorps for a three-year placement as a tenant counselor and educator. Amber new works full time with Terri, who seeks another AmeriCorps placement for housing preservation and tenant organizing.

“Tax credit housing is now the major form of affordable housing,” Terri said. “In the HUD Section 8 project-based program, tenants paid just 30 percent of their income.”

Terri, whose mother was Shinto, Buddhist and Methodist, said her family attended United Methodist churches in South Dakota and in Allen, Wash.

“In Japanese spiritual tradition, we are not limited to one faith but can be Buddhist, Shinto and Methodist,” she said, noting that church was important in her high school years, grounding her in a welcoming community after her father died and when her mother had cancer.

“Knowing we were a poor family, the church paid me to run the day care,” she said.

As she felt adopted and welcomed in that church and community, she has felt adopted and welcomed as part of the Native American community.

The strength from faith and spirituality helps her face the everyday opposition she meets in work on behalf of tenants.

“The landlord-tenant clash is a clash of systems, the capitalist view of housing and the view of housing as a human right,” Terri said. “Any policy that hurts renters hurts people of color more, but I also find cross racial collaboration on tenant issues. Spokane is a multi-racial, faith-based and BIPOC communities agree that to have a sustainable city, it’s important to collaborate. In housing more than other areas, there is cross-racial collaboration, because schools struggle when families are evicted and students move to other schools,” she said.

If we use our voices, we can change policies to have a healthy city,” Terri said. For information, call 558-7126 or email terri@tenantsunion.org.
Walter Kendricks calls for doing justice, loving mercy, walking humbly

In addressing the theme, “Beyond Words: Doing Justice,” Walter Kendricks, pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church, spoke to 180 Zoom participants at the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference on Jan. 30. Opening, he recognized that he stands in the shoes and on the shoulders of those who came before him—his ancestors and parents, those who have struggled for justice, equality and fair treatment, matched with signs, and had dogs and water hoses set on them—and now those who cry that Black Lives Matter.

“We understand legislative priorities and circumstances that have occurred are not just in recent times but from the founding of the nation through its history,” he said.

Walter read from the prophet Micah in 6:8: “He has told you, what is good, but what does the Lord require of you? To do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God.”

“Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly, not to talk about justice but to do justice,” he said.

He then spoke of the importance to feed the soul, he cited lyrics songwriter Allen Toussaint penned in the 1970s. “Songs tell stories, especially in the African-American community. Music supersedes the sermon,” Walter said.

“Toussaint’s words reflect a cry about the reality of life for people, especially people of color,” he said, quoting: “Free-dom for the stallion, freedom for the mare and her colt, freedom for the baby child who has not grown old enough to vote. Lord, have mercy, what you gonna do about the people who are praying to you? They got men make laws that destroy other men. They’ve made money ‘God’. It’s a dog gone sin. Oh, Lord, you got to help us find the way.”

Toussaint talked of men making laws—Jim Crow, separate but equal, segregation—men making laws that destroy other men and make money—prison for profit, inequities in health care” Walter said. “Men making money. It’s a doggone sin. You’ve got to help us find a way.”

Walter said the lyrics reflect the centuries-old cry for justice. Then he named Trayvon Martin, James Byrd, Walter Scott, Philip Adams, George Floyd, and others.

“Those things happened somewhere else. Across the mountains in Tacoma, it was Manuel Ellis. In my home town, Cleveland, Ohio, Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old child, was playing with a gun in a park and, in 10 seconds of police appearing, he was dead,” he said.

“Of course there’s George Floyd, whom the whole nation saw die. It shook the nation’s conscience. For eight minutes and 47 seconds, he pleaded for his life, saying, ‘I can’t breathe,’ as life was choked out of him on a city street. What was his crime? Maybe passing a counterfeit $20 bill. The Black Lives Matter movement, and protests up to and including the election stem from a cry for justice,” he said.

“I am way beyond words. ‘Communities of color, Native, Samoan, Marshallese and Hispanic communities are all beyond words. There are no more words. It’s time for us now to do justice,” he said.

Walter told of his work on the Governor’s Task Force on Independent Investigation, the Washington Commission for African American Affairs, the Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) and the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)—made possible because Morningstar Missionary Baptist Church shares him with the community.

The task force grew out of the death of George Floyd, Walter said, saying that Governor Jay Inslee has a heart for what is best for all Washingtonians, while some die of COVID and others demand their rights to the point of infringing on others’ rights for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

On Zoom, the task force gathered people from around the state with different expertise to offer suggestions for a bill now in the legislature. Suggestions came from people exploring what an independent investigation of the police looks like.

“Those who have power rarely give it up,” Walter said. “Our issue is with police investigating police, especially on deadly use of force. We don’t want police investigating police.”

“The Washington Constitution puts power in prosecutors and police, and they don’t want to give it up. We were fighting about what an independent investigation is,” he said.

Recognizing the importance of legislation, Walter also knows morality can’t be legislated.

“There are all sorts of laws on the books, but if we don’t recognize a person’s basic humanity, it doesn’t matter what laws are on the books, because the killings keep occurring. Every one of us—black, white, male, female, rich, poor—all of us must understand the other’s right to exist,” he said. “That’s what is beyond words and moves us to the cause for justice.”

Walter told of systemic racism on the task force. It was set up to be led by people of color, but “we were shoved aside as those with positions spoke. ‘Lord help us find a way,’ he said.

The Commission on African American Affairs is changing as new people join and want to push forward.

“We advocate on a state level to advance people of color,” he said. “It means spending money. Once you write a check, don’t micromanage how it is spent. We are smart, educated and trained enough to know what is best. We do not need masters. We can be the master of our own destiny. Why? We’re human. That’s how we move beyond words and into justice.”

With Black Lens editor Sandy Williams, Walter helped form SCAR in outrage about the 2015 murder of William Poinexter, a black man. He was on Altum St. in East Central Spokane, arguing with his girlfriend. He pushed her.

A gay skateboarding in the neighborhood with a backpack containing two knives and a gun fought with Poindexter. As Poinexter walked away, the accused got in a shooting position and, fired three shots, hit him in the back twice, Walter said. He died there.

In the May 2017 trial, a jury of 12 white people said the accused was “not guilty.”

SCAR came into existence to move the community beyond words and still helps people move beyond words.

“Look at God’s Providence,” Walter said. “Without SCAR— and someone giving his life to wake us up—when 10-month-old Caiden Henry was beaten to death in June 2017, SCAR was in the courtroom that August as the community’s eyes. In that case, there was justice. The accrued benefits were incredible.”

Walter also praised the NAACP, as it transitions from the leadership of Kurtis Robin-son to Kiahntha Duncan, its new president.

“SCAR is taking the community in a new direction focusing on unity beyond words,” Walter said. “The NAACP has an action focus for the unity of all people. Kiahntha’s approach is to say, ‘Because I love you, I have something to tell you.’”

Walter said some people “de-sire to go back to yesteryear, but time continues to go forward.”

“So how do we to build a just society?” he asked, returning to the scripture: “What does the Lord require of us? Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God.”

“That’s how we move beyond words,” he said. “We know what is right. The time for talking is over.”

Walter concluded with a call to free the marginalized, such as the children separated from their parents who still sit in cages at the border.

“The time is now to move beyond weeks,” he said. For information, call 724-0301.
Panelists reflect on theme of moving beyond words to doing justice

Panelists Margo Hill, Phil Misner, Chalo Martinez and Kiantha Duncan, with Gen Heywood, moderating, offered some of their perspectives on the keynote address and theme “Beyond Words: Doing Justice.”

Margo, who teaches urban planning at Eastern Washington University and who was attorney for the Spokane Tribe, resonated with the theme, “Beyond Words: Doing Justice,” and with the lyrics that “men make laws that destroy other men and women.”

“Indigenous people have lived on the land for time immemorial. The trouble is we opened our hearts and the land to welcome newcomers and continue to suffer injustice,” she said.

“Native Americans did not ask to be attacked on their lands by invaders who hanged their chiefs, killed their horses and forced them to move on reservations to live in poverty,” said Margo, who grew up in a trailer because the land was held in trust, so tribal members could not build houses.

“In Spokane, we experience violence. A young Native American man was shot in the back. Native Americans have higher bail and heavier sentencing,” she said.

“Many appreciate police, but questions racial bias of officers officers have met in her work with Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.”

“There are 5,712 indigenous women missing according to FBI data, but the U.S. Department of Justice lists just 116 cases,” said Margo, telling of state efforts to stop human trafficking and address injustices in law enforcement.

She called for churches and the community to understand that people of color experience traumatic, high rates of violence and poor health care, leaving many vulnerable to human trafficking.

Phil Misner, previously pastor at Peace Lutheran in Colfax, has been since 2018 assistant to the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s Northwest Intermountain Synod, which serves congregations in Eastern Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Wyoming.

“Caring about understanding diversity and racism is built into our structural guidelines for ministry since we formed the ELCA in the 1970s, but we are still one of the whitest denominations in the U.S.,” he said. “We have the words, but have not done well at going beyond words. The synod seeks to move beyond words and so leaders become a more concrete example,” Phil said. “Words set the intent.”

In the synod, he said action is needed. One effort is a recent Color Amazed Preaching Project, bringing ELCA leaders of color to give sermons virtually to introduce diverse voices to the region’s ethnically homogeneous congregations, he said.

In addition, anti-racism was a focus of Bishop Kristen Kuepbel’s recent conviction with deacons and pastors.

On criminal justice and law enforcement, the ELCA in 2013 adopted a social statement on justice addressing inequities in the criminal justice system as central to living out the biblical call to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly, Phil said.

Chalo Martinez, who worked in Los Angeles with Latino parishes, saw the impact of inequities in criminal justice on people of color and people of different social and economic standing, regardless of skin color. People of color had longer sentences.

“I hope the state of Washington will act to be sure justice is fair,” said Chalo.

“Catholics believe in equal love as love without exceptions. The catechism teaches universal equality and dignity as persons. Churches say that all deserve respect, but we also need to act,” Chalo said. “We need to meet the challenge of words with action.”

U.S. Catholic bishops have made statements calling for addressing injustices in law enforcement encounters with African Americans and Latinos.

Leaders pray for humankind to work together, but many want bishops and priests to act as well as speak out, to “go beyond words to make Martin Luther King Jr.’s dream reality faster and permanently,” he said.

Kiantha Duncan has been in leadership and civic engagement for 25 years, and is currently with the NAACP Spokane.

“Hear me with your heart. I love you, I do not condemn you, but I want to convict your hearts,” she said.

“The nation calls and cries for justice,” she said. “The way it’s always been done has only gotten us so far.” She invited those at the conference to join the NAACP in 2021 to be part of its action, not only as individuals, but also as congregations.

“Nationally people of color are at a disadvantage on health. We want you to bring your congregations to the table and bring your resources.

“Do justice does not mean keep talking about justice at summits, conferences and meetings, but to get into action, movement, get busy collectively to move the city, community and world to do justice,” Kiantha said.

“It’s time to stand together. Faith based communities need to stand together and welcome us with open doors. Listen to the legislative agenda and leave the conversation knowing we will do something to move toward a more just, compassionate society.”

For information, call 535-1813. For recordings of sessions visit www.thefigtree.org and click on the link to the Legislative Conference videos in the right margin.

Top left to right, Scott Cooper introduces panel: Margo Hill, Phil Misner, Chalo Martinez, Kiantha Duncan and moderator Gen Heywood.

Kiantha Duncan is proud to support the local journalism of The Fig Tree.
Public health professionals told how COVID-19 has made obvious the disparities in public health based on socioeconomic position, race/ethnicity, national-ity, nativity, immigration, citizen status, age and gender.

Eastward Washington Legisla-tive Conference workshop lead-ers were:
• Bob Lutz, medical advisor for COVID-19 medical response for the Washington Department of Health, worked eight years with the Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) until 2022.
• Helleen Dewey, health eq-uity specialist with the SRHD, focuses on racial equity for better health outcomes. She is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and is also Santee Sioux.
• Amber Lenhart worked with the Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Pew Charitable Trusts in Wash-ington, D.C., and served as the SRHD health policy specialist.

“One’s zip code is more im-portant to one’s health than one’s genetic code,” Bob said. “Structural racism undergirds American society. Health begins where we live, learn, work, play and pray.

“Social determinants have impact. The country was built on the backs of slave labor and the lands of indigenous peoples. Marginalization and vulnerabil-ity mark populations impacted by structural, avoidable and unnecessary inequities, which result in disproportionate ill-nesses and hardships,” he added. “Health care is a contributing factor. There is racial bias in health care in terms of access and decision making.”

Bob said COVID-19 reflects these inequities. In the last two months, the Department of Health released data it did not have before. Nationwide data shows significant disproportion-ality in black, Hispanic and Pacific Islander populations in the number of cases, hospitaliza-tions and deaths.

“When we miss data, we misrepresent the impact of com-municable diseases on these populations,” he said. The disparities play out in distribution of vaccines to mar-ginalized people and at risk essential workers. He sees vac-cine resistance as an outgrowth of distrust based on historical events, such as the 1920 to 1972 syphilis experiments on African Americans at Tuskegee Institute. Helleen looked at reasons for disparities in COVID data.

“We see racial disparities in every system, not just health care, but each calls it something different,” she said. “In health, it’s disparities. In child welfare, it’s disproportionality. In juve-nile justice, it’s disproportionate contact. In education, it’s the achievement gap.”

“Racism impacts health because of different access to resources, biological responses, chronic stress, increased wear and tear on the body, and more cancer and high blood pressure, making risk of death from COVID higher,” she said, noting that interpersonal and structural racism affects decisions in com-munities, with explicit racism to implicit bias affecting decisions.

“Racism impacts people’s ology in that chronic toxic stress leads to some illnesses. The lack of access to resources and living conditions for people of color make them more susceptible to environmental transmission of COVID,” she said.

She differentiated between public health and the medical model. Public health focuses on behaviors that impact health—like eating well, being active and not smoking.

“With COVID, many are unable to follow public health guidance because social structures impact their behavior,” Helleen said.

A socio-ecological model looks upstream to see that where one lives and works has impact on behavior. Discriminatory beliefs or "isms" in societal struc-tures—racism, classism, sex-ism—and status—social, eco-nomic, immigration, age—affect decisions and social messaging.

“Those isms impact neighbor-hoods, schools, housing, workplaces and family living conditions, which lead to behav-iors,” Helleen said.

“Racialized beliefs lead to policies and practices that lead to dispari-ties that impact communities and have medical outcomes.

Public health gives guidance for social distancing, wearing masks and those exposed to isolate at home, but some com-munities cannot follow the guid-ance because they cannot take the time off without losing their job or cannot access unemploy-ment benefits, she said.

“Isms can lead to negative policies and outcomes, as much as behaviors can lead to disease,” Helleen said. “We need to change the narrative and policies to empower people whose voices usually are not considered in decisions.”

Growing up on the Chippewa reservation, she knows that ex-periences are the experts, “Some have to work even if they are contagious and some live in crowded multi-generational households. Why? Their community infrastructure sets their environment: like work-place policies, housing costs or cultural expectations.

Socio-economic factors in-clude employment status, educa-tional attainment and neighbor-hood setting.

“Keep asking why, and we see policies and systems at the roots—school discipline, inabil-ity to work from home, and hous-ing, transportation and criminal justice policies,” she said.

In the groundwater are biases/ beliefs: racism, classism, sexism or xenophobia.

“We eliminate inequities by changing policies, systems and environments that create them,” she said. “Then we can talk with, educate and lobby decision makers on how policies impact health.

“We can listen to and amplify voices of people with lived ex-perience. They are the experts,” Amber said.

For information, email Bob at taizetw@gmail.com or Amber at amber.lenhart@gmail.com.

Health equities panel are Bob Lutz, Helleen Dewey and Amber Lenhart.
In a workshop on immigration at the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference, Sr. Pat Millen OSF outlined reasons to advocate for immigration from Catholic social and interfaith teachings. She cited the Exodus, the flight to Egypt, the Sermon on the Mount and incarnation as migration. She said “the Torah tells us strangers and sojourners are to be treated as natives.”

“The Bible shows that Jesus welcomed strangers. The Quran directs followers to do good to neighbors in need and wayfarers,” she said.

“Why do people of color flee? Why do people from El Salvador or Honduras flee? They flee violence from gangs and environmental devastation,” she said. Pat said her Ukraine grandfather left the Ukraine to avoid being drafted into the Czar’s army and to flee violence.

“Knowing why we or our ancestors left helps us understand why others leave,” she said. “In the Exodus, people fled to escape slavery. Jesus’ family fled to Egypt to escape persecution.”

Pat said Catholic social teaching—the collected wisdom, teachings and writings of popes, councils and Catholic writers—includes seven themes: 1) life and dignity of the human person, 2) call to family, community and participation, 3) protection of human rights and fulfillment of responsibilities, 4) the preferential option for the poor, 5) the dignity of work and rights of workers, 6) solidarity and 7) care of creation.

“A country has the right to regulate its borders, but a country must regulate its borders with justice and mercy,” Pat said.

She described the Kino Border Initiative, a Jesuit ministry promoting U.S.-Mexico border relations and immigration policies that affirm the dignity of people and bi-national solidarity. Leaders listen to stories from migrants who have crossed or plan to cross.

Sr. Pat shared information from the Catholic Advocacy Group Formation, an inter-parish group on immigration in the Spokane Diocese. It includes St. Aloysius Parish’s social ministry advocacy committee and St. Ann’s parish, which has worked in the Sanctuary Movement.

The group meets monthly to discuss advocacy updates and plan activities, connecting with national women religious. They also hold prayer services. The committee connects with the Kino Border Initiative as they advocate for Governor Jay Inslee to dedicate part of the state’s CARES funds for immigrant groups.

This resulted in COVID-19 Immigrant Relief Fund, which has $40 million to assist Washington residents who can’t access funds because of their immigration status. Advocacy activities address family separation at the border, child migrants, ICE detention of migrants at Intermodal Center and South and Central American immigration.

Advocacy priorities include immigration as a fundamental faith issue and the ongoing need for advocacy in the new administration.

Federal priorities in 2021 include reunification of more than 600 children separated from parents at the border, restoration of U.S. refugee resettlement system, raising the refugee resettlement cap to 125,000 a year, permanent solutions for DACA recipients and comprehensive immigration reform.

For information, email pmillen@osfphila.org.

---

**COVID-19**

**VACCINE ELIGIBILITY**

**Am I eligible?**

Find out by visiting the Washington state PhaseFinder at findyourphasewa.org

**Print your eligibility verification form**

from findyourphasewa.org

(screenshots are acceptable)

**Call your healthcare provider to schedule an appointment.**

Unable to get an appointment or do not have a provider? Go to next step.

**Go to doh.wa.gov**

and click on “Vaccine Locations”.

Or call 800.525.0127

Unable to get through? Call an alternate line at 888.856.5816. Still unable to get an appointment? Go to next step.

**Go to chas.org/covidvaccine.**

This is the scheduling web site for the Spokane Arena mass vaccination clinic.

**Still unable to get an appointment?**

Please be patient and continue to try the options above.
Traditions and advocacy have given meaning to Darlene McCarty

Continued from page 1
and fight for our rights.”

To make sure everyone would have access to health care, Darlene has traveled to Olympia to testify for preserving Medicare, Medicaid and public health programs, on which she now relies for treatment of uterine cancer that has spread through her body. Her cousin, Deb Abrahamson, recently died of the same cancer.

Now Darlene deals with the struggles for insurance coverage and health care, for which she advocated for others. She believes that everyone needs health insurance and that health care is a human right. Her family recently created a Go-Fund-Me drive to help with medical expenses.

Darlene was also involved with Deb in advocacy with the SHAWL (Sovereignty, Health, Air, Water and Land) Society, traveling to Olympia to accompany Deb when she testified at the legislature to assure the mining companies would be accountable for completing cleanup of contaminated sites on the Spokane Reservation.

“I remember going out with my mother with a Geiger counter in areas near Wellpinit,” she said. “My mother and I walked and warned with fruit trees there near one of the mines.

“Several relatives have had health issues. Before the mines, there were not all the cancers the tribe now has,” she said.

Darlene has also advocated at Spokane City Council for community issues and served on the Steering Committee for the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane.

Despite her health problems, she has participated in Black Lives Matter rallies and Spokane events in solidarity with efforts to protect the water and environment and challenge construction of an oil pipeline across part of the surrounding Rock Sioux Reservation in North and South Dakota.

In addition, she and Barbara have worked to keep Native American traditions alive. Both have helped plan powwows, like the Gathering at the Falls in Riverfront Park and the annual Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration.

“I do not dance, but I love to go and watch the young people dance and keep the tradition alive,” Darlene said.

Her youngest grandson, Lance, is carving a dugout canoe in the back yard, while her eldest grandson, Uriah, is busy illustrating indigenous digital stories to help process grief.

Most of her life, Darlene has lived in Spokane, but spent some summers and a few years in North Carolina, California, New Mexico, Arizona and British Columbia, where she helped instill indigenous traditions.

Darlene attended Rogers High School, except for a semester in Wellpinit and her senior year. Her art teacher at Rogers arranged for her to spend her senior year at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, N.M., in 1964. She spent another two years there after graduating, to study drama and creative writing.

“arwayLooking for more information or to schedule an appointment, call: 624-5228

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call: 624-5228

For 16 years, she has been a project specialist in Indian country with Kauffman & Associates, Inc., a consulting company that is dedicated to improving the lives of those in underserved communities.

The work has taken her around the Indian country since 2004, with her mother and children sometimes joining her.

“I credit my being a community advocate to my mother and grandmother. My mother took my grandmother’s lead and said that I was to carry on bringing people together, holding the family together and bringing the community together,” she said.

Now Barbara is spending time caring for her mother, returning the love she has been given for years.

For information, call 981-8143 or email bgongyin@gmail.com.

Darlene McCarty and her daughter Barbara Gongyin cherish their moments together.

Photo courtesy of Barbara Gongyin

Promoting life and dignity throughout Eastern Washington.

Personal or legal problems? DUI? In need of alcohol and drug treatment?

SPOKANE ADDICTION RECOVERY CENTERS
SPARC has highly trained qualified staff to assist you. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call: 624-5228 or visit us at 1508 W. 6th Ave. 8 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. - Monday through Friday Confidential, discreet services.

SPARC
60 Years Where Community Shines

Kizuri

35 W. Main, Spokane
509-464-7677
www.kizurispokane.com

Fair Trade, Local Earth Friendly
Curbside pickup, delivery and shipping available.

Kizuri

Rockwood South Hill: 2903 E. 25th Ave. 509-536-6650
Rockwood Hawthorne: 101 E. Hawthorne Rd. 509-466-0411
www.rockwoodreitrement.org

independent • assisted • skilled nursing • memory care

Earth Friendly shipping available

Life Center to share with people monthly at Emmanuel Family Life Center to share with people from several churches—including Unity and Bahá’í—to learn about Native culture and stories, and hear stories of the lives of non-Native participants to build cross-cultural understanding.

Although not Catholic, she attends the Native American Church’s Indian Mass at St. Aloysius Parish once a month to connect with Native Americans during the second year when they are not going to powwows.

She attended the Presbyterian Church in Wellpinit, and said she goes to any church because she believes churches are similar and share much in common with Native religion.

“I have learned to appreciate life, loved ones and friends,” Darlene said. “People treat me well, and I treat people well.”

Because of the struggles urban Indians experience, Darlene encourages friends to keep open to learning and remembering their traditions, working to save the salmon, keep waters clean and protect the land.

Her daughter, Barbara, along with serving on the Gathering at the Falls Planning Committee for several years, started the Indigenous People’s March in Spokane two years ago.

The Gathering at the Falls highlights the significance of Northwest tribes gathering at the Spokane River, a sacred tradition for generations, celebrating the river and creating or renewing friendships, she said.

Barbara, who earned a bachelor’s degree in 2003 in business administration, finance and management information systems from Eastern Washington University, carries on the family tradition of advocating for justice as a community activist and organizer to improve people’s lives.

Barbara was also in two movies during the school year when they rang for her to spend her senior year at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, N.M., in 1964. She spent another two years there after graduating, to study drama and creative writing.

“I was always interested in acting, so finally 50 years later I was Nana Anuk in Z-Nation,” she said. “The setting was Alasksa, but the filming was done in Spokane.”

The American action, horror, post-apocalyptic comedy is about a motley group of survivors battling a zombie apocalypse.

Darlene was also in two movies, “Home Sweet Home” and “One Small Thing,” and in two plays with Stage Left, “At the Sweet Gum Bridge” and “The Controversy of Valladolid.”

In the summer of 1975, Darlene worked in North Carolina with a Job Corps program training Chickasaw and Cherokee tribal teens, taking them into nature on hikes and camping.

Another summer she worked on an Indian reservation in Bishop, Calif., where Los Angeles churches brought groups to help build buildings.

After some time in Arizona, she came home to Spokane, where she raised her daughter, Barbara, while working in hotels.

Darlene told of other involvement related to her values:

• She was involved for a while with the Native and non-Native Talking Circle that met monthly at Emmanuel Family Life Center to share with people from several churches—including Unity and Bahá’í—to learn about Native culture and stories, and hear stories of the lives of non-Native participants to build cross-cultural understanding.

• Although not Catholic, she attends the Native American Church’s Indian Mass at St. Aloysius Parish once a month to connect with Native Americans during the second year when they are not going to powwows.

• She attended the Presbyterian Church in Wellpinit, and said she goes to any church because she believes churches are similar and share much in common with Native religion.

• “I have learned to appreciate life, loved ones and friends,” Darlene said. “People treat me well, and I treat people well.”

Because of the struggles urban Indians experience, Darlene encourages friends to keep open to learning and remembering their traditions, working to save the salmon, keep waters clean and protect the land.

Her daughter, Barbara, along with serving on the Gathering at the Falls Planning Committee for several years, started the Indigenous People’s March in Spokane two years ago.

The Gathering at the Falls highlights the significance of Northwest tribes gathering at the Spokane River, a sacred tradition for generations, celebrating the river and creating or renewing friendships, she said.

Barbara, who earned a bachelor’s degree in 2003 in business administration, finance and management information systems from Eastern Washington University, carries on the family tradition of advocating for justice as a community activist and organizer to improve people’s lives.

For 16 years, she has been a project specialist in Indian country with Kauffman & Associates, Inc., a consulting company that is dedicated to improving the lives of those in underserved communities.

The work has taken her around the Indian country since 2004, with her mother and children sometimes joining her.

“I credit my being a community advocate to my mother and grandmother. My mother took my grandmother’s lead and said that I was to carry on bringing people together, holding the family together and bringing the community together,” she said.

Now Barbara is spending time caring for her mother, returning the love she has been given for years.

For information, call 981-8143 or email bgongyin@gmail.com.
Three speakers addressed housing inequities and issues regarding tenure for a workshop at the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference.Terri Anderson of the Tenants Union, Ben Stuckart of the Spokane Low Income Housing Conser- vation and Jonathan Mallahan of Catholic Charities spoke. Terri said ties between housing and systemic racism in Spokane housing date to 1881, when Spokane’s first indigenous inhabitants were forcibly removed by federal de- order, forced to leave their land and homes. A homeowner claimed the Peaceful Val- ley during World War II, while Terri Gurry was away for education.

“Property rights often supersede hu- man rights,” Terri Anderson said. “We must consider housing a human right. As new inhabitants settled Spokane, race dictated housing policies, with white enclaves and redlining the South Hill near Compass Point and North Hill near Audubon Park in place until court cases and then the Fair Housing Act of 1968 paved the way for change.”

Other inequities relate to access to financing, displacement and exclusion. “Median income is just over $60,000, 80 percent of black households and 60 percent of other color renting, while 70 percent of white households are homeowners only 30 percent rent.

That gap arises from disparities in wealth, education and jobs, she said, so nonprofits collaborate to help make hous-

ing stable and rents fair. Ben said three pillars of a stool for housing stability are 1) adjusting regula-

tions to allow density in the right places, 2) tenant protections and 3) subsidies and support to build more low-income housing.

“Home and apartment prices are rising steadily,” Ben said. “As prices rise, it pressures the system.”

In December 2019, the City Council postoned to March 9 discussion of tenant protection legislation, but these proposals were postponed because of a moratorium on evictions. Jonathan said a moratorium on evictions will last, Terri said there is need for city and state actions or, when it ends, there will be “a tsunami of evictions.”

In the Senate, SB 5139 prevents rent increases for six months and SB 5160 provides for a rent control moratorium, requiring repayment plans, mediation and a right to counsel.

• In the House, HB 1256 is for just cause eviction and ending the 20-day no cause eviction clause. HB 1277 increases the real estate transaction fee by $300 to establish permanent rental assistance. HB 1220 allo-

ws emergency shelters in areas zoned for hotels and motels. HB 1700 is returning damage deposits and defining normal wear and tear, so they are not used to replace a 40-year-old appliance.

Jonathan said Catholic Charities pro-

grams and resources protect tenants and those who care for people experiencing trauma, mental illness or disability.

Project-based assistance gives a three- year tax credit for low-income housing development and the risk that tenants would make units affordable so they earning less than 30 percent of the median income level pay 30 percent of their incomes on housing, he said.

Seeing housing as integral to human rights, Jonathan said that Catholic Charities offers supportive services.

• “Offer emergency housing in Rapid Rehousing when there will be fewer places otherwise.”

We are called to make flesh.

Faith inspires and teaches people to turn words into lived realities—because of the inspiration of words of faith—to make lives of people, communities and among nations better. Awareness of all the ways people are acting in faith inspires us to live our faith.

Words are how we communicate, so words are expected to have meaning. Words express under- standing, respect, relationships, recon- ciliation, unity in the midst of the gorgeous diversity God has given us. Words express support and solidarity, and commitment to act on those words. We are called to em- body caring and love in the face of hate. We share news—words—from the World Council of Churches and National Council of Churches, not only about their involve- ments but also of what people around the world are doing—because of the inspiration of words of faith.

We have often heard that it’s not those who do the Lord’s work, but those who do God’s will—do justice, love mercy and walk humbly, or simply love. It’s not us—us who do the Lord’s work. Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly, or simply love. It’s not us—us who do the Lord’s work. Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly, or simply love.

Faith inspires and teaches people to turn words into lived realities.
Area churches join the Little Library movement to encourage reading

By Fred Jessett

A project to create a small rolling library to use at any time, anywhere inside St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church was squashed by the pandemic.

Kris Jessett, who was on the Baptized for Life Committee that was planning the rolling library, suggested the church put up a Little Free Library® outside the building, especially with the church and libraries closed because of COVID.

“The first time I saw a Little Free Library was in 2010, when I was walking down East 46th Ave.,” she said. A woman was working in the yard near it, so Kris asked her about it. The woman said it was dedicated to her friend who had been a school librarian.

Kris said she worked as a teenager for 25 cents per hour in a public library in Duluth, Minn., where she grew up. She has always loved books, so the idea of making books available to anyone who passes by, especially children, appealed to her.

Soon after that she learned that someone in Spokane, Jan Hansen, builds little libraries. Kris contacted her and soon had a little library in her yard.

“That was the first one I had built,” Kris said. “A few years later, when my husband, Fred, and I moved, we took the library to our new location, and Jan made some repairs and improvements.”

By permission to St. Stephen’s caught on and what some call “the little red book box” was built by a member. It now stands in front of the church at 5720 S. Perry with books on spiritual and religious themes. It is available to anyone who stops by.

It’s Little Free Library #199,884.

St. Stephen’s is not the only congregation in the region with a little library.

Central Lutheran has had a little library outside their building at 512 S. Bernard for many years. Its old wooden number plate says it is #14,061. Newer number plates are metal.

The little library at Central Lutheran was built and is stocked by church members and friends as a resource for the neighbor-

hood. It’s a take-one-leave-one lending library used daily by local residents and nearby business employees.

It’s part of the church’s services to the neighborhood, along with their summer parking lot barbecues and the “doggie station” on their lawn, because they have the only grassy area in that part of town.

Earlier this year, they began putting food in it instead of books. Now it contains both.

Northwood Presbyterian has one by the steps in its front courtyard at 6721 N. Monroe.

St. Luke’s Episcopal at 501 E. Wallace in Coeur d’Alene has had one for more than five years. Members have considered converting it to use for food if necessary. Inside, the church also has a library of spiritual books.

The American Association of University Women maintains it. Pilgrim Lutheran Church at 2730 W. Northwest Blvd. has Little Library #65,191 in front of its building. They have two boxes, and one now has food items in it.

A search of the Little Free Library website found a few other libraries in the region.

First Presbyterian Church at 417 N. Fourth Ave. in Sandpoint, Idaho, located its Little Free Library in its Community Peace Garden, built in the style of Noah’s Ark. It includes a wide selection of books for all ages.

Greenhouse Community Center and Food Bank at 22 Fir Ave. in Deer Park has one of six Deer Park Rotary Club has installed in the community.

All Saints Episcopal Church at 1322 Kimball Ave. in Richland hosts a little library for readers of all ages on its grounds, maintained for community use as are its playground, open yard and walking labyrinth, as an expression of its desire to “love our neighbors.”

There are at least 126 little libraries in the Spokane area registered with the Little Free Library® website, and many more in outlying communities.

Many are “chartered” by private individuals beside their homes.

There are also a number of little book boxes in this area that are not connected to the organization, including one outside the Odyssey Youth Center at 1211 S. Perry.

Little Free Library is a non-profit organization that promotes neighborhood book exchanges, usually through public bookcases. It is based in Hudson, Wis. By now, there are likely more than 110,000 public book exchanges in 91 countries registered with the organization and branded as Little Free Libraries. Millions of books are exchanged each year via these libraries.

The purpose is to increase access to books for readers of all ages, interests and backgrounds. The littlefreelibrary.org website offers a map for people to search by city and state to find little libraries nearby. It also offers plans for building different models of libraries, which can be purchased or built, and offers discounted books.

For information, visit littlefreelibrary.org, email Jan Hansen at littlereaderybuilder.com.

For information on churches, email office@ststephens-spo.kane.com, clspokane@comcast.net, office@northwoodpres.org or admin@stlukescda.org.