

CELEBRATING  
OUR 30TH YEAR

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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest  
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# Ministry nurtures changed lives

By Deidre Jacobson

Central United Methodist Church (CUMC), under the leadership of their pastor, the Rev. Ian Robertson, and member Loli Kalua, has launched expanded services for the homeless, poor and vulnerable in the downtown Spokane area.

The ministry, Change for the Better, empowers individuals to transform their lives.

The goal is to create an environment that supports change and growth for the whole person, inside and out, physical, mental and spiritual, while coordinating with and accessing the existing system of services and removing barriers to success.

CUMC has served meals to downtown residents since 1994 through the Shalom Ministries' Dining with Dignity program. Since August 2012, the program closed to reorganize.

Ian, who retired as pastor of Spokane Valley Nazarene Church, began serving as three-fourth-time minister in October 2012 and met with church leadership. They agreed to invest in the ministry, providing \$100,000 to launch the new program.

He felt there was a challenge to make significant change for the



Loli Kalua with some of the toys participants are packaging for Goodwill Industries.

people in the church's neighborhood.

Meeting with Adrian Dominguez of the Spokane Regional Health District, Ian saw a study revealing that life expectancy in downtown Spokane is 18 years lower than high-income areas in the state, such as the South Hill in Spokane.

"This sickness and suffering is not acceptable. This breaks God's heart. We need to find a way to do better for these people," said Ian.

Loli, who has a background in acrobatics, youth ministries and missionary work, was recruited by Ian to partner with him at CUMC.

She had designed a model for sustainability for nonprofits and was anxious for an opportunity to implement it.

Together she and Ian began to envision Change for the Better. The ministry would provide a cluster of services, which would move people through stages of healing, growth and stability.

They recruited an eight-person team, comprised of some formerly homeless people and others with a variety of practical skills and experience. The team developed policies, procedures and program components.

Continued on page 4

## Hate Studies Institute names recipients of 2013 Take Action Against Hate Awards

The 2013 Eva Lassman Take Action Against Hate Awards will be presented at a banquet at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 22, in Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University. Recipients are World Outside My Shoes, organized by Carl and Teresa Wilkens to end genocide, racism and intolerance, the organizational award, and Linda Pall, a longtime human rights leader, city councilor and attorney in Moscow, the individual award.

Joseph Bock, director of the Eck Institute for Global Health and Teaching, professor at the

University of Notre Dame and author of *The Technology of Nonviolence: Social Media and Violence Prevention* (2012), will be the featured speaker.

World Outside My Shoes works to inspire and equip people to enter the world of the "Other" and to stand up against genocide, racism and intolerance. As a humanitarian aid worker, Carl was the only American who chose to remain in Rwanda during the genocide, helping save the lives of hundreds of people.

Today, Carl and Teresa speak

throughout the world, promoting peace and openness toward the "Other."

Linda, a Latah County human rights leader and instructor at the University of Idaho Law School and Washington State University, founded the annual "Finding the Center" conference.

The banquet of Gonzaga's Institute for Action Against Hate will include a performance of "Eva's Song," read by bestselling author Michael Gurian and accompanied by Vicki Strauss, cellist with the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra for nearly 20 years.

Each year, in honor of the life and memory of Holocaust survivor and educator Eva Lassman, the institute presents the awards to individuals and organizations dedicated to combating hate. She was the first recipient of the award in 2009 at age 90.

A story in The Fig Tree on the life of Eva is at [thefigtree.org/oct09/100109Lassman.html](http://thefigtree.org/oct09/100109Lassman.html).

For information, call 313-3665 or email [hatestudies@gonzaga.edu](mailto:hatestudies@gonzaga.edu).

## Tribe sets event for STOP Violence Against Women Day

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe's STOP Violence Program will host speakers and workshops for Stop Violence Against Women Day from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday, Sept. 27, at the Coeur d'Alene Resort and Casino Event Center in Worley, Idaho.

The opportunity to learn more about domestic violence and how to prevent it includes a Women's Health and Resource Fair, offered with the Idaho Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, said event chair Charity Doyl.

In March 2013, President Barack Obama signed the reauthorization of the 1994 Violence Against Women Act into law, expanding the earlier law to cover same sex couples, immigrants, Native Americans and sex-trafficking victims.

Deborah Parker, vice president of the Tulalip Tribe in Washington and a leading supporter of the act, will provide the evening keynote address. Deborah, who has a bachelor's degree in American ethnic studies and sociology from the University of Washington, has also been director of the Residential Healing School of the Tseil-Waututh Nation in Canada, and in the Treaty Taskforce Office of the Lummi Nation.

In a luncheon address, Christina Crawford, author of *Mommie Dearest*, an autobiographical account of alleged child abuse by her adoptive mother, actress Joan Crawford, will address the long-term effects of abuse and solutions to break the cycle of violence.

Seminar speakers include:

- Sarah Foley of the YWCA-Spokane Alternatives to Domestic Violence program, will discuss re-thinking traditional understandings of domestic violence related to LGBTQ communities and issues when seeking services.

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## Religion News Briefs

### Around the World

World Council of Churches News, PO Box 2100  
CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111  
Fax: +41-22 788 7244 www.oikoumene.org

#### WCC calls for action against corruption

The World Council of Churches (WCC) invites member churches to join a global call to action against corruption, which impacts poor people the most. Studies show that every year more than \$1 trillion goes missing from the global economy through bribes, dishonest deals and tax evasion.

With its emphasis from Oct. 14 to 20, the initiative, Exposed 2013, will engage people in raising their voices against corruption. It is organized by a coalition of Christian organizations known as the Micah Challenge International, based on Micah 6:8.

The campaign suggests ways to resist corruption. It plans 2,000 vigils across the globe, and is collecting 1 million signatures to present at the G20 meeting in November 2014.

**"Corruption is rooted in and propagated by our prevailing economic structures, cultures and value systems,"** which are driven by "greed, relentless pursuit of power, profit and material gain by corporations, political bodies, administrators and individual actors," said Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, the WCC general secretary.

The campaign resonates with the theme of the WCC's upcoming assembly, "God of life, lead us to justice and peace." The WCC assembly from Oct. 30 to Nov. 8 in Busan, Republic of Korea will host a plenary on "overcoming greed."

#### WCC condemns chemical weapons use

The recent use of chemical weapons in the conflict in Syria against civilians has raised international alarms, led to calls for an investigation and met with strong condemnation from World Council of Churches general secretary, the Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, who called on the United Nations to fulfil its responsibility to protect the Syrian people from gross human rights violations.

"No matter who is behind this attack, it is unconscionable that chemical weapons may have found their way into the conflict in Syria," he said. "As a worldwide fellowship of churches, including churches in Syria, which have suffered greatly in the war, we condemn the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances by either side. These last few days have shown the brutality of this war, in which the innocent Syrians are paying an unbearable price."

**Nearly 1,300 people died** from what appears to have been a gas attack of Aug. 21, in Ghouta, a suburb of the capital, Damascus, according to news reports.

**More than 100,000 have died** in the conflict; 1.7 million have become refugees outside Syria, and 1.5 million are displaced in Syria. Hundreds are missing and have been kidnapped, including Archbishop Mar Yohanna Gregorios Ibrahim from the Syriac Orthodox Church and Archbishop Paul Yazigi from the Greek Orthodox Church, and three priests.

Tveit said the WCC calls for the UN to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation and appeals to the UN and international community "to work cooperatively for a negotiated political means to find a peaceful end to this conflict."

In 2006, the WCC adopted at its 9th Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil, a statement for churches around the world to call on the international community and individual governments to protect citizens from human rights violations. The "Vulnerable Populations at Risk: Statement on the Responsibility to Protect" says the "prevention of catastrophic human insecurity requires attention to the root causes of insecurity, as well as to more immediate or direct causes of insecurity."

#### Churches observe International Day of Prayer for Peace

The World Council of Churches calls its member churches to observe the International Day of Prayer for Peace on Sept. 21. It invites people and parishes to pray using the theme of the WCC Assembly, "God of life, lead us to justice and peace."

The WCC commemorates the International Day of Prayer for Peace in conjunction with the United Nations-sponsored International Day of Peace. The day began during the ecumenical Decade to Overcome Violence, emerging from a meeting of the WCC general secretary and the UN secretary general in 2004.

## REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

### Resource Directory distribution underway

The Fig Tree's 2013-14 Resource Directory: Guide to Congregations and Community Agencies has just been published and mailed to each entity listed, as well as to advertisers.

Some receive more than 10 copies or are in locations with other agencies will have copies delivered in September. Volunteers are needed to help with the delivery.

Those interested in additional copies to share with their staff and constituents may request copies and arrange to pick them up.

There will be copies on sale at the Spokane Community College and Spokane Falls Community College bookstores. Community Colleges of Spokane Headstart/ECEAP, which partners with The Fig Tree to produce the directory

will also distribute copies.

"This is a widely-used, popular resource that gives a comprehensive overview of the many organizations, ministries, congregations and government agencies serving in Eastern Washington and North Idaho," said directory editor Malcolm Haworth.

For information, call 535-4112 or email malcolm@thefigtree.org.

### Rural ministry retreat focus is domestic violence

Rural Ministry Resources' Fall Retreat will discuss "Domestic Violence: Pain and Impact" Sept. 16 and 17 at the Rainbow Lodge Retreat Center in North Bend, Wash., said Kathy Lee Kramer, co-chair.

The retreat will explore the impact on all people affected by domestic/intimate partner

violence—men, women, children, friends, work places, schools, communities and congregations large and small.

Clergy and laity from churches of all sizes will participate in the retreat sponsored by Rural Ministry Resources, an ecumenical rural church and community team serving the Pacific Northwest for

more than 35 years.

Workshop facilitators are Kathryn Stickney, pastoral counselor; Clare Josef-Maier, of the Lutheran counseling Network, and Ellen Johanson of the United Methodist Regional Media Center.

For information, call 509-284-6107 or email krammermrelmore@frontier.com.

### Holy Names Sister hold benefit for Lesotho

The Sisters of the Holy Names will hold their seventh annual benefit to raise funds for orphans in Lesotho at 2 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 15, at the Convent of the Holy Names, 2911 W. Ft. Wright Dr.

This year Holy Names Sisters of Lesotho will use funds to build additional classrooms for St. Ambrose School. With each

classroom costing \$5,000, Nancy Tankersley, SNJM, alumni coordinator, believes they can raise enough for three classrooms.

Ninety-eight SNJM sisters and 56 associates work in the mission in Lesotho, where there are four health clinics, four preschools of 15 to 50 students and several high schools with hundreds of children.

"Through the generosity of volunteer musicians, artists and community members, we offer an afternoon of music, refreshments, art and collectibles, including sculptures, paintings, jewelry and more," said Nancy.

For information, call 328-7470 x121 or email ntankersley@snjmw.org.

### Interfaith forum explores young adults' faith, values

How young adults live out their beliefs and values will be the topic of a forum to be held at Gonzaga University from 7 to 9 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 1, at the Wolff Auditorium in the Jepson Center.

The Spokane InterFaith Council is sponsoring the interactive panel with audience participation with Gonzaga Missions, hoping it will lead to similar forums at other local universities in future months, said Doug Huigen, coun-

cil secretary.

The target age group ranges from high school seniors to "30-somethings."

The panel from Gonzaga, Whitworth and Eastern Washington University and non-students will voice young adult attitudes on religious issues and practice, exploring cultural differences and similarities from previous generations.

The InterFaith Council initiated

the project hoping to generate interest for future forums, he said.

Fr. Frank Case, SJ, GU's vice president for mission, said, "We are happy to welcome the forum to our campus. As a Jesuit institution, fostering respectful inter-religious dialogue is an important part of our mission."

The forum will include time for exchange with the audience.

For information, call 328-3158 or 951-8023.

### Habitat and Lutherans build South Hill home

Habitat-Spokane broke ground on Aug. 17 at 3501 E. 22nd Ave. to build a single-family home with hundreds of area Lutheran church members working side-by-side with the Siddig-Awasa family. The home will be completed in December, said Michone Preston, Habitat-Spokane CEO.

Thrivent Builds was created in 2005 as a result of a successful pilot build in which Habitat-Spokane built six homes with

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Michone said.

In 2006, as part of a nationwide alliance, Thrivent committed to providing \$125 million for four years to build Habitat homes across the country to increase the organization's home production. In total, Thrivent and area Lutherans have sponsored 23 Habitat homes in Spokane County.

"We feel blessed to have this partnership with Thrivent and area Lutherans. Habitat is a faith-based organization and the spirit of kindness and generosity from our Lutherans has been wonder-

ful," said Michone.

The Siddig-Awasa family have been earning their 500 hours of sweat equity by building on other Habitat homes. They have attended mandatory workshops to help prepare them for homeownership and are saving for closing costs.

When they have met the partnership requirements, they will purchase the home from Habitat, which will hold a 20- to 30-year no-interest loan they will repay.

For information, call 534-2552, email michone@habitat-spokane.org or visit www.habitat-spokane.org.

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**Workshop gives tools for coping with loss**

For people who experience loss of a job, a divorce, a death or a health issue, Susie Weller and Peggy Capes are co-facilitating a workshop on "The Art and Practice of Living with Nothing or No One Against You" from 6 to 9 p.m., Friday, Sept. 20, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 21, at Unity Center of North Idaho, 4465 N. 15th St. in Coeur d'Alene.

The event integrates spiritual tools and scientific research on coping with trauma and stress, said Susie, who has a master's degree in pastoral ministry. Peggy has a master's degree in social work and is a licensed Unity teacher. For information, call 255-6676 or 208-664-1125 or email [unity@unitycenter.org](mailto:unity@unitycenter.org).

**Retreat explores 'An Artist's Voice for Justice'**

Theresa Henson, an artist, poet/writer and the Monastery of St. Gertrude's communications manager, will facilitate a retreat on "Creative Courage: An Artist's Voice for Justice," from 7:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 23 to 1:30 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 29 at the Monastery in Cottonwood, Idaho.

The retreat will include morning workshops, afternoon studio time and an evening series of "Justice Talks," featuring guest speakers working for justice throughout the region.

Participants will explore the works of "those who maintained a soulful response to injustice and a joyful curiosity for the diversity of our world," said Theresa, who studied English and art at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and recently completed her master's degree in transforming spirituality at Seattle University. For information, call 208-962-2000 or email [spirit-center@stgertrudes.org](mailto:spirit-center@stgertrudes.org).

**Law professor reviews government apologies**

Steven Bender, professor at Seattle University School of Law, will speak on "How Could We? Regret and the Pursuit of Humanity" at 7 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 19, in the Barbieri Courtroom at Gonzaga School of Law.

In this talk, drawn from his upcoming book by the same name, Steve will offer a "moral compass" based on American legal, economic, political and cultural history to guide contemporary decision-makers and the public adopt policies and practices that avoid "societal regret" and that express compassion.

He will review federal and state apologies issued because of previous policies and practices of dehumanization, and then look at how current practices and policies may be judged.

For information, call 313-3665 or email [hatestudies@gonzaga.edu](mailto:hatestudies@gonzaga.edu).

**Second Harvest honors Gary Singer**

Second Harvest will dedicate the Gary Singer Distribution Center at a reception from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 25, at their volunteer center, 1234 E Front Ave. There will be a formal presentation at 2 p.m.

Second Harvest named the center after Gary Singer, "longtime, passionate supporter" and board member who passed away unexpectedly in February.

"It's a way for us to pay tribute to his more than three decades of service to Second Harvest and hungry people in the Inland Northwest," said Rod Wieber, chief resource officer.

Jason Clark, executive director, said that "we lost a good friend when Gary, owner of Dutch's music store and pawn shop in downtown Spokane, died.

"In his involvement, he was board chair more than once, and received the national food bank board member of the year award in 2000. He was auctioneer for the first five years of our annual taste event, 'Taking a Bite out of Hunger,'" Jason said.

Gary, who rejoined the board in 2011, was involved in the capital campaign to purchase the present building in the early 1990s.

Also involved with Spokane Public Radio and as a leader in Spokane's Jewish community, he was known for his sense of humor and his puns.

He used to give what he called the "Sermon on the Amount" at the annual the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service and fund raiser for Second Harvest.

For information, call 534-6678.

**Pathways to Peace events begin Sept. 21**

The annual series of peace events known as Pathways to Peace will take place in Spokane from Sept. 21 through Oct. 5. Each weekend, there will be events focusing on peace through inner experience and perspective-expanding dialogue.

Pathways to Peace 2013 is sponsored by One Peace, Many Paths, the Spokane Interfaith Council and several faith communities.

Six activities will present dif-

**Multi service agency seeks new nonprofits**

With the WIC office moving out on Nov. 1 and another internal office transition, Spokane Valley Partners, community service organization, has space available for other nonprofits in its building at 10814 E. Broadway Ave.

"We seek to enhance services we already provide to address needs in the community," said David Stone, emergency services coordinator.

The organization already provides the largest food bank in Spokane County, a clothing bank, protective payee services, emergency assistance services, on-site SNAP offices, Valleyfest, Day-break Counseling Services, Grins and Giggles Dentistry and Ignite! Community Theater.

They also host social service organizations in its lobby, and conduct seminars for other organizations in its classrooms, to give the people they serve access to more than they have on our campus.

For information, call 927-1153, email [admin@svpart.org](mailto:admin@svpart.org) or visit [svpart.org](http://svpart.org).

ferent pathways to peace.

On the International Day of Peace at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 21, the Center for Spiritual Living, 33rd and S. Regal, will offer an "Honoring the Nations" ceremony to help people visualize and set intentions for peace for every nation of the world.

The Peace Pole Pilgrimage will visit six of Spokane's peace poles, starting at 2:30 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 22, at the Center for Spiritual Living and ending at North Spokane Unity Center with a 5:30 p.m. potluck and the film, "I AM," at 6:30 p.m.

At 10 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 28, a Peace Conversation Cafe, at Chairs Coffee Shop, will discuss "Food as a Tool for Peace." Attendees will reflect on how food choices on their personal peace, as well as on issues of animal welfare, hunger, war and peace.

At 3 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 29, the Spokane InterFaith Council offers its Women's Interfaith Circle for

women of all faiths to share their experiences with prayer and meditation as a path to peace. RSVP to the website for the location.

The final weekend of Pathways to Peace 2013 begins at 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 4 at Unity Spiritual Center, 2900 S. Bernard, with a Crystal Bowl Ceremony by Joy Gruenewald, an experience of vibrations of the crystal bowls that transport listeners to stillness and peace.

The closing event, co-sponsored by One Peace, Many Paths and the Spokane Interfaith Council, will be an Interfaith Potluck and Game Night, from 5 to 8 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 5. After the potluck, small groups will play an interfaith game, "We Believe 2," which invites participants to share their beliefs in a fun, safe manner while learning about the perspectives of others.

For information, call 536-2811 or visit [www.onepeacemanypaths.org](http://www.onepeacemanypaths.org).

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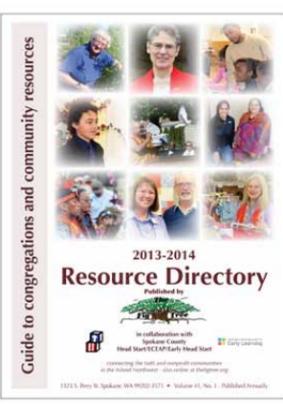
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## Community leaders plan Christian Service Summit on Sept. 14

Local government officials and Central United Methodist Church have teamed together to plan a Christian Service Summit from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 14, at Weyerhaeuser Hall at Whitworth University, as an invitational gathering for ministers and church leaders to define areas of community need where local churches can make a difference.

The participants will examine potential community needs and determine which ones require immediate attention.

Then, the group will break up into geographical groups to create plans for action in their own neighborhoods.

"Recognizing that the basic needs of many in our communities are increasing and that government services are decreasing, it is imperative that faith communities work together in a spirit of unity to serve those who suffer from lack of essential resources," according to Episcopal Bishop James Waggoner

Jr. "Supporting life, health and hope for all is our calling."

Among the issues to be considered at the summit are jobs and economic opportunity, safety and security, quality of life, and health and mental health issues.

Among the speakers are Mayor David Condon, Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich, Police Chief Frank Straub, Whitworth President Beck Taylor and Regional Health District Epidemiologist Adrian Dominguez.

Ozzie said he envisioned the need for such a summit meeting and communicated his thoughts to Pastor Ian Robertson of Central United Methodist Church. Together they established a committee, which has been planning the gathering for several months.

"It is my firm belief that working to-

gether we will make a difference in our community and more importantly in the lives of those whom we serve," Ozzie said. "If done right, we can change the lives of individuals and families for not only the present, but for generations to come."

### Leaders gather to create plans of action for their neighborhoods.

Participation in the summit will be by invitation due to limited space and to allow representation of all faith communities.

Ministers from a variety of Spokane area churches will be asked to consider "What Breaks God's Heart in Spokane County?"

Their lists of concerns will generate plans for Christians to do something about these issues.

A group of Spokane business leaders and government representatives will also be invited to attend the summit.

One member of the business com-

munity planning to attend is Spokane County United Way President Tom Stephenson.

"Given declining government funding, most organizations need more volunteers and more money to meet the rising need in our community," he said. "We encourage and will do what we can to support efforts in the faith community to enlist volunteers and raise money to help those in the greatest need face these trying times."

A year-long plan has been established for additional meetings in each of seven neighborhoods in Spokane County. Leaders for these neighborhood gatherings will be determined at the summit meeting.

"One of the criticisms of previous attempts at projects like this has been that it doesn't get past the discussion stage," said Ian. "We won't let that happen."

For information, 838-1431 or email at [lolik@change4tb.net](mailto:lolik@change4tb.net).

## Change for the Better builds on people's assets

Continued from page 1

Meals continue to be the backbone and bring low-income and homeless to the ministry. Five breakfasts, two lunches and two dinners are served weekly—providing 5,500 meals each month.

Participants can access a clothing bank, services from nursing students, outreach from CHAS clinic, mental health services, veterans' services and legal services on site.

Participants are invited to participate in what they call the Hall of Change—with separate youth and adult groups. These groups meet to exercise, participate in activities and volunteer.

The groups have gone on outings, volunteering to clean the downtown area.

Participants receive rewards including showers for men, a place to do laundry, storage of their things and free items from the store—such as clothing, hygiene products and other donated items.

Change for the Better focuses on "asset building," developing people's skills, for example, through piece-work, for which participants are paid and build funds to help with needs related to life improvement.

Money earned is placed in an individual's account and can be withdrawn to use for anything that contributes to their goals, such as for ID, a necessity for job hunting, paying fines or housing.

Change for the Better has a contract with Goodwill Industries to sort and bag toys, said Loli.

It seeks to develop similar contracts with other local businesses.

On-the-job training will be a component of the program.

Several of the team members have skills to train and oversee participants in various construction and building tasks, providing opportunities for training and future employment.

A partnership with Gonzaga Law Clinic and the Center for Justice will help individuals seeking to form new businesses and begin the steps toward self-employment.

Another focus of Change for the Better is to increase the amount of healthy, organic and local food served to the guests.

A link between processed food and poor health has been identified, Loli said.

Change for the Better will move toward quality nutrition with a long-term goal of connecting with local providers and other feeding stations in Spokane.

Local leaders and people concerned about downtown Spokane have been excited about what is happening at CUMC, said Loli.

For example, Judge Mary Logan met with Ian and Loli sharing her dream of forming Community Court, a model similar to the existing drug and mental health court systems, partnering with service providers to overcome barriers and establish a transformative plan for offenders, which could partner with Change for the Better.

She wants to locate the courtroom in the downtown area, possibly at CUMC.

The Community Court will connect people leaving jail with services and intervene so that they

do not end up on the streets and in the same circumstances.

"Life beat them up. Something happened to them," said Ian of people he meets at CUMC. "They need somebody to believe in them."

"When this happens, the impossible becomes believable and possible, that God cares enough to walk with them every step of the way. We need good people in the community who want to help, people of all faiths to help break down barriers," Ian said.

He said there is need for contract work to help people build their assets, and construction projects for on-the-job training.

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# Counselor helps people overcome barriers disabilities may set before them

By Sara Parker

Throughout her life, Wilma Bob has observed how disabilities can affect a person's quality of life from a variety of perspectives.

Now, through her work as a vocational rehabilitation counselor at the American Indian Community Center in Spokane, as chaplain for the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Police, as an ordained minister and in facilitating a Bereaved Parents support group, she is able not only to support disabled American Indians, but also to hear frustrations of police, lead a celebration circle and support families who have lost children.

Growing up on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation in North Idaho in a family with 11 children, she had a sister with polio.

"I saw how people treated her—how she got left behind again and again—so I'd slow down and walk with her so she wouldn't have to be by herself. Society doesn't see the disabled, so we always helped her if we could," Wilma said.

In 1998, Wilma was involved in a car accident when a driver struck her car while attempting to pass her on a snowy highway.

At the hospital, she was given pain medication, to which she had an allergy. A migraine developed and pressure burst a blood vessel behind one of her eyes.

As a result, she has double vision and trouble with depth perception. She now uses a Zoomtext screen that helps magnify print and graphics 10 times so she can read them. She also has special glasses to help her read for work and drive.

Despite her visual impairment, Wilma is active in her community.

As a vocational rehabilitation counselor for nearly two years, she assists "anyone who has a barrier and can't do a job they once did."

She meets with people who come between 8:30 and 11:30 a.m., Wednesdays, at the American Indian Community Center, 801 E. Third in Spokane. She gives them application forms and counsels them to help them articulate their needs.

"As an employment program, the Career Renewal Program remove barriers that inhibit people from working," she said.



Wilma Bob at the American Indian Community Center

It helps disabled people who are members of federally-recognized tribes find and maintain employment by assessing their abilities, developing plans of action and following up after they find jobs.

"If someone has an eye problem that impedes functionality, we can buy glasses. If someone has a hearing problem, we can provide for the person to get hearing aids, as long as it's directly tied to employment," Wilma said.

One person she is helping was a felon no one would hire. He is going to trucking school and will be a long-haul trucker after that.

A person with an injured leg is being retrained for other work and begins studies at Spokane Community College in the fall.

"It's renewing for me to help people, because for many years, I did not work," she said.

As a police chaplain, she rides

with Coeur d'Alene Tribal police and lets them talk just to help relieve their stress. She has been doing that for a year. She also provides emotional support for both officers and families affected by trauma on the reservation.

"If there's a death notification, we can travel with them and sit with the family," she said.

Wilma tailors her services to meet the needs of each person.

As an ordained minister serving the Celebration Circle Fellowship with the Kingdom Fellowship Church Alliance, she was doing counseling. That's how she was asked to do the vocational rehabilitation counselor job.

The fellowship she leads in Worley, Idaho, is one of 13 circles in the Kingdom Fellowship Church Alliance in this region.

"We use a form of traditional services that involves people who are comfortable with different faiths. If we can't meet their needs, then we'll find someone who can," she said.

"We can find spiritual leaders in any of the four tribes surrounding Spokane: the Coeur d'Alene, Kalispel, Spokane and Nez Perce," she said. "We locate the spiritual leader and provide transportation to and from the ceremony."

Although Wilma had been raised Catholic, she converted to the Pentecostal faith in 1985. The celebration circles are small, personal gatherings in a home.

"It's non-traditional, with no chairs, pews, pulpit or single leader," she explained.

People bring music and share their concerns and experiences in seeking to live faithfully.

"Everyone brings something to share," Wilma said. "I take notes and tie together what people share with Scripture so they see how the Lord is working in their lives."

The church also incorporates Coeur d'Alene traditions of dance, sign language and drama.

As a minister, she also counsels people with marital, domestic violence, and physical and sexual abuse issues.

Wilma does her best to meet the needs of whoever comes to her for help, providing food, clothing and transportation, funded by donations from the community.

Two months ago, her church

took three truckloads and a trailer load of food, clothing and household items to flood victims on the Siksika Reservation near Calgary, Alberta.

"I keep in touch with the people and we hope to gather funds and take a group to do manual labor to help them recover," she said.

Wilma and her husband of 43 years, Thomas, have two boys and two girls, but lost two children to crib death and one in a miscarriage, so she identifies with bereaved parents.

So she is bringing a branch of the Bereaved Parents of the USA Support Group to the Coeur d'Alene reservation. Although her surviving children are all grown, she finds that the loss of her other three children still affects her years later.

"When you're a mother, and you give birth to a baby, there's much pain. When they put your baby on you, the pain goes away. With a miscarriage, there isn't anything to take that pain away," Wilma said.

She hopes the bereaved parents support group will help bring understanding, compassion and hope to new people experiencing grief, whether they are parents, grandparents, siblings or other family.

It is a self-help group, with people who have experienced the death of children helping others, letting them know they are not alone and learning how others have redirected their lives. The group meets on the third Thursdays of every month.

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## Couple pray together to strengthen their marriage and bring church unity

Carole Dillon and her husband Jim Thiessen are part of a small group that meets at the Convent of the Holy Names to pray, say the rosary, sing and read from "True Life of God," which compiles messages that mystic and prophet Vassula Ryden has conveyed for more than 27 years.

The messages Vassula receives from God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Mary reflect the message of the Christian faith calling for people to repent, love, reconcile, pray and work for peace and church unity.

Vassula, who was born in Egypt into a Greek Orthodox family, married a Lutheran from Switzerland and lived in Europe, Asia and Africa. After a divorce, she married a Swedish Lutheran, who is a career diplomat. They lived in Switzerland and now in Greece.

In 1998, she started the Beth Myriam project, a house to feed and educate the poor in the Holy Land. Now there are 25 other houses around the world.

"The thrust of the messages given to Vassula is for the unification of the church—Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic. The church has lost power by being split," Carole said.

"We are called to live life in constant prayer, love and relationship with Jesus," said Carole who grew up Catholic.

She and Jim, who grew up Baptist, graduated from West Valley High School.

Carole has worked for 43 years as a respiratory therapist at Sacred Heart, after completing a respiratory therapy class in 1971 at Spokane Community College. Jim sold health and beauty products, crackers, cookies and soda pop in the Tri Cities and Yakima.

In 2001, he moved back to Spokane. Both had married and divorced. Each has three children and several grandchildren.

In 2005, before they married, he became Catholic. Jim, who



Jim Thiessen and his wife, Carole Dillon, sit in their home.

retired three years ago, now sings in the choir and a schola men's group at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, where they attend.

"I didn't want to be married but spiritually single," Carole said.

They pray together each morning before she goes to work.

"Praying together has made a difference in our marriage," she said. "As we pray for intentions, we learn what is up with each other. It's a great way to communicate."

Carole also finds that prayer helps her be more compassionate with the circumstances of her patients, especially some who are indigent and do not take care of themselves because of drug abuse.

"There's little difference between one sinner and another," she said.

Carole lived next door to Sr. Mary Trenary, who was a Holy Names Sister. Carole and Jim are now a Holy Names associate.

"She introduced me to the writings of messages Vassula

has received," said Carole. "Not everyone trusts these kinds of revelations, such as Mary's appearance to children in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, in 1981, or in Garabandal, Spain, from 1961 to 1965," said Carole.

Some people tried to dissuade her from being involved with someone who had such revelations, but she kept reading the volumes Vassula has written, and praying with them.

A Greek Orthodox man in Spokane helped start a prayer group at the Convent of the Holy Names, where several sisters were involved.

Pwin Berkowitz of Seattle, former co-coordinator, asked Carole if she and Jim would be the Northwest Region coordinators for Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

Carole is hopeful about church unity, because the messages Vassula receives promise that if the churches unify their date for celebrating Easter, the unity of the

church will follow.

For Easter 2013, the Eastern rite Catholics and the Latin diocese in the Holy Land both adopted the Julian calendar used by the Orthodox and celebrated Easter on May 5.

In 2014, Easter falls on the same day, April 20, in both calendars, so the change for these two churches officially begins in 2015.

Carole is also hopeful because Pope Francis, soon after his election, announced he would meet with the Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

"There are always questions about revelations, such as those

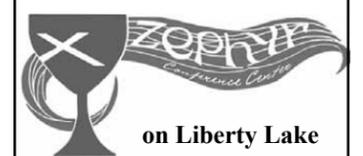
of Vassula," said Carole. "Usually the visionary needs to die before a decision is made about the visions."

The movement reaches out ecumenically to other Christians, and also reaches out to Islam, Hindu, Buddhist and other faiths, she said.

"Vassula speaks about what is happening in the world, concerned that there are so many wars and so much violence," Carole said.

She says that about 150,000 are involved in the True Life in God movement in the United States.

For information, call 599-1114, email [caroledillon@mac.com](mailto:caroledillon@mac.com) or visit [www.tlig.org](http://www.tlig.org).



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Continued from page 1

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• Melanie Warner, owner of Hand to Hand Combat Martial Arts in Post Falls, will give easy-to-learn and remember self-defense techniques.

• Molly Nota of the Idaho Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, will report on Idaho, which ranks among the worst in the nation for breast cancer screening.

Bernie LaSarte of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's STOP Violence Program, said proceeds will benefit that program, which provides victim and court advocacy, emergency shelter, victim counseling, resource referrals, emergency room advocacy, technical assistance, outreach, community education and a Domestic Violence Offender Intervention Program. It respects cultural beliefs.

Nonprofits with programs serving women and children, and interested businesses will have displays.

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# Alliance builds relationships as people share concerns and unite to act

By Mary Stamp

Organizing through the Spokane Alliance helps people in congregations, labor and education build relationships as they share their passions, frustrations and hopes. Out of listening sessions, common issues emerge and the alliance helps member organizations prioritize those issues, research them and decide on ways to make changes that benefit the community.

For more than 10 years, the alliance has used the community organizing process to improve public transportation, increase job opportunities, promote green building, improve access to health care and bring funding to Spokane to improve life in the community by both challenging and partnering with people in power.

Carol Kawczyk, the Spokane Alliance's executive director since November 2011, brings a background from community organizing—also in the Industrial Areas Foundation model—in Baltimore, where she moved at 18, after leaving her home in Milwaukee.

**"I saw the face of Baltimore** while teaching art in churches, community centers and soup kitchens while working on degrees in fine arts and community art at the Maryland Institute College of Art," said Carol, who earned a bachelor's degree in 2005 and a master's in 2006.

As she taught art, she listened to people's pain. What she experienced was quite a contrast to the life of students in college.

Carol collaborated with people, developing relationships and ideas to address issues for young adults and older people.

"Although they were homeless, addicted to drugs or needed a meal to share across the table, they faced similar issues," she said. "I couldn't just listen."

So she began doing community organizing, working nine years with Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD).

"BUILD started 35 years ago, using ideas from the civil rights movement," Carol said.

**Community organizing helps** people find shared self-interests and builds consensus on issues to influence decision makers, while developing leadership skills.

In a Baltimore school, she talked to teachers of children who were in trouble and who gave them trouble. She learned they could not play outside because of a drug dealer on the corner. They could not walk to school because they passed prostitutes on the way.

"If we know something like this, and the community wants things to be different, we need to act to solve it," said Carol.

A team of parents built a rela-



Carol Kawczyk seeks to inform and energize people to act.

tionship with local police to solve some safety issues children and families faced.

Similarly in schools they identified facility issues, and found simple things to do, such as adding streetlights in the dark areas around the school and building a playground in a neighborhood that lacked one.

"We organized with the parents and teachers in the schools," Carol said. "We made the repairs possible by building relationships with the school superintendent, who became a partner."

**"Organizing is addictive,"** said Carol, who grew up in a Polish Catholic family with Jewish roots.

She has been visiting different member churches to learn about them since she came to Spokane.

"Often we meet people who know things could be different and are willing to organize to create change. Organizing gives focus to conditions, so later things are different and better," she said.

**In Spokane, she has found** that there are so many issues work can go on for years. Because of its size, Spokane also is a community where organizing can have a positive impact, compared to a large city with crumbling buildings, she said.

"Compared to Baltimore, Spokane is smaller, more stable and easier to grasp for a single staff person," said Carol.

Since she came to Spokane, she has recruited five new organizations and none have dropped out, although several had dropped before she came.

Of the 25 members today, six

are congregations—St. Ann's, The Unitarian Universalist Church, Westminster United Church of Christ, Liberty Park UMC, Covenant United Methodist Church and Holy Trinity Episcopal, down from 14 in 2004.

Fourteen are labor unions, and others are school and community groups.

Carol said some churches may have dropped because of dues.

**"I don't want dues to stand** in the way, but dues mean the alliance operates autonomously," Carol said. "They give us more power to be a presence rather than spending our time raising money."

Through its member organizations, 20,000 people are involved. Participation is through member organizations, not individual members. Some individuals who belonged to previous member

organizations, wanted to continue when their organizations dropped membership. Fifteen formed the Independent Grassroots Organization, Carol said.

Priorities are to find new leaders and to broaden membership.

**"The goal is to reenergize,** re-focus and set people into action," she said. "Most of my efforts are learning by doing, building relationships and sharing experiences."

Soon after she arrived, the Washington State Legislature passed a jobs bill that gave local stimulus through a \$1.1 billion bond for construction projects supported by the Spokane Alliance, working in collaboration with the Puget Sound Alliance.

Of that amount, \$54 million of the projects are in Spokane. Half of the fund will help finish the Medical School at Washington State University in Spokane.

Other projects include energy-efficiency programs under SustainableWorks, a University District pedestrian/bike bridge; Spokane Community College's Extended Learning Center; infrastructure on the Centennial Trail and a professional technology skills program.

Those funds coming soon after she arrived gave a boost of energy to the Spokane Alliance, she said.

**The current action teams** are Restore Spokane and Washington's Future, responding to budget cuts and shaping a shared vision for the future in the city and state; the Jobs Team, working to ensure quality jobs in Spokane County, and the Health and Education

Team, seeking to open school-based health centers in two public schools.

Since the end of October 2012, the Spokane Alliance has focused on the city budget, concerned that managers' salaries were increased when other items were cut.

The alliance involved 12,000 volunteers to back the library levy, which passed and to oppose the measure requiring a two-thirds vote by the City Council for new tax revenues.

For the November election, the alliance's strategic team urges a platform calling for quality jobs, restoring the river and increased resources to public safety

**"People are facing many** decisions about cuts, so we need to be clear what we want funded or created," said Carol.

The Spokane Alliance has embarked on a multi-year campaign to address state-wide revenue shortfalls by standing for needs of the whole state.

"By organizing more people with this focus we believe we can help shift our economy," she said.

Carol said the alliance has worked recently with the public facilities district on Convention Center expansion to hire locally, offer health care, hire apprentices and provide jobs for veterans.

For information, call 532-1688 or email [carol@spokanealliance.org](mailto:carol@spokanealliance.org).



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# Three women's persistence brought health care to low-income people

By Kaye Hult

Dirne Community Health Center helps meet the health needs of 18,000 people in Kootenai County, particularly for individuals and families who struggle to make ends meet.

No such facility existed in the early 1980s. The clinic was born through the vision and dedication of Lidwina Dirne, Sandy Mamola, and Peggy Irving.

In 1983, Lidwina, who was facilitating a divorce support group at St Pius X Roman Catholic Church, shared with her friend Sandy that one participant had a chronic health condition, but couldn't afford to see a doctor.

Sandy and Lidwina discussed the difficulty working-class people had taking care of their health because of their low wages. What they earned needed to go first to pay rent and feed their families.

Those unemployed or homeless had access to more assistance.

The women invited others to help them explore creating a free clinic. Peggy, a registered nurse who worked in several hospitals and settings, including with student health services at Central Washington University and the Red Cross, became involved.

In 1983, they founded Lake City Health Care, which later became the Dirne Community Health Care Center.

It took them years of monthly meetings before the clinic opened. Each month, Lidwina called everyone to remind them the group was meeting.

"I was running the soup kitchen at St. Pius on Fridays, which I've done for 26 years, and working as a lumber broker, Sandy said in a recent interview. "At times, it felt like the clinic was going nowhere. Lidwina's drive was key to bringing the clinic into being."

The first donation the group received, \$600, from the Presbyterian Synod of Women, helped them set up their nonprofit status.

Next they needed malpractice insurance. No doctor would work at the clinic without it.

The board's second donation came from the religious community in Holland, to which Lidwina belonged. In 1971, she had come to Coeur d'Alene from Holland, supported by that community, and worked at St. Pius as their director of religious education. The clinic board used that donation to open a bank account.

The board contacted every doctor in Coeur d'Alene, asking who was interested in helping with the clinic. The only positive response was from Dr. William Woods.

The clinic opened in 1985 with one doctor in space donated by Panhandle Health, through the



Sandy Mamola tells the story of the Dirne Health Center.

help of Carol Couch, the director of nursing, and Larry Belmont, the executive director.

"At first, they let us use their facility Saturday mornings. We had maybe six patients the first time. It grew from there," Sandy said.

Panhandle Health let them store medical records in one room.

They could only serve patients who had no insurance. Eventually, Lake City Health Care had people standing in a line that stretched around the corner, sometimes for three or four hours before it opened. The clinic grew to two nights a week, then to three.

Gradually, more doctors volunteered. Most helped every two to three months, but some came monthly.

"Everyone was a volunteer," said Sandy, "doctors, nurses, clerical people and financial screeners."

They sometimes served 30 or more patients, never turning anyone away.

Organizing and running the clinic took much time. Sandy, Lidwina and Peggy attended every clinic to maintain continuity.

The board hired medical directors, but no one stayed long, because the pay was low. Because there was so little money, Sandy quit her job to work as the clinic's director. She had previously worked in medical offices and had knowledge from having worked with doctors for many years. They also paid Ginger Seaman as a patient assistant. Kathy Ream, who volunteered as a pharmacist, was at every clinic.

Joe Morris, chief executive officer at Kootenai Medical Center (KMC), gave the clinic \$5,000 credit for x-ray services.

"We used these infrequently. Once the \$5,000 ran out, KMC

continued to foot all the labs and x-ray costs," Sandy said. "Without KMC's support, we would not have survived."

The hospital was unable to sell drugs to Lake City Health Care, but donated antibiotics and hypertensives. KMC provided meds for most of the clinic's patients, keeping them out of the hospital.

Eventually, the clinic grew too large for Panhandle Health's building. Steve Meyers and Charlie Nipp, from Parkwood Business Properties, found space to lease at the 1111 Ironwood Building. KMC helped pay the lease.

Sandy and other volunteers helped write grants. "3 Cs (Cancer and Community Charities) was generous to us, too," she said, "allowing us to expand."

Offering mental health care was also important. A student, Skip Frasier, sought a place to do a supervised practicum for his psychology degree. Once he graduated, he became a mental health provider. As the mental health component grew, he brought other students to fulfill their practicum requirements there, too.

Glenn Vaughn, a licensed social worker, came as a volunteer. He is the longest-serving social worker.

"We went out of our way to treat our patients with respect," said Sandy.

When patients arrived, they would go through financial screening, which Sandy did, because it allowed her to know the patients better. The financial screening included social work screening and counseling.

The clinic had a fee scale from \$5 to \$20, although Sandy doesn't believe any patient ever paid the full amount. Everyone was expected to pay something, either at the time of service or later.

Sandy thought back to some of the people she met.

A young man brought his wife to the clinic. A graduate of the University of Idaho, he was insured through his work at a local bank, but his wife and child were not. He earned \$10 an hour, or \$1,200 per month, on which to support a wife and child. His wife became sick. The clinic was able to treat her, and their child, who was on Medicaid. The presence of Lake City Health Care made a difference for them.

In 1999, Sandy suggested that the board change the clinic's name to Dirne Community Health Center in honor of all Lidwina did to bring the clinic to life.

Lidwina maintained interest in the health center until her death in June. Peggy died a few months earlier in March.

"People always think it can't be done," said Sandy, who left the clinic in 2001. "It seemed overwhelming, but it was simple. Anybody can start a clinic or a soup kitchen."

Alan Brockway, director of development at Dirne, explained the transition since 2004. Dirne grew from a volunteer organization, which saw only uninsured, to being a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), which can treat anyone without regard to insurance. As a FQHC, it is directed by patients and receives patients with and without insurance.

"Dirne transitioned from community members taking care of those in need to the board having a majority of its members from

the population served," Alan said.

With paid staff, higher standards of care are delivered, together with an increased longevity of care, he said. Several hundred people still volunteer their services, including some retired doctors. It has grown to the point that the center has moved to a new building at 1090 Park Place in Coeur d'Alene.

It also serves people throughout Kootenai and Shoshone Counties with five satellite clinics.

It offers primary care for all ages, including pediatric care; preventative, restorative and emergency dental care, and medication assistance through free- or reduced-price medication. It teaches and provides counseling on diabetes.

Dirne offers several counseling options, evening as well as daytime sessions for adults and children as individuals, couples or families.

It provides outreach and supportive services for the homeless, including a walk-in clinic for acute care.

Sandy is pleased it carries on the legacy of its founders, maintaining much of its original mission of serving people who cannot otherwise afford health care.

For information, call 208-292-0292 or see [www.dhcidaho.org](http://www.dhcidaho.org).



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## SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

**Are Human Beings Created Noble?  
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*You are invited to participate in conversations on spiritual topics with people of all faiths (or none).*

**5:30 p.m.**  
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at  
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113 W. Indiana St.

To find out more about this month's topic, visit the Bahá'í website [www.spokanebahais.org](http://www.spokanebahais.org)

# Daughter's death to cancer leads parents to run a clothing bank at church

By Evanne Montoya

More than two years after Kira Wraspir's sudden death from a non-cancerous tumor at the age of 12, her mother Debbie Wraspir keeps her memory alive through Kira's Kloset at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Spokane.

In her name, volunteers give out hundreds of clothing items and books on third Saturdays at the church's gymnasium, 9706 N. Division St.

It's a way for Debbie to both remember and honor Kira.

While Debbie does not believe the grief of a parent losing a child is something that ever goes away, working with Kira's Kloset has helped carry her through the difficulty of the first years after Kira's death.

**It also helps other children,** keeping alive Kira's spirit of giving to her community.

Since it opened in October 2010, serving 28 children at its first distribution in January 2011, it has grown to serve 100 to 300 children each month. It also provides an outlet for others who wish to remember Kira and help out in the community.

After Kira's death, Debbie knew she needed to find something on which to focus her attention.

**"We did so much together.** I was her Girl Scout leader. She also did volleyball and dance," Debbie said. "I had this huge hole, not only in my heart, but also in my life."

The girls in the Girl Scout troop gave her the idea of a clothing bank. Their idea was to open one focused on providing prom dresses. Debbie, however, decided offering clothing for every day could make a bigger impact.

**Kira gave to the community** during her lifetime, so it made sense to Debbie to honor her in a way that helped those in need. For example, Kira volunteered at the Mead food bank with her family and grew out her hair for Locks of Love.

"Kira loved clothes, and she had a genuine care of people," Debbie said. "I feel like it brings those two parts of her together and represents her well."

As the idea took shape, it quickly attracted the efforts of a range of people.

"Our youngest volunteer was about seven years old and our oldest is in her 80's," Debbie said.

Along with Debbie's friends and family, who rallied around



Brian and Debbie Wraspir serve at Kira's Kloset

Debbie and Kira's Kloset from the beginning, Kira's friends, members of St. Luke Lutheran Church, which the family attend, and others touched by Kira's story volunteered.

**"Different people have found** different roles that fit them," Debbie said.

Mead elementary schools, the church, Kira's dance studio and other organizations put out barrels to collect clothing. Volunteers pick up the donations, wash them and bring them to the church.

St. Luke opened their doors and offered Kira's Kloset use of their space. Clothing is stored in their basement and distributed in the church's gymnasium on third Saturdays.

**Volunteers sort donations** each week. Some, such as Debbie's mother, mend clothes. On the Friday before distribution, volunteers come in to set up the gym. Saturday requires 20 to 30 volunteers. There's a role for everyone.

"Some volunteers don't want to interact with customers. For others, that's what they're there for," Debbie said. "I'm glad there are different opportunities so people can help out where they are comfortable."

On a typical Saturday, customers line up outside the church before the doors open at 10 a.m. Parents and their children show their IDs and receive a punch card for each child.

This punch card acts as a shopping list, letting the family know how many of each item they can take. It is also a way to keep track of the clothing and books being given out. The punch cards change depending on what items are available that month and how many people are expected.

While the original intention was

to serve school-aged children, because they were Kira's peers, the program has expanded to include some infant clothes, as well as a small juniors section.

**Children can pick out books** along with clothing and shoes. As an elementary school teacher, Debbie knows the importance of early literacy for children's success in school.

"If they don't have money for clothes, you know there's no money for books, and I just think that's so important," Debbie said. "It warms my heart to see children dig through the books."

She loves being able to help families in hard situations.

"If there's a house fire with a family we also put together bags for the children," she said.

**It can be difficult for people** to ask for help.

"We had one mom who had lost her job. Her husband had left her. She was raising children on her own," Debbie said. "She said, 'I've never had to ask for help like this.'"

Debbie and the volunteers work hard to ensure shoppers are treated with dignity.

One way they do so is through

the setup of the organization.

"We try to make Kira's Kloset as much like a store as possible," Debbie said.

**When children grow out** of clothes they've received, many customers re-donate them. This is a way that they are able to turn around and help others. One mother was able to see firsthand the impact her donations made.

"She had donated a shirt, and as they were at Kira's Kloset shopping for her children, she saw someone else with that shirt she had donated," Debbie said. "I think it's meaningful that they are able to help, too."

Debbie, who grew up in a Catholic family in Yakima, went to Eastern Washington University and graduated in 1989 with a degree in elementary education. She and her husband, Brian, lived in Vancouver, Wash., until 1998. At that time her husband was offered a chance to transfer to Spokane.

In 1999, they joined St. Luke. She and her husband began attending Lutheran churches after their marriage, because they found it to be comfortable both for her and Brian who grew up as a Protestant.

**Debbie took a break** from teaching while raising Kira and Mitch, 19, who is a freshman at Eastern Washington University.

Now she has two part-time jobs: teaching third grade in the Mead School District and serving as the children's ministry coordinator at St. Luke.

Debbie is grateful for the community's support. She saw it in the pink flower decals Kira's Girl Scout troop made for her funeral. People display the flowers in car windows and other places to show their remembrance of Kira.

"It's amazing how many pink flowers are around," she said.

She also feels that support through the items people donate.

**"I am humbled** by how much we are given," Debbie said. "When I look at these racks full of clothes that people have made a choice to give to us, I know they could have given it to any other agency but they gave it to us. So I bear a responsibility. I want to do right by them and make sure that their clothing is used again."

As she spends a Saturday giving out clothing, her thoughts come back to her daughter.

"When I see the looks on some of those faces and hear some of the stories of people that come through, I just can't help but feel fulfilled, and that Kira is smiling down on us," she said.

For information, call 509-467-5256 or email [dwrspirsl67@gmail.com](mailto:dwrspirsl67@gmail.com).



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## Much progress has been made; much more still remains to be done

Much progress has been made since the March on Washington and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech gave us a vision and challenge.

**Much still remains to be done** for there to be freedom, justice, equality, wellbeing, democracy and peace for all.

We gained civil rights, voting rights, fair housing and medicare among the laws. We can sit at lunch counters and on busses together as people of different races. We can marry people of other races.

**Marching through civic engagement**, we gained new eyes to see each other as people. We gained voices to challenge oppression and inequality, so we have become part of the process and continue to be. Stories we cover in The Fig Tree tell the continued commitment to love, care, educate, advocate and march together.

We've made progress, but the only way for discrimination to end is for people to claim their power and continue to raise their voices against today's challenges.

Speakers at the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Equality on Aug. 28 captured the history and the moment of challenge today to end oppression for people of all regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age or ability. They called for: living wages, the right for workers to organize, no child going to bed hungry, affordable health care, the criminal justice system to work for everyone, every neighborhood to have a good school, and an end to violence in homes and communities.

• **Marc Morial**, president of the National Urban League said, "We have to wake up to unfair legality posing as morality...and to the pursuit of power for power's sake."

• **Linda Johnson Robb**, daughter of former President Lyndon Johnson, said, "We need to see that everyone benefits from racial and economic equality. We need to find and work with unexpected allies."

• **President John Kennedy's daughter**, Caroline, said, "We need to put the force of government on the side of the movement to recognize that we face a moral crisis."

• **The Rev. Al Sharpton** of the National Action Network recalled 50 years of struggle to break down the walls of apartheid in America, to beat Jim Crow laws. He warned to watch for James Crow, Jr., Esq., laws that deny people the right to vote, establish stop-and-frisk practices for

African American youth and bring unequal economic opportunities. "We must continue to fight until the dream is reality," he said.

• **Oprah Winfrey, TV talk show host**, told people to see that their destinies are intertwined and their hopes and dreams are the same: "Like King, when we see suffering and injustice, we must refuse to look the other way, knowing injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

• **The Hon. John Lewis**, civil rights activist and now Congressional representative from Alabama knows the change. He grew up in cotton fields of Alabama. He was in the Freedom Ride to end the exclusion of "Whites only" and "Coloreds only" signs that have disappeared, except for museums. He could not register to vote, so he was among those arrested for trying to participate in the democratic process.

King, he said, taught "us the way of peace, love and nonviolence." He taught "us to stand up, speak up and find 'a way against the way,' so people put their bodies on the line for a cause greater than themselves."

• **Former President Jimmy Carter** said it was unlikely he, former President Bill Clinton or President Barack Obama would have been presidents without King.

When Carter returned from World War II, he served on the school board in Plains, Ga. He found white children went to school in nice brick buildings, but African-American children had 26 schools—in churches, living rooms and barns—because there were no school busses. They had outdated, worn-out school books with white children's names in them. Front fenders of busses they finally provided to bus black students were painted black.

"It's not enough to sit at a lunch counter if you can't afford to buy a meal," he said, challenging new voter ID laws, stand-your-ground laws, 42 percent unemployment for African-American youth, and 835,000 African Americans being in prison—five times more than when he was in office.

• **Clinton was a 17-year-old boy**, watching the March on Washington on TV in Arkansas. He said it was an empowering moment when people gained power to "open the stubborn gates of freedom."

"We should not live and die complaining about gridlock, but should put our shoulders against the stubborn gates," he said "to

build an education system that will give all children a common core of knowledge and give all Americans affordable access to college and training programs."

He also made the point that "a great democracy does not make it harder to vote than to buy assault weapons."

With the landscape of America "littered with lost dreams of all Americans," he called for everyone to "join in pushing over the stubborn gates together."

• **Martin Luther King III** called for redoubling efforts. He was five years old when his father spoke in Washington. He brought his five-year-old daughter so she would appreciate the history and continue to participate in his father's challenge for the nation "to be a better nation for all God's children" and for people to love each other.

• **Christine King Farris, King's sister**, said "our challenge as followers of his life, leadership and legacy is to carry forward his work, to be champions of nonviolence in our homes, communities, places of work and worship, every day in every way." She urged people not to be discouraged, distracted or defeated by setbacks, but to know the work to fulfil the dream goes on.

• **The Rev. Bernice King** who was five months old that day, rejoiced that the 2013 event involved three Presidents, because 50 years ago the President did not attend. Women were involved in planning and speaking, but no woman spoke in 1963. She honored leaders of 1963 as they bequeath the message to a new generation. As her mother, Coretta Scott King, said, "Every generation must earn freedom."

**She called people to reflect, renew** and rejuvenate for the struggle for freedom and justice, because there are still policies and practices steeped in racial injustice, economic inequality and the cycle of violence.

At 3 p.m., her speech led into ringing the bell from the 16th St. Baptist Church of Birmingham, as a call "to let freedom ring across the nation, and in Libya, Syria, Egypt and Florida," she said.

• **President Obama then summarized** 50 years of changes and setbacks since the first March on Washington that awakened "America's long slumbering conscience."

"**King gave a mighty voice** to the quiet hopes of millions and offered a salvation path to oppressed and oppressors," he said, adding that the day belonged to ordinary

people, whose names are not in history books or on TV.

Through campaigns, boycotts, voter registration drives, smaller marches, setbacks and heartbreaks, Obama said that the march inspired people to pray for their tormenters, stand up and sit in with the moral force of nonviolence and go to jail to protest unjust laws, learning that freedom must be won "through struggle and discipline, persistence and faith."

**While the flame of justice flickered**, it never died, Obama said, pointing out that because they marched, America changed, civil rights and voting rights laws passed, and city councils to Congress and the White House changed: "America became more free and more fair for everyone," he said.

"**To dismiss the magnitude** of this progress or suggest little changed, dishonors those who had courage and made sacrifices to march in the 1960s. It would also dishonor those heroes to suggest the work is complete. The arc of the moral universe may bend towards justice, but it does not bend on its own. The gains secured require constant vigilance. We will suffer setbacks, but the country has come too far. Those of goodwill are too plentiful for those of ill will to change history's currents," he said.

**Obama said King's dream has been** the dream of every American, but the position of working Americans, regardless of color, has eroded making the dream more elusive.

He recognizes the task will not be easy, given growing inequality, and as people believe "greed is good" and "compassion is ineffective."

**As progress seems stalled**, hope seems diverted, and the country is divided, Obama warns not to let gears of democracy grind to a halt, nor let children to accept a life of lower expectations, where a few do very well while struggling families of every race fight over a shrinking economic pie.

**He said that the march "reminds us** that the promises of the nation will only be kept when we work together, igniting embers of empathy and the coalition of conscience expressed 50 years ago."

He closed, reminding that the lessons from the past and the promise of tomorrow are that in the face of impossible odds, people who love their country can change it.

We seek to help people join in that effort.

**Mary Stamp - Editor**

## 75 years of religious commitment challenges today's culture of blips

Recently, I attended a celebration of a friend's 75th Jubilee of her religious commitment through the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, and I ponder...

In our culture today, so much happens in flashes and blips! Watching a movie, or even a commercial, can leave one's eyes swirling in their sockets!

Multitasking seems to be the new sought-after skill for employment.

I have heard that five years is the average length of employment in any one job.

Many families do not even find time to

share a meal together on a regular basis.

Relationships are often short-lived. Many are conducted through social media rather than the sit-down-with-a-cup-of-tea visits that were once normative.

So I look at my sister-friend, and I ponder.

I am in awe of the idea that someone can get up each morning for 75 years and renew her contract to live the life she committed to live 75 years ago.

I marvel at the integrity and consistency of her actions each day that express that life.

I listen to the ways in which she has learned to deepen the relationship she has with God over so many years of saying "Yes!" to invitations to be more in love, more of service, more the agent of change that first attracted her in her youth.

I am grateful that this woman, who has been a teacher in the classroom and in our world, continues to teach those of us who walk with her on this journey of commitment that perseverance is, indeed, a gift for us and for our world.

Commitment is a decision, a conscious

decision, which requires renewal every single day.

That decision is not to be stuck, but to be open to growing ever more into the wholeness of the persons we can be: an integration of mind and heart, body and spirit, left and right brain.

From the position of wholeness, we could all be effective agents of change for the "better" of our world.

**Sr. Mary Ann Farley, SNJM**  
**Fig Tree Board moderator**

Reflections

## Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

**In spring citizenship classes**, we discovered many students are learning answers for questions that could be asked on the test, yet do not have the language skills or grasp of what they are learning to integrate it all into the larger picture of American history and government. For example, what do we mean when we talk about "checks and balances" in terms of the three branches of government? This is tough to comprehend, especially in trying to learn a new language in a different culture. Some of our students have no formal education. It takes language, skills and time.

This is like understanding what the Realm of God is about. We know the phrases, "love your neighbor as yourself" or

"do to others as you would have them do to you," but what do they really mean? How do we move from knowing the answer to the question to integrating it into our lives.

What does it mean to be a citizen of the Realm of God? Integrating it into our lives is a lifelong journey.

**The Rev. David Helseth**  
**Englewood Christian newsletter –**  
**Yakima**

**There are times we've wanted** to disassociate ourselves with Christian extremists who are harshly judgmental, vicious or violent. Members of other religious groups have had the same experience. Our faith in the uniqueness of Jesus doesn't

mean we have to be hostile to those who believe differently.

Most reasonable people don't want to use their faith as a weapon to hurt or destroy others.

I've struggled to find a comfortable place that includes a love of our Christian faith and Jesus without being exclusive to people from other faith communities. Christians have a difficult history of how we have dealt with loyalty to our teachings in relation to other religious groups.

We have often reinforced our identity by defining ourselves against the teachings and practices of others. On the other end of the spectrum, trying to find a different stance, some people have minimized the

differences of our teachings to be accepted by others.

Brian McLaren's book, *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha and Mohammed Cross the Road: Christian Identity in a Multi-faith World*, addresses possibilities of a Christian faith that is intense yet responsible. He suggests that to be "in Christ" is to be in solidarity with all people, all creation, for whom Christ died.

It's a relevant conversation for our time when we are confronted with the whole range of inter-religious problems from discrimination to jihad.

**The Rev. Kate LePard**  
**St. Mark's Lutheran newsletter**

# Calendar of Events

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Sept 6</b> • Whitworth University's Church and Ministry Fair, Hixson Union Building Multipurpose Room, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., 777-4345, mclaassen@whitworth.edu</p> <p><b>Sept 8-Oct 6</b> • "Season of Creation," Sunday Celtic Services at St. David's Episcopal Church, 7315 N. Wall, 11 a.m., 466-3100, stdavidspokane.org.</p> <p><b>Sept 13</b> • "Black in Latin America—Brazil," Foley Teleconference Center, Gonzaga University, 7 p.m., gonzaga.edu/Student-Life/UMEC/<br/>• Coeur d'Alene Tribal Stick Games, Schitsu'umsh Country and African Journeys Closing Ceremony, Human Rights Education Institute, Coeur d'Alene, hrei.org</p> <p><b>Sept 14</b> • Christian Service Summit, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 838-1431<br/>• Project H.O.P.E. "Harvesting Hope" Fundraiser, Salem Lutheran, 1428 W. Broadway, 5:30 p.m., 703-7433, projecthopespokane.org.<br/>• Working Together to Make Things Better, Community Day of Service, Hayden Lake Stake, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Majestic Park, Rathdrum, 8 a.m., 208-661-1569</p> <p><b>Sept 15</b> • Benefit for orphans in Lesotho, Convent of the Holy Names, 2911 W. Ft. Wright Dr., 2 p.m., 328-7470 x 121 or ntankersley@snjmwa.org</p> <p><b>Sept 16-17</b> • "Domestic Violence: Pain and Impact," Rural Ministry Resources, Rainbow Lodge Retreat Center, North Bend, 509-284-6107</p> <p><b>Sept 17</b> • Whitworth Community Building Day, 777-4566, bwatts@whitworth.edu</p> <p><b>Sept 17, 24</b> • Finances 50+, AARP workshop, Spokane Valley Senior Center, 2426 N. Discovery Pl., 5 to 7:30 p.m., 800-646-2283</p> <p><b>Sept 18, 25</b> • Finances 50+, AARP workshop, Corbin Senior Center, 827 W. Cleveland, 9 to 11:30 a.m., 800-646-2283</p> <p><b>Sept 18</b> • YWCA Racial/Social Justice BookClub, 930 N. Monroe, ywcaspokane.org<br/>• "Coffee and Contemplation," Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 9 to 11 a.m., 448-1224</p> <p><b>Sept 19</b> • A Force More Powerful, film and discussion, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m.<br/>• Partners in Hope Fundraising Event, Gardens of The Franciscan Place at St. Joseph's Family Center, 1016 N. Superior, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., 483-6495 or visit sjfonline.org/partners_in+hope2013.html<br/>• "How Could We: Regret and the Pursuit of Humanity," Steven Bender, Gonzaga Law School, 7 p.m., 313-3665, hatestudies@gonzaga.edu</p> <p><b>Sept 20</b> • Cardboard Box City, Family Promise Fund Raiser, Chipman/Taylor parking lot, Pullman, 6 p.m. to 7 a.m., 747-3487<br/>• Otsukimi: Japanese Moon Viewing Festival, Japanese Cultural Center, 4001 W. Randolph Rd., 7:30 to 9 p.m., jcc@mfw.edu</p> <p><b>Sept 21</b> • "The Art and Practice of Living with Nothing or No One Against You," Susie Weller and Peggy Capes, Unity Church of North Idaho, 4465 N. 15th St., Coeur d'Alene, 6 to 9 p.m., Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 208-664-1125, unity@unitycenter.org<br/>• "From Hell to Healing: One Veteran's Story," Jason Moon, Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Ft. Wright Dr., 7:30 p.m., 518-878-8579, paula@warriorsongs.org<br/>• Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) Volunteer Appreciation Party and Membership Meeting, Saranac Rooftop, 25 W. Main, 4 p.m., 838-7870<br/>• Oktoberfest at St. Aloysius Gonzaga School, 611 E. Mission Ave., 5 to 10 p.m., after 4 p.m. Mass, 489-7825 or akrauss@dioceseofspokane.org</p> <p><b>Sept 21-22</b> • Spokane Meditation Marathon, International</p> | <p>Day of Peace/Fall Equinox, Spokane Buddhist Temple, 920 S. Perry St., 8 a.m. Saturday to 10:30 a.m., Sunday, www.doodle.com3mk3nvtvkckd9h7i</p> <p><b>Sept 21 &amp; 28</b> • Cup of Cool Water Volunteer Training, 1106 W. 2nd, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 747-6686, kathy@cupofcoolwater.org</p> <p><b>Sept 21-Oct 5</b> • "Pathways to Peace" events, see p. 3</p> <p><b>Sept 23-29</b> • "Creative Courage: An Artist's Voice for Justice," Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, Idaho, 208-962-2000 or email spirit-center@stgertrudes.org</p> <p><b>Sept 25</b> • Dedication of Gary Singer Distribution Center, Second Harvest 1234 E. Front, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., 534-6678<br/>• "Immigration Reform and the Media," Hector Amaya, Jepson Wolff Auditorium, Gonzaga, 7 p.m., gonzaga.edu/Student-Life/UMEC/<br/>• "Mumia: Long Distance Revolutionary," film/discussion, Scott Finnie, professor of Africana education, Eastern Washington University, Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, 7 p.m., 838-7870<br/>• Avista Energy Fair, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 3 to 6 p.m., 495-8024</p> <p><b>Sept 26, Oct 3</b> • Spirituality 101 Series, Kathy Finley, The Franciscan Place 1016 N. Superior St., 6:30 to 8 p.m., 483-6495 or visit sjfonline.org.</p> <p><b>Sept 26-28</b> • Annual Greek Festival Dinner, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 1703 N. Washington, 328-9310, holytrinityspokane.org/festival.html</p> <p><b>Sept 27</b> • Stop Violence Against Women Day, Coeur d'Alene Resort and Casino Event Center, Worley, Idaho, 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.<br/>• "Matsiko World Orphans Choir, Human Rights Education Institute, hrei.org<br/>• "Caring for Kids" benefit Luncheon for St. Anne's Children and Family Center and Morning Star Boy's Ranch, Kelly Graves, Gonzaga women's basketball coach, DoubleTree Hotel, 322 N. Spokane Falls Ct., 11:30 a.m., 358-4354, jlee@ccspokane.org</p> <p><b>Sept 28</b> • 2013 AIDS Walk, Spokane AIDS Network, Riverfront Park's North Bank Shelter, register 10 a.m., walk, 11 a.m., 455-8993, www.spokaneairs.org</p> <p><b>Oct 1</b> • Interfaith Young Adult Forum, InterFaith Council and Gonzaga Missions, Jepson's Wolff Auditorium, Gonzaga, 7 to 9 p.m.</p> <p><b>Oct 2</b> • Fig Tree and Resource Directory distribution, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m., 535-1813<br/>• Are Human Beings Created Noble?" Spiritual Conversations, Chairs Coffee, 5:30 p.m.<br/>• Advocacy Event, Transitions and Volunteers of America, Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Ft. Wright Dr. 4 to 5:30 p.m., 328-6705, info@help4women.org</p> <p><b>Oct 3</b> • Fig Tree Board, Emmanuel Family Life Center 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 1 p.m., Benefit planning at noon<br/>• PJALS Campaign organizing workshop, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870</p> <p><b>Oct 4</b> • Into Africa, Partnering for Progress fund-raising gala, Lincoln Center, 6 p.m., 509-720-8408</p> <p><b>Oct 5</b> • Mennonite Country Auction &amp; Sale, Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, 659-0926</p> <p><b>Oct 6</b> • Sisters of the Holy Names, 125th Anniversary in Spokane, St. Aloysius Church, 330 E. Boone, 2 p.m., 328-4310</p> <p><b>Tues</b> • Taizé Service, The Ministry Institute, 405 E. Sinto, 4:15 p.m., 313-5765</p> <p><b>Tues/Thurs</b> • Citizenship Preparation Classes, World Relief, Spokane Valley Partners, Broadway and University 6 to 8 p.m., 321-0328</p> <p><b>2nd/4th Wed</b> • Inland NW Death Penalty Abolition Group, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>2nd/4th Thurs</b> • Palestine-Israel Human Rights, 35 W. Main, 3 p.m.</p> <p><b>1st/3rd Wed</b> • Peace &amp; Justice Action Committee, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m.</p> |
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## Woman says solutions to world problems come through church involvement

Since coming to Moscow, Idaho, Pat Rathmann has become active at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Palouse, helping set up several social justice task forces.

Pat believes people of faith need to move from the pews to the streets and courts.

So she's active in the two-year-old environmental justice task force, which hosted a meeting of the environmental groups in the region in 2013, drawing 80 people who met for three hours.

They formed the Palouse Environmental Sustainability Coalition that meets monthly, drawing educational programs that use the expertise of professors on climate change and global warming.

"I'm 75 and continue to be involved in the civil rights movements, as I was in the anti-Vietnam War movement," she said.

"I'm active in my church because I believe the solutions to the majority of the world's problems affecting people will happen only if the church is involved. Churches were instrumental in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements. They held candle-light parades," Pat said.

After graduating from Cornell University with a degree in psychology and math in 1959, she began her pilgrimage into the Unitarian Universalist Church. While walking to work at her first job in New York City, she saw All Souls Universalist Church.

Growing up Presbyterian in Newcastle, Penna., Pat, who had been involved with civil rights, was impressed her first Sunday at All Souls. They talked about the problems of people who lacked access to clean water.

That coincided with her concern to be responsible about what people do on earth. Her mother had nurtured her interest in nature.

In the 1960s, the Unitarian and Universalist churches merged and became a church concerned with the welfare and wellbeing of people around the world.

In New York, Pat worked at a bank and attended the New School of Social Research. With each job and move—to New Jersey and Indiana—she found Unitarian Universalist churches.

She lived in upstate New York and Louisville, Ky., and Cincinnati, Ohio, during the school-bussing era.

When her son began graduate work at the University of Idaho, she and her husband, Dan, decided to move to Moscow because they love the outdoors and wanted to explore national forests.

Five years ago, they purchased 40 acres at Deary. Then they bought the house in Moscow that



Pat Rathman's volunteering takes her to social justice events.

their son lived in during college. They can walk and use the bus in town.

Since living in Moscow, Pat grew frustrated as she learned about development of the tar sands in Alberta through efforts of Wild Idaho Rising Tides (WIRT) to block megaloads of equipment going there.

Last year she went with a WIRT group to Fort McMurray, Alberta, where most of the tar sands development is being done. This year, she recruited people from her church to go there with her in July.

In 2012, indigenous people, the Athabasca Chipewajan Waterkeepers, welcomed her and asked her to go back and tell their story.

Catholic bishops have written letters opposing the tar sands, Pat said, because of their effect on indigenous people, who cannot drink the water, eat the fish and experience more cancer because

of the emissions.

"The tar sands coal and oil have the heaviest carbon emissions," she said.

On returning in 2012, Pat preached a sermon on her spiritual journey to the tar sands.

"It distresses me to see the effect of mining on people and the environment," she said. "The poor all over the world who will be most affected by global warming are not the ones responsible for creating it.

"I won't be around when populated areas on the East and West Coasts are under water. Millions of people will migrate. There will be food security issues. How will we produce wheat when it's too hot? How do we produce rice when there is not enough rain?"

Pat is committed to energize people to act by educating them on climate change. She is heartened that more and more people

are understanding it.

She imagines positive possibilities for the future if "we take the funding we use to subsidize coal and oil and spend it on renewable energy—such as biomass—fuel from biological materials converted to energy by thermal, chemical or biochemical methods.

"People of faith need to stand up and do the right thing," Pat said. "If people understand what is going on, they will step up and say, 'No, this cannot happen.'"

Pat also arranges for speakers

on the influence of environmental disasters on people, wild life and the planet.

"We are collaborating with the Environmental Law Center at the University of Idaho to bring speakers on environmental issues to the campus," she said.

The first speaker is at 7 p.m., Monday, Sept. 23, at the law school on mountain-top removal for coal mining in Kentucky and West Virginia.

For information, call 208-882-8262 or email [plr23@cornell.edu](mailto:plr23@cornell.edu).

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