COVID-19 was first identified in Asian bullying arising because and Liz Moore, co-director of the focuses on anti-Asian discrimination to keep it that way. The lessons specific anti-Asian hate crimes April 14 on Zoom.

Bystander Intervention Training of Spokane (PJALS), facilitated Peace and Justice Action League education programs - p. 12

Sherilyn Long helps community garden adjust to COVID-19 precautions.

**Food banks receive garden produce**

By Kaye Hult
Shared Harvest Community Garden in Coeur d’Alene began with a pumpkin seed, said its new president, Sherilyn Long. Since 2008, the people who have gardened there have donated 57,000 pounds of produce to about 17 food banks. As its name implies, sharing the garden’s harvest is part of the mission taken on by this community of gardeners.

In 2008, Kim Normand wanted to have a pumpkin growing contest with friends, Sherilyn said. She found an unused field belonging to realtor Marshall Mend and approached him about using it. While Kim was broaching the idea to Marshall, she surprised herself by saying, “I want to have a community garden and donate half of the produce to food banks.” Marshall agreed.

With the love, generosity and hard work of many individuals and agencies, Sherilyn said, Kim and her husband Mike put the garden together. They provided leadership until the end of the 2019 season, Kim stepped down as president, Sherilyn replaced her in February. Produce from the donation plot in the garden at 10th St. and Foster Ave. is given to food banks.

**Bystander intervention training focuses on anti-Asian discrimination**

By Mary Stamp
To help people challenge anti-Asian bullying arising because COVID-19 was first identified in China, Pui-Yan Lam, co-chair of the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC) Spokane Chapter, and Liz Moore, co-director of the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS), facilitated Bystander Intervention Training April 14 on Zoom.

While there have not been any specific anti-Asian hate crimes reported in Spokane, APIC wants to keep it that way. The lessons will teach people how to speak up when they hear racist bullying. “We hope to change minds and hearts,” Pui-Yan said.

As a PJALS member, she knew PJALS offered Bystander Training for “compassionate people to learn strategies to speak out against discrimination and hate in safe, effective ways so they, along people targeted and those expressing hate, will not be hurt.” Often well-meaning people disapprove, but heated arguments are not effective. They may put a person on the defensive and those targeted and those expressing hate, will not be hurt.

Many are not responding to phone calls or don’t have the ‘bandwidth’ to make connections and offer support, Pui-Yan said. “We also need bee people to help if we want to have honey bees again.”

Compost bins, planting barrels and arbors are available to use. Sherilyn said there are raspberry bushes, and apple, maple and 100-year-old oak trees, as well as the benches and picnic tables inviting people in to sit and absorb the garden’s peace and beauty.

Children come there, not only as part of gardening families, but also from the neighborhood. They help with weeding or other projects. They also turn over rocks to find out what lives underneath. A children’s plot provides a place to learn about nature and grow and explore, to learn more about life.

The community garden offers workshops on such topics as—

Continued on page 4

**Census contacts continue through faith communities**

Jim CastroLang, coordinator for The Fig Tree’s census project to reach hard-to-count communities, reported that the efforts are still underway to connect with congregations and to invite them to reach out to neighbors to encourage participation in the 2020 census.

Working through the contacts with congregations that have food banks and meal distribution, The Fig Tree has made connections and is distributing fliers in the May issue to locations that agree to give them out to people who come for food.

The Fig Tree is also connecting with the regional leaders and bishops of denominational and faith community networks to ask them what they have done to promote participation in the census, to include reminders in their newsletters and to host Zoom meetings with area clergy and laity.

The Fig Tree will email a letter to congregations asking them to encourage members to fill out the census and connect with neighbors to invite participation.

Jim is preparing a phone list to make contacts and offering guidance on how to hold Zoom events with pastors and congregational leaders to build energy for how they can reach out to their neighbors and members.

On recent calls, including with the Faith Action Network, Washington Nonprofits and the Census Bureau, I have realized how many are struggling in the COVID-19 environment to make connections with faith communities,” Jim said. “Many are not responding to phone calls or don’t have the ‘bandwidth’ to do much right now. “Our strategy with food banks is happening in other areas of the state,” he said, pointing to a recent Second Harvest food

Continued on page 2
The Fig Tree is published 10 months

WCC webinar shares practices for church online

The pag...
During the coronavirus outbreak, SNAP has coordinated efforts to provide food, shelter, medical and financial services. On April 3, its homeless services coordinator, Arielle Anderson, called for assistance in feeding homeless neighbors. By April 4, she had many food sources.

“We have been doing homeless outreach,” she said, “but these folks are hungry. It’s hard to assess what services they qualify for if they are hungry.”

Arielle sees an increase in food need among homeless people. Traditional food sources are less available, and many who have no house—cautious about catching COVID-19—avoid places handling food, she said. SNAP’s team called local grocery stores, vendors and common sources that deal with food insecurity. Most were tapped out.

So SNAP forged partnerships with area nonprofits. Benefits Under the Bridge founder Jessica Kovac accepted non-perishable food items that Arielle collected and immediately gave to clients on the streets.

SNAP partnered with Transitions’ New Leaf Bakery to provide food to distribute. “This was a double win, as New Leaf Bakery, a small business, has felt the financial crunch of the shelter-in-place order,” she said. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, SNAP has been assessing what needs, while assisting the one in 10 Spokane County neighbors they serve annually.

In March, SNAP’s homeless services team housed 17 clients, while working remotely, social distancing and dealing with increased fear among those served. Through three nonprofits, Arielle’s team supplied foods like fruit, granola, pretzels, trail mix and non-perishable sack lunches for homeless people.

“Spokane embodies a collaborative spirit,” she said. “As many homeless neighbors shelter in place under freeway overpasses, in vehicles, under tents or plastic tarps during this time without a reliable source of nutrition, this food provides not only vital calories, but also knowledge that the community has not forgotten them,” she said.

Arielle is also working with homeless services providers, medical staff and organizers to implement street medicine. Inadequate shelters combined with poor access to hygiene, medical treatment and information means the homeless community have the potential for spreading COVID-19, she said.

Physician assistant TJ Byrne Pa-C, who previously did street medicine for homeless in North Idaho, volunteered on four outings since street medicine with homeless outreach teams began in April. He joined Bob Peeler of SNAP on his normal street rounds and saw 17 people, offering help from providing socks or a bandana to screening vital signs and blood pressure, and testing for COVID-19.

SNAP street medicine team goes to people where they are. (Photo courtesy of SNAP)

SNAP’s new director of financial stability, René LaRocca, learned that things move quickly at SNAP and “being resourceful is a premium” as SNAP seeks to provide pathways for more than 40,000 neighbors to move out of poverty through its subsidiary, SNAP Financial Access. In response to a need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), SNAP partnered with World Relief to provide masks made by graduates of its WEAVE sewing program, many of whom have been laid off during COVID-19. SNAP covered material costs to produce masks and relied on donations to provide wages for World Relief’s sewing artisans. For information, call 701-3515 or communications@snapwa.org.

Spokane Food Fighters find niche for helping feed people

Spokane Food Fighters came about in April to help feed people in this food emergency. In response to coronavirus, Spokane resident Marcus Riccelli founded and leads the nonprofit. Robbi Katherine Anthony and Patrick Rodriguez partnered with him.

Local philanthropist-activist Sharon Smith represents the fiscal and local community in partnership with Spokane’s downtown representative, Fletcher Marritt Progressive Fund.

They rally restaurants and volunteers to bring meals to neighbors in need.

“We are partnering with local restaurants to help their bottom line a bit. Restaurants are paid unless they want to donate,” said Marcus. “We knew in these days there would be more people struggling with food insecurity.”

He said the Spokane group adopted the name “Food Fighters” as Breakfast After the Bell for students.

The Spokane Food Fighters serve people with emergency food needs, people who cannot afford food and/or are place bound. It does not replace food from schools, food banks, vendors and Ministerials.

Meals are free for city residents, with a maximum of five meals per household.

Volunteers deliver the micro-wave-ready meals prepared at different restaurants.

Spokane Food Fighters can serve up to 35 households a day, and households may order no more than once a week. Deliveries include a community food resource guide.

Meals are ordered at https://spokanefoodfighters.org/request a meal noon and midnight for next day delivery. Volunteers pick up meals from the restaurant(s) and deliver from 4 to 6 p.m. Emergency food boxes are delivered from noon to 8 p.m.

Meals are left at the front door or drivers may call other instructions are given.

The delivery person knocks on the door or rings the bell to alert the household the food is there. To keep everyone safe, volunteers and household members do not interact.

Restaurants use best practices and have limited interaction with deliverers.

Each delivery volunteer has a safety kit with gloves and hand sanitizer. Those receiving food are to wipe down the food containing with alcohol and wash their hands.

Volunteers may sign up at https://spokanefoodfighters.org/volunteers.

The effort is funded by donations made at http://bit.ly/3oKanEF.

Immigrant groups raise funds for those left out

A partnership of the Spokane Immigrants’ Rights Coalition (SIRC), Hispanic Business and Professional Association (HBPA), Latinos en Spokane (LES), Mujeres in Action (M.A.) and Raiz will provide undocumented families grants for rent.

This effort seeks to minimize a household’s financial domestic violence crisis in the LatinX community in Spokane, said Hancel Sanchez, director of M.A. Priority is given to families with children under 18, with COVID-19 positive members, with victims of domestic violence or with no other options for relief.

“Even though undocumented immigrants pay sales taxes and file tax returns,” she said, “they are left out of the stimulus package. Undocumented immigrants in the state pay more than $300 million in state and local taxes a year.”

Some serve as essential workers in food service, the food industry, meat processing and crop production. Others serve as teachers, offering online services to students.

“So we especially need to help survivors of intimate partner violence,” she said.

Donations can be made to the Spokane Relief Fund For Undocumented Families. Grant applications are at: en Espanol—https://bit.ly/3A5x5w or in English—https://bit.ly/3cXd0T.

For information, call 869-0087 or visit misapokane.org.

SNAP SNAP street medicine team goes to people where they are.

For more information, please visit https://spokanefoodfighters.org.
Coeur d’Alene community garden supplies both food and respite

Continued from page 1

ganic gardening, composting, mulching and water conservation. It provides a venue for artists and musicians to show and perform.

Beyond growing food to share, the garden builds community as a way of individuals meet and work together. It is a place to learn new and old ideas about planting, composting and wise water use. It brings beauty and nourishment to the wider community.

“People in the community are mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually healthier because of this place,” she said. “We need places where we can be real, laugh and pause. It’s an oasis. Deer come here because it’s peaceful.”

She and the board have dreams for the garden.

“We want to build a worm compost to help with soil regeneration,” she explained. “We need to build the soil in order to maximize this growing place.

“We want to incorporate more permaculture to create a sustainable food system and reduce our resources to reduce our footprint,” she said. “We want to mimic how nature does it, such as no-till gardening, building resiliency.”

Sherilyn mentioned some practical goals: They seek ways to preserve the place for future generations. They need to replace the tool shed. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, they will have a hand-washing station built.

In a recent letter to members, she outlined other changes. “Because we are unable to gather in large groups, we are going to do our spring clean-up family style.”

The letter asks families to sign up for tasks. Leaders will inform them when the tasks will be done.

“We are starting our clean up and registrations early this year because of the need for more food this year and to accommodate the need for minimizing the number of people in our garden at the same time,” she said.

Sherilyn asks gardeners to wear gloves and use their own tools. For those needing to stay home due to illness, she said their plots will be cared for in their absence.

“Because of need for more food, gardeners are to increase their harvest this year. That includes learning to do succession planting, as well as donating canned goods and produce from home gardens or fruit trees.

“Our garden is also a drop off spot for other gardeners and neighbors throughout the Coeur d’Alene area,” Sherilyn said. “Together we can make a difference and show those who are anxious, sad, lonely or afraid that they are loved, valued and not alone.”

Produce and canned goods will be collected from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on first and third Wednesdays beginning on June 17. It will continue throughout the end of September.

Sherilyn added the garden helps move pallets of groceries, helps move pallets of groceries, and then are given a food box with gloves. Volunteers bring their gloves. Hands and could help. The Salvation Army recruits new volunteers to respond to increased need due to illness, she said their plots will be cared for in their absence.

“We want to incorporate more permaculture to create a sustainable food system and reduce our resources to reduce our footprint,” she said. “We want to mimic how nature does it, such as no-till gardening, building resiliency.”

Because of health issues, she met an herbalist, who led her to attend the School of Natural Healing in Utah, where in 2015 she earned a master’s in herbal and holistic healing.

Sherilyn joined the Inland Northwest Food Network’s book club. Its director asked her to teach a class on cooking with wild edibles four years ago.

Wanting to use weeds in the Community Garden’s compost pile for the class, she called Kim.

“Then she signed up for a plot herself. For three years, she has been on the board.

“We need gardens in our communities. This is not just a garden for me, it’s connected to my faith,” said Sherilyn, who attends Real Life Ministries. “Having a plot of land to love and tend is an answer to prayer.

“People and gardens are worth fighting for and protecting. Loving anything makes us vulnerable, because there’s a risk of losing it. I want this to be a place where people feel they belong,” she said.

“I love when we can make things better together. We can do so much more together than one person can do alone,” she said.

“This place belongs to our community. I want us to preserve it for future generations. We can be part of something where we can connect with each other while being caught up in something greater than ourselves, as we create a wider cultural meaning. The motivation here is to help foster community, sharing lives as we share our harvest,” Sherilyn said.

For information, call 208-597-3584 or email sharedharvestcommunity@gmail.com.

Salvation Army recruits new volunteers to respond to increased need

Because of coronavirus, the Salvation Army in Spokane has seen a 50 percent increase in the number of clients, so it has needed to have 40 volunteers a day to serve everyone; said Casandra Cram, the Salvation Army Family Resource Center program director.

The daughter of Salvation Army officers, Cassandra has worked in Spokane since 2013, overseeing the food bank and the transitional center that are part of the Family Resource Center. Before she came to Spokane, she was a youth worker, a lay leader and then an officer-pastor serving in Montana and Colorado.

“Since COVID-19, I have seen the community come together and be more giving,” she said. “Everyone wants to know how to help by donating items, giving time or saying hello.”

“Many new clients have never sought help before,” she said. “We are giving them more than before.”

Clients line up outside, standing six feet apart and coming alone.

They give information at the door and then are given a food box with canned, frozen and fresh food and protein.

In addition, because more seniors are staying home, volunteers recently delivered 72 food boxes to seniors living on their own. Volunteer coordinator Joshua Schultz screens volunteers for symptoms and provides personal protective equipment and gloves. Volunteers bring their own masks—from bandanas to creative homemade masks.

One of the new volunteers is Albert Rendon.

Furloughed from a used car dealer in Spokane Valley, he began volunteering with The Salvation Army March 8.

“I figured I had time on my hands and could help. The Salvation Army responded first to my offer to volunteer. I do the morning shift from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.,” said Albert, who helps move pallets of groceries, stocks the freezer and hands out donations.

He signed up for unemploy- ment and decided he could volun- teer while waiting for that.

Albert first came to Spokane in February 2019, from Stockton, Calif., where he worked in a car part until that work in the area dried up and he began living in a hotel and then in his car.

The food donations he works with in the warehouse and packs in boxes for clients come from Second Harvest and Northwest Harvest, from food drives and from the Salvation Army supplies in their warehouses—where they have enough to last two months, Cassandra said.

For information on volunteer-
Jonathan Myers leading worship for Creators’ Table. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Myers.

The liturgy of the table, prayers of the people, communion and announcements draw people together before a closing song. Katy, who grew up in Manti United Methodist Church (UMC), graduated from Drew University in theatre and anthropology in 2008, and completed online study with Iliff School of Theology in Denver while working part-time at Rockford UMC. She was concerned that several United Methodist Churches closed in recent years in poor neighborhoods—Central downtown, Trinity in Northeast—and St. Paul’s in West Central became a shared ministry with Liberty Park.

She joined the staff at Audubon Park UMC in 2017 to start a new church in West Central Spokane. “It’s important to have a Methodist presence in proximity to people below the poverty line,” said Katy, who gathered a group of folks and began talking about how to be church in a different way. They were looking for a place to gather when she met Jonathan.

The Episcopal Diocese continued the free Wednesday community meals as part of the West Central Episcopal Mission in one of the buildings of the former Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. The parish had closed in 2016. Volunteers from St. John’s, St. David’s and St. Andrew’s Episcopal churches and Bethany Presbyterian have kept the weekly dinner going.

Jonathan, who supervises the program, said about 40 people come early each month with 75 later in the month when income is running out. He serves as part-time priest at St. Andrew’s Episcopal and the West Central Episcopal Mission. His position was created as a yoked ministry of the congregations beginning in fall of 2017. He started at St. Andrew’s in late December, after his predecessor retired.

Katy learned the West Central Mission chapel was not being used and was a possible location for the group to worship. “Jonathan found they had a similar interest in ecumenical liturgy, so they formed a Methodist-Episcopal worshiping community with the blessing of their bishops, Episcopal Bishop Gretchen Rehrberg and United Methodist Bishop Elaine Stavansky, who support the joint effort even though the denominations are not yet in full communion.”

Katy said the Methodist movement started in the 1700s and its founder, John Wesley, was an Anglican priest, so there are few theological differences, but there are differences in worship style and formality.

“Creators’ Table is wholly Episcopal in its celebrating Eucharist every week, honoring its historic liturgical practices, and offering contemplative, sacramental space inviting people to feel God’s presence,” said Katy.

“It is also wholly Methodist in that we sing with gusto and let the music carry our theology,” she said. “We are poets who dare to feel the Holy Spirit in a way that few other people to test every day about how God’s grace is present in their lives and contemporary experiences.”

Katy’s involvement with the Spokane Alliance and Creators’ Table is about “the church’s job to love and include neighbors. The church loses credibility when it is too far from the poor and people who live the injustices of our time,” she said. “A credibility check is that any church plant has no roof over their heads.”

The worship space is open. Snacks are available throughout the worship. Usually a few homeless people enter the worship space. Some come, eat snacks, sit a while and go on their way, she said.

Many go to both Dinner Table and Creators’ Table. Jonathan helped assess the West Central Episcopal Ministry before adding the worshipping community to balance the outreach and action

We invite you to join us for reflection, prayer and spiritual renewal.
Sociology helps people understand social pressures on people’s actions

Continued from page 6

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) has offered trainings to combat recent Anti-Asian Bias: By- stander Intervention Training in various communities.

Before Liz Moore came as co-director of PJALS 11 years ago, she was using elements of the training to interrupt oppressive or racist comments and statements. She said during World War II, the United States incarcerations of Japanese Americans and internment camps were U.S. born. She said. “There are dynamics ways people think and behave,” she said.

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For Earth Day Live, local youth urge inclusion of climate change in studies

On behalf of Sunrise Spokane and 350 Spokane, high school students Rosie Zhou and Jaydn Malone hosted a livestream local event as part of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

Jaydn said the first Earth Day was held to increase environmental awareness and it led to the Clean Water, Clean Air and Endangered Species Acts.

In opening, Rosie noted there has been progress, but more needs to be done “or our generation will live with the effects.”

The Sunrise Movement gathers students to build millions of jobs while stopping climate change.

“The challenge is to influence corporations and politicians,” Rosie said, “looking forward, not right or left.”

The livestream included comments by several students:

Ali wants the climate damage to be reversed for future generations.

Emma said students need to know about what is happening.

Gloria called for the Green New Deal.

Maggie wants that to include Medicare and housing for all.

Nora felt empowered by seeing thousands gather for the climate movement.

Jerrall said it’s hard to keep curriculum current, adding climate topics already are part of the state.

Jordyn said it’s important to help students reach their potential, and a sustainable environment is necessary.

At the March 15 club, President Breean Beggs expressed a moral, social justice issue, the need to be in history, English, current events, social studies and other classes, not just science.

With student-directed learning, Jerrall said, “students can push for what they need for quality learning in their education.”

On installing solar on the 10 acres of school rooftops, Jerrall said the state requires schools to install more solar and encourages partnering with cities, libraries and others to create group rates to lower costs so schools can afford to install solar and benefit from long term savings in energy costs.

“We will put up solar as soon as we can,” he said.

Nikki believes there is the political will to install solar panels, and the city and schools will seek grants so costs are reasonable.

For information, email sunriseeawa@gmail.com, info@350spokane.org, nikkilockwood@spokaneschools.org or jerrallhaynes@spokaneschools.org.

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Michelle Wheatley, Gonzaga University’s vice president for mission and ministry, guides various dimensions of the mission and ministry team to serve not only students, but also the faculty and staff—of Gonzaga University.

Now her team is transitioning to digital as the campus has gone to online learning and worship.

“We are reflecting on what we are learning as we now reach new people online,” she said. “Nothing will be the same after coronavirus. Attendance for some mission programs on Zoom has increased.”

The mission and ministry team is responsible for three functions: educating the university on Gonzaga’s mission, identity and purpose; providing pastoral and spiritual care, and giving formation for discernment and leadership.

Michelle came to Gonzaga 13 years ago to study public relations, earning a bachelor’s degree. In her studies, she became involved in different ways with mission and ministry, so she completed a master’s degree in religious studies in 2012 and a doctorate in ministry in 2019 from San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Inspired by her mentors in a Jesuit high school in Portland, she chose to come to Gonzaga. Some of those mentors were priests for a passion with life and invested in Jesuit education.

In sports and campus ministry at GCU, she saw coaches create retreat-like experiences with prayer and reflective activities.

She worked in campus ministry beginning in high school and was nurtured through studies at Gonzaga, said Michelle, who worked in the ministry office as a student and was hired into the program her senior year and continued working with the program during her master’s studies.

She became involved with the Jesuit mission and ministry and decided that was what she wanted to do. Experiencing the opportunities and challenges of the job, she felt called into it. After graduating, she worked two and a half years before deciding to stay in ministry in higher education.

Working in mission and ministry since 2007, she has participated in restructuring it.

“I started as an entry level program coordinator and had opportunities to lead retreats, small groups and other programs,” she said. “I experienced most of our programs.”

In 2011, the role of assistant director for the team was created because the director, who was also a chaplain for the men’s basketball team and often away.

“We decided to adjust the structure and address the team’s organization and management,” said Michelle, who was put in the role to carry out the duties she proposed.

She worked in partnership with the director until he was called elsewhere. University President Dr. John I. deGuzman appointed her as director in 2013 because she had been active in leading the department, mentored closely by the director.

Although recognized as the first woman to serve in this role on an ongoing basis, Michelle acknowledges women who came before her served in transitional roles, guiding various dimensions of mission and ministry at Gonzaga.

In January 2017, Michelle became assistant vice president and then acting vice president in 2018.

“As a Jesuit university, we are called to apply our teaching and learning through the Jesuit charism toward creating a more just and humane world, to build up the reign of God, and a world as God’s Reign on earth in the world,” Michelle said.

Michelle said that this is an interesting time in institutional history to do this work because the university now has fewer Jesuits.

“We cannot assume people will understand the Jesuit charism or how to participate in it through osmosis,” Michelle said. “We need to be intentional about cultivating spaces and resources to support people in participating fully in the life of our community.”

Michelle also said that this office gives voice to the deepest hopes and needs of our community, she said. “Our mission is ultimately about a journey we take over time as we discover who we want to be and how we can best serve our community and the world.”

This mission continues, even and especially in the context of the global pandemic, Michelle said. So, Mission and Ministry has rebuilt its work for the rest of the semester, telecommuting, providing new virtual opportunities at least six days a week, developing new programs in a different format and meeting one-to-one through phone and Zoom.

“Much of this work is on Instagram, where students are comfort- able engaging, and on the website, Facebook and Twitter,” Mission and Ministry has a new weekly schedule: Monday is reflection night with a theme and prayer. Tuesday is “Pray Where You Are.”

Wednesday is “Word Wednesday” with scriptural discussion. Thursday, “Love Does” is about putting the word in action. There are virtual liturgies, podcasts, virtual church and one-to-ones.

“We don’t want to lose connections even though we are physically at a distance,” she said.

In March, students learned classes would move online and they would not return to campus after spring break.

“We are trying to walk with students, faculty and staff through uncertainty, as well as unexpected blessings,” she said. “There is grieving among seniors, who did not imagine a final year like this. People want to be at Gonzaga in a highly relational way. Being at a distance is painful, but we try to communi- cate hope and solidarity.”

“Our Jesuit mission can give us strength and inspiration,” said Michelle, referring to a picture of St. Ignatius at Seattle University, standing with his fist on his hip, and he was called to Rome, not Jerusalem, where he wanted to go.

Noting the context, she said the Pope’s message: “Why can’t you make Rome your Jerusalem?”

Michelle Wheatley (Photo courtesy of Gonzaga University)

“The questions for us, ‘Do you have a deep enough sense of who you are that you can persist in your purpose, even when you have to be flexible in your approach?’ This is a key element of the spiritual exercises,” Michelle said.

“We say in our tradition that anything has the potential to draw forth in us a deeper fullness of life, and I see that opportunity here now,” she said of COVID-19 altering the way Gonzaga worked.

“Staff and faculty have done a remarkable job transitioning to the new format, even working two to three times as many hours to be present to students online,” she said.

For information, call 313-6191 or email wheatleym@gonzaga.edu.

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WE ARE SEASONAL!
Jim Dodell believes that God set out stepping stones for him to follow. After the 1996 ice storm, fires in construction skills, he volunteered to help find more food. Jim went online to find places that help find more food. Jim went to hospitals where he connected with Scott Steinlunkis, now director of Refuge Relief, which took meals to children's homes in Uganda. "I called. Two days before he and his family moved to Spokane, Jim said, "Lord, slow down," and then quickly, "No don't!"

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

or email jim@foodforkidz.org.
Incredible ingenuity inspires new ways to interact and influence

Ever since social distancing restrictions were put into place, Spokane Area Jewish Family Services has had to adjust the way it serves the community. In-person client contact was re-placed almost entirely by phone or email contact, and helping clients find and use both long-standing and new, emerging resources became a crucial part of our work.

The Fig Tree’s regularly updated guide to local resources during the pandemic has been—and continues to be—a key resource, in turn, for us to update the guide, or went through it for them because they lacked internet access, and it has saved them time and stress and has made a clear positive difference in how my agency and its clients are coping with the pandemic.

Neal Schindler - Director
Spokane Area Jewish Family Services

Mary and I met 38 years ago in a clergy wives support group. Over the years, Mary has given the Greater Spokane Area a community voice that is truly the voice of The Fig Tree.

I’ve been reading it off and on for more than 35 years. I love that this publication is non-denominational and ecumenical and non-political. It is the stories of many area people who chose to be involved bringing God’s love to all creation. It has provided us with the support that we needed long before the pandemic.

Suzi Hokonson
Asylum Activist

The Hutton Settlement has been committed to serving the needs of children and families for more than a century. This effort has become even more critical as the pandemic has disrupted our lives and communities. Many organizations throughout Spokane have been silent partners in our effort to provide resources to those in need. This has helped them move from tragedy to triumph.

One such partner in this effort has been The Fig Tree. The Fig Tree publication is one of the few publications that is distributed internally among our organization and for good reason.

The Hutton Settlement, a non-sectarian organization without religious affiliation, shares the commitment towards connectedness that is so important as we stay apprised on the deeper issues of our community.

The pandemic has a heavier toll on communities of color, poor, homeless and hungry people, so our call is to speak up for their voices. We all know that there may be good people who are not sure people stay housed and to feed people.

Many leaders remind us to take a deep breath and ask what we can do. We need to empower ourselves to act—to think.

As I was thinking about what to share in today's edition of The Fig Tree, I thought about The Fig Tree’s regularly updated guide to local resources during the pandemic has been—and continues to be—a key resource, in turn, for us to update the guide, or went through it for them because they lacked internet access, and it has saved them time and stress and has made a clear positive difference in how my agency and its clients are coping with the pandemic.

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Many leaders remind us to take a deep breath and ask what we can do. We need to empower ourselves to act—to think.
Farmers' Markets

Farmers' markets in the region will look different and operate in new ways to keep vendors and customers safe. Market managers are working with the Spokane Regional Health District on best practices.

Diane Reuter, who manages the Spokane Farmers' Market, said she has been driving in and out of the city for 35 years, first at a booth on the street, then at the Spokane Public Market, until other vendors began to buy their produce from markets rather than farms. They then relocated.

Tolstoy Farm, an intentional community north of Davenport, was started in 1963 and has sold its produce locally for 35 years. First at a booth on the street, then at the Spokane Public Market, until other vendors began to buy their produce from markets rather than farms. They then relocated. Tolstoy offers Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) to local members of the Inland Northwest Farmers' Market Association for safety of patrons and vendors.

He also suggested washing the food on returning home and sharing photos of the market with online reviews.

For information, call 208-619-9916 or visit spokanearts.org.

The Liberty Lake Farmers Market will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, June 6 to Oct. 10, at 1421 N. Meadowlawn. It will observe Department of Health and Center for Disease Control protocols, opening late because of the social distancing order. For information, call 209-383-9858 or visit libertylakefarmersmarket.com.

The Millwood Farmers' Market opens in mid-May in the parking lot of Millwood Presbyterian Church. For information, call 924-2350.

Gary and So Angell of Rocky Ridge Farm south of Parallel Plaza in Spokane provide the following rules of conduct that are in effect as of 3 p.m. to Thursday, March 5, from March through November at 3204 E. 17th in Spokane. Membership is required for meat orders. Orders are at rockyridgeranchspokane.org.

The South Perry Thursday Market will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, June 6 to Oct. 10, at 1421 N. Meadowlawn. It will observe Department of Health and Center for Disease Control protocols, opening late because of the social distancing order. For information, call 209-383-9858 or visit libertylakefarmersmarket.com.

The Spokane Valley Farmers' Market will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, June 6 to Sept. 18, at the Spokane Valley Center/Place parking lot, 2426 N. Discovery Peak. For information, call 208-619-9916 or visit spokanevalleymarket.org.

The Millwood Farmers’ Market opens in mid-May in the parking lot of Millwood Presbyterian Church. For information, call 924-2350.

Garfield Neighborhood Council with the support of Catholic Charities, Project Hope and Knox Presbyterian Church.

Market manager Taylor Phillips listed changes: service animals but no pets; no arts and crafts vendors; fewer farms, bakeries and prepared food vendors; no public tables or benches for seating; no extra children’s activities; no sampling or eating on-site. They will follow guidelines being used by other members of the Inland Northwest Farmers’ Market Association for safety of patrons and vendors.

He also suggested washing the food on returning home and sharing photos of the market with online reviews. For information, call 255-3072 or email market@emersongarfield.org.

The Fairwood Farmers’ Market opens from 3 to 7 p.m., Mondays, beginning June 22, at 5102 N. Division, Spokane Valley. For information, call 208-552-2044 or email brandyshine 27@yahoo.com.

Kendall Night Market will be open from 5 to 8 p.m., Wednesdays, at 1335 W. Hastings Rd. in the Fairwood District of North Spokane. It has 35 vendors listed on its website. For information, call 466-0862, email fairwood.market@gmail.com or visit fairwoodfarmersmarket.org.

The Hillyard Farmers’ Market opens from 5 to 7 p.m., Mondays, beginning June 22, at 5102 N. Division. For information, call 993-2104 or email brandyshine 27@yahoo.com.

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Diane has been at Tolstoy Farm 26 years. She was the face of their stand market for many years and has been market manager for eight years.

“The first thing I have to do is get vendors in their stuff.”

She then went to vendors to get them ready. “In the beginning, vendors were setting up their stand, I was there to make sure that the food was washed, sanitized and food was in the right place.”

Vendors, in turn, are setting up tables and keeping everything sanitized, she said.

While there are some things she does not know about the new rules, she works out the details and knows that the farmers are having a good growing season and that when she announced the market would open on Saturday, May 9, she had emails from 400 customers excited they were opening.

Saturday, May 9 and Wednesday, June 10

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Bukola Breczinski, managing editor of KSPS teacher who arranged a week-long trip to Paris with her class. The visit sparked her interest in living in a big city and in language learning. Bukola began studies at New York University’s Stern School of Business in 2001, when 9/11 changed life in the city.

During college, she helped low-income second and third graders in Harlem with reading and writing, and then had a work-study experience teaching at an elementary school in the Bronx, solidifying her interest in education. She joined the New York Teaching Fellows program, specializing in English language learners. From 2003 to 2004, she did marketing with Scholastic, the children’s book publisher. From 2005 to 2006, she was a marketing assistant with Oxford University Press. From 2006 to 2009, she worked with the Wallace Foundation funding educational leadership, arts and after-school programs.

There, Bukola met her husband Dan, who grew up in Ceaur d’Alene, and is now an independent web developer. In 2010, itching to travel internationally and gain teaching experience, she obtained a teaching English as a foreign language degree and spent the year in Prague, Czech Republic, teaching English to children and adults. She returned to start a master’s degree in 2011 at Long Island University in Brooklyn. At the Brooklyn high school, she built relationships with students and tailored instruction to their needs, helping support their dreams of attending college.

In 2016, she applied for the newly created position at KSPS of director of the education department. She started in August 2016. With a background in culturally-responsive teaching and curriculum development, she creates resources for local educators and families to make education more equitable, especially for vulnerable communities because KSPS removes financial barriers and puts resources in the hands of educators, parents and children.

Bukola worked with two Gonzaga University master’s interns in the “This Time in History” series on air in English (or Speakers of other Languages) to segment KSPS’ 30-year archive of documentaries and develop learning guides. Each guide helps students gain background on a topic, explore it through the documentary segments, and engage in peer discussions and projects to deepen their understanding. The lessons are posted on pbslearningmedia.org, which is viewed by about a million educators each month.

Bukola also leads professional development workshops for teachers. On Feb. 20, middle and high school social studies teachers came to watch segments of “Luther King Jr. Community Center” and “Justice at Home” on the Japanese internment, and learn about KSPS’ documentary curricular and PBS learning media resources. KSPS hosts two grants from the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to present stories of local Japanese Americans in the “Injustice at Home” series, sharing their experiences of discrimination before World War II, being relocated to and incarcerated in camps, growing up in camps in Idaho and California, and returning to Washington, where they faced discrimination in finding jobs and housing.

“Most never told their children, because their focus was to rebuild their lives,” Bukola said.

Bukola is also working with national PBS resources for community programs, such as “Every Child Reads,” a first Monday pre-K story-time literacy program at the station with a local storyteller reading stories to 10 to 15 children who also do a craft. She also did the program third Wednesdays at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center for 40 children.

“With social distancing, we are doing it virtually on first and third Fridays,” Bukola said. KSPS is also working with county librarians, public school teachers and community leaders to create resources on family bonding, literacy, math, trauma and building resilience with local families, educators and child care providers.

For information, call 443-7748 or email bbreczinski@ksps.org.

As the education director at KSPS-PBS in Spokane, Bukola Breczinski applies her background in teaching and curriculum development to offer educational resources during COVID-19 school closures and to support at home and distance learning any time.

Bukola and the KSPS team have been working with the Spokane School District on teacher-produced lessons, which are aired on the WORLD Channel (on air: 7:2 and Comcast 313), “Keep Learning,” April 27 through June 12 from 7 to 9 a.m. This learning block is repeated from 2 to 4 p.m. These classes are also on the school district’s channel 17. Mondays and Tuesdays, local K-5 teachers do 20-minute math programs with the district curriculum. Wednesdays and Thursdays are on literacy, and Fridays on art, music and PE.

Along with the teacher lessons, KSPS is broadcasting grades 6-12 educational programs from PBS on the WORLD Channel from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. These lessons are for students, families lack regular access to the internet. With the Keep Learning Initiative and the PBS educational programming on WORLD, families have access to free educational content on seven hours a day from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To access WORLD, families need a TV and antenna, which they can pick up at an Ace Hardware.

“It means children can see and connect with teachers through the end of the year,” Bukola said. KSPS is also providing families and educators free preK-12 daily educational resources from PBS and KSPS during school closures.

“We are posting resources on our website at ksps.org under home learning and sending daily newsletters to more than 1,000 families who signed up,” she said. “Quality education is an equalizer,” she said. “Giving all children access to quality learning experiences improves lives.

“As we support children, we strengthen society. We also help parents be part of their children’s education, giving them self-confidence by increasing their access to resources so they can support their children’s learning,” she said.

A major focus of her work is to create curricula for KSPS’ archive of 30 documentaries on regional history, such as the Mount St. Helens eruption, the women’s movement in Washington, survivors of Japanese internment camps, three local photographers who captured history, and attorney Carl Maxey’s fight for civil rights.

Her goal is to help educators teach regional history through visual and personalized storytelling found in KSPS’ documentaries.

Bukola has also developed curricula for Northwest Profiles, a lifestyle news program that covers local events, people and programs. She is working on a series of lessons on local Native American history, art and culture, from Northwest Profiles to help students learn about native history in an immediate, engaging, personal way.

“My goal is to interest local children and teens in area history so they connect what they learn in class with their own settings,” she said. “There are many resources from the national perspective, but the local perspective helps students connect.

“Video documentaries use storytelling that engages children and draws their attention visually to address challenging topics they might not understand just by reading a text,” she said.

Bukola’s passion for teaching and designing curricula began when teaching. English as a second language to new immigrants at the international high school at Prospect Heights in Brooklyn. Her work helped students cultivate confidence in communicating with peers and gain the language and literacy skills needed to graduate.

Born in Lagos, Nigeria, she immigrated with her family to Minneapolis in 1992 when she was seven, and her father, an engineer, was recruited by Siemens. In Lagos, English is the primary language. She grew up in Plymouth, Minn., of Minneapolis, she realized that, other than two other Nigerian families, people did not look like her. “I did not fit in American culture or African-American culture, and coming so young. I was fully African,” she said. “I felt culturally and racially fluid. It’s why I value equity.”

Despite the challenge of integrating and making friends, she had the support of a high school French teacher who arranged a week-long trip to Paris with her class. The visit sparked her interest in living in a big city and in language learning.

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