

NOW IN ITS 31ST YEAR

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FEATURES 40 EVENTS THAT
INFORM, INSPIRE, INVOLVE



Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest
online at www.thefigtree.org • check The Fig Tree Facebook page daily for news and links

Everyone deserves a healthy home

By Mary Stamp

A doll house Edie Rice-Sauer's grandparents made for her when she was 12 reminds her that everyone deserves a comfortable, safe and healthy home.

As executive director of Transitions, she oversees programs to end poverty and homelessness for women and children in Spokane.

In her three years there and in previous work, the doll house has been a good conversation starter.

During her two years as director of the Women's Hearth, a drop-in center for women, one woman said it brought back childhood memories.

"I wish I had a home like that," another said.

"We talk about dreams," Edie said. "Dreams are important. When people are hopeless, it's hard to move out of that."

Edie showed the stuffed bed and chair her grandmother made. The doll house is complete with earring lights, curtains and towels.

"To me, it is a symbol of their love," she said. "Everyone should have that kind of affection."

Edie keeps it decorated for Christmas because that can be such a joyous time. There are presents around a tree, and a Santa on the



Edie Rice-Sauer uses a childhood dollhouse as a conversation starter, often bringing back childhood memories of women who visit her office.

roof, which is made of shingles from the house where her grandfather was born in 1906 in Indian Territory that is now Oklahoma.

Transitions offices are now in the basement of the Transitional Living Center at 3148 N. Hemlock, which means they save rent. Youth Build remodeled it two years ago.

Before the Dominican Sisters left Spokane to move to Sinsinawa, Wis., they started a ministry to serve women and children. In 1993, they purchased and renovated the 1896 building that had been used for nearly 50 years as an orphanage.

At its fall "People Who Care" benefit breakfast and lunch, Transitions celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Sisters of the Holy Names, Sisters of Providence, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and Dominican Sisters bringing together their programs as Transitions.

Edie described the Transitions programs.

- Since 1986, Miryam's House has provided transitional housing for 10 homeless, single women at a time. Many are victims of domestic violence or in recovery for substance abuse. There are recovery support groups and a trauma

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World Relief director assures people that refugees are already well vetted

When Mark Kadel educates people on refugee resettlement, he typically reminds people that Jesus and his family fled to Egypt as refugees and that Native Americans welcomed Europeans fleeing religious persecution and helped them understand how to survive in their new land.

After the attacks in Paris and reports that one perpetrator was trained by Daesh (ISIS) and came in the wave of refugees into Europe, Mark, executive director of World Relief in Spokane, reassures people that refugees are vetted by the Department of

Homeland Security and four other government and international agencies.

In the federal government's modern Refugee Resettlement Program's 36 years of resettling refugees, no refugee has been arrested for domestic terrorism, he said.

"Refugees are the victims of religious or political persecution. That's why they are refugees," he said. "The Syrian refugees are victims of terrorism, fleeing war. They strongly oppose the more than 1,000 armed factions fighting each other."

One Syrian family of seven, who came from a refugee camp in Jordan, does not identify itself because of backlash here against Muslims and because they still have relatives in Syria. It took them six years to flee.

"We believe each human being is made in the image of God with inherent dignity. We view each human life as sacred," Mark said. "Conflicts produce refugees."

Since the attack in Paris and media attention, the World Relief Spokane office has had many calls about the refugee crisis. Most want to know how they can help. Only 10 percent are misinformed, so Mark helps them by providing accurate information on the screening process for refugees.

"Spokane is a welcoming community. There has been an overwhelming wave of compassion," he said. "I value opportunities to help people understand the U.S. refugee program and to understand that refugees are fleeing for their lives from terrorism."

More than 70 years ago, World
Continued on page 5

2016 Legislative Conference features speakers, workshops

The 2016 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference will offer speakers and workshops calling people of faith to consider "Our Responsibility for the Common Good." It will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave.

Linda Haydock, SNJM, executive director of the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center in Seattle, will speak on "Connecting Global UN Goals with Local / State Issues."

There will be workshops on environmental issues, the impact of I-1366, concerns about education, criminal justice, and state policy implications of the Parliament of World Religions.

Sharon Park, OP, executive director of the Washington State Catholic Conference, and the Rev. Paul Benz, co-director of the Faith Action Network will assist with workshops and give briefings on issues before the 2016 session of the Washington State Legislature.

Area faith leaders will also present reflections and prayers to inspire participation in the year's legislative process.

Nonprofit agencies and ministries will bring displays to share resources about legislative initiatives and their programs that serve people in the region.

"This educational event invites people of faith to consider how their faith teachings call them to be involved in having a voice on hunger, housing, creation, jobs, education, justice, equality, taxes and more," said Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp.

Organizers include The Fig Tree, Catholic Charities Spokane, the Faith Action Network and the Inland United Methodist District.

For information, call 535-1813 or email mary@thefigtree.org. Fliers are available at thefigtree.org/FigTreeEvent.pdf.

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Around the World

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WCC calls Christians to welcome the stranger

In the midst of a mounting climate of fear of refugees and immigrants, the World Council of Churches (WCC) calls Christians to be true to the biblical imperative to "welcome the stranger." A workshop in Geneva before the attacks in Paris focused on multiculturalism, ministry and mission. Twenty-five participants from 13 countries met to explore ways to promote multicultural dialogue and activities at community levels. Theological education, liturgy and intergenerational dynamics in migrant churches were featured. The goal was to encourage established and migrant churches to overcome fear and distrust of people different from themselves and to create inclusive, welcoming communities.

The workshop, organized by Katalina Tahaafe-Williams of the WCC's migration and multicultural mission program, was co-sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and The United Church of Canada. The Witnessing Together network of more than 90 migrant churches in the Geneva area pointed to partnerships with historic churches that have led to regular joint Sunday services and events for children and youth.

Integral to multicultural ministry and mission is forming collaborative partnerships that foster close, lasting relationships of trust and mutual care, said Katalina. "These become communal, personal bonds that enable meaningful multicultural sharing and support that help people work through their fear of newcomers."

WCC plans further work in multicultural ministry to counter rising xenophobia and intolerance in the wake of mass refugee migrations and violent incidents.

Media Monitoring Project reveals disparity

Progress toward equality of men and women in news media has come to a halt, according to results of the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). Research in 114 countries over 20 years reveals ongoing, severe disparity in representation of women and men in news media. The portrayal of women in day-to-day journalism does not reflect their contribution to society. It is GMMP's fifth and largest such study.

Worldwide, women are about 50 percent of the population but only 24 percent of persons heard, read about or seen in newspaper, TV and radio news, the same level as in the 2010 report. Women's relative invisibility in traditional news media continues in digital news. Only 26 percent of those in internet news and news "tweets" are women.

"The GMMP 2015 report examined the visibility, voice and mention of women and men in news media. It found sexism enduring across decades and geographical boundaries, adapting to emerging media and thriving in all spaces that produce and share news content," said Sarah Macharia, GMMP global coordinator.

The ecumenical family has a role in strengthening the global commitment to equality for women in news media, said Isabel Apawo Phiri, WCC associate general secretary. The report shows "we should be having this conversation while on the pilgrimage of justice and peace."

The report also found that women are more than twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims than they were a decade ago—16 and eight percent respectively. Findings indicate a global glass ceiling for female reporters in bylines and newscasts, with 37 percent of stories reported by women, the same as a decade ago.

Given these findings, the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) and its GMMP coordinators call for an end to media sexism by 2020.

Isabel adds WCC's voice to that call. "Our prayer and hope is that, by the time of the WCC's 11th Assembly in 2021, we shall report that news media have adopted a wider vision of equality and inclusion," she said. "With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can transform media to make women more visible."

The WACC's GMMP project has support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The first survey of gender portrayal in news media was in 1995, and at five-year intervals after that.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Holy Names Sisters give grant to Fig Tree

The Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary in the United States and Ontario have granted The Fig Tree \$3,000 to build its capacity to empower people through staff and volunteers, to train interns and writers to write uplifting stories of people who make a difference because of their faith and values.

The Fig Tree fits in the SNJM charism of educating people on ways to put their faith into action, working for justice, peace and environmental sustainability.

Holy Names sisters and

associates continue to be involved on The Fig Tree board, editing, delivering and doing mailings.

"We provide journalism that reveals solutions, rather than just divisions other media dwell on as they assume there are just two sides to issues of justice, peace, creation, relationships, diversity and inequality," said Mary Stamp, editor. "We open people's eyes to a myriad of ways to address issues and care for people."

Board moderator Mary Ann Farley, SNJM, said, "I am in awe

that such a small operation is one of the most respected, widely read, good-news newspapers in our area. Unlike other publications, our media feature people in our community, people we know and see in action, people who can inspire us and help build a community of fully developing persons."

Sr. Mary Ann said The Fig Tree's annual Resource Directory is the prime resource for services in this area.

For information, call 535-1813 or visit snjmuson.org.

Nate Miles speaks at MLK Prayer Breakfast

Nathaniel "Nate" Miles, vice president for Strategic Initiatives for Eli Lilly and Co., is the speaker for the first Annual Prayer Breakfast for the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center from 9 to 10:30 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 9, at Gonzaga's Cataldo Hall.

For more than 30 years, Nate, a native of Washington who lives in Seattle, has brought change in local, state and national health care, community and nonprofit sectors, building coalitions among diverse populations to support public policy changes.

With the Lilly pharmaceutical

firm, he develops initiatives from grassroots, faith-based, labor, civil rights, social justice and non-governmental organizations, working in partnerships to advance health care. He was director for state government affairs for Lilly from 1994 to 2011.

A graduate of the University of Washington, he was a marketing executive for KIRO-TV in Seattle. In the 1980s, he was legislative aide for Washington Senate Majority Caucus Chair George Fleming, and then on the management team for the Washington State Convention and Trade Center.

For information, call 455-8722, ext. 211 or visit <https://mlkprayer-breakfast2016.eventbrite.com>.

Plans are also underway for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day march, rally and resource fair, including the kick-off of the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center Capital Campaign for its new, modern, community center.

Vendors may reserve space at the resource fair at the Convention Center where the march begins and ends.

For information, call 455-8722 x202 or email varguello@mlk-spokane.org.

Tree of Sharing will run through Dec. 13

The Tree of Sharing is now open in NorthTown, River Park Square and Valley malls.

Shoppers come to the Tree of Sharing tables at the malls and pick up tags with gift requests for often forgotten people in the

Spokane area.

After the shoppers make their purchases they need to return the gift items to the same mall by 6 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 13.

For 2015, the Tree of Sharing is seeking to fulfill 7,000 requests

from 52 agencies.

The Tree of Sharing also accepts monetary donations to fulfill requests on tags that are not selected.

For information, visit www.treeofsharing.org.

Organists guild plans concert walk Dec. 26

For the second year, the American Guild of Organists (AGO) in Spokane is sponsoring the annual Downtown Spokane Christmas Walk and Carol Sing from 2 to 4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 26, beginning at Central United Methodist Church, 518 W. Third.

Two other downtown churches will share in hosting the event, which features listening to organ music and enjoying Christmas decorations with family and friends, said Carolyn Payne of the AGO.

After singing carols at Central United Methodist, people will walk two blocks west to

Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington St.

Then they will walk two blocks to Central Lutheran Church, 512 S. Bernard, for more singing, organ music and refreshments.

Taylor Giese, organist at Cheney United Methodist Church

will play at Central UMC. Tom Jefferson, an AGO member, and Debby McConnell of Deer Park will play at Westminster. Alice Hosteler, organist at Central Lutheran, will play there.

Parking is under I-90 across from Central United Methodist.

For information, call 535-7145.

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Congregations, agencies experience damage, power loss, but still help

In the days after the wind storm, The Fig Tree contacted congregations and agencies about their experiences and responses. Some had damage. Some had trees fall nearby, creating a mess but no structural damage. Many lost power. Some found creative ways to reach out to their neighbors. Many opened their homes to friends, family and others.

Manito United Methodist youth visited neighbors

The day after the November 2015 wind storm in the Inland Northwest, nine youth from the Manito United Methodist Church youth group went door-to-door to check on people at risk, hand out candles and cocoa, and help with yard work for people near the church and in Southeast Central Spokane.

Meeting the afternoon after the wind storm, they gave out about 50 taper and tea light candles to people with no power.

"Taper candles were partially burned from worship services," said the pastor, Mark McMurray.

"It wasn't huge," he said, "but for people sitting in apartments in the dark, having someone give them a candle and matches was appreciated."

There was no electricity at the church when the youth came. They barbecued hamburgers for dinner over the grill, eating the meat before it thawed.

Manito UMC also offered rides to people for hot breakfast and lunch at Ferris High School.

For information, call 570-3938.

Programs linked volunteers with needs

Ann Marie Byrd, development director at Catholic Charities Spokane, said they received calls from volunteers offering services and from clients with needs.

"We helped match volunteers with people in need, and encouraged people to go to volunteerspokane.org, through which United Way and the City of Spokane connected volunteers with people in need," she said.

Catholic Charities, which opened warming centers at the House of Charity and St. Margaret's, continued to provide its usual services. St. Ann's was shut one day. When it reopened, it welcomed older siblings of children registered because schools were closed.

"More than 180,000 people spent the night in the dark in their homes, feeling vulnerable, feeling the chill of winter, and hoping for quick restoration of normal life," said Rob McCann, director of Catholic Charities.

"What if that level of fear and uncertainty was your normal? What if you spent many nights in a cold home without electricity and not enough food to eat? What if you had no family or friends to turn to when you needed to

be welcomed? The people we serve know these circumstances too well," he said. "Catholic Charities brings hope and dignity to people in our community whose lives have become a storm of unfortunate circumstances."

Volunteer Spokane reported volunteer efforts throughout the city. They appealed for such supplies as candles, flashlights, batteries, chain saws and generators.

VOA programs continue to serve people in need

Crosswalk and Hope House programs never lost power, so both took in extra people.

Power was out at their low-income and senior apartments, so VOA brought daily deliveries of food and coffee.

Alexandria House had no power, so residents went to friends and families.

Residents of one VOA veterans' home that lost power went to the home that had power.

The low-income, disabled housing unit had power but sustained roof damage. The Thrift Store was down a few days.

URM gives thawing food to Union Gospel Mission

URM Cash and Carry took a difficult situation and blessed others. Their freezers went out with the power outage, and they gave the food to the Union Gospel Mission nearby across Trent Ave. and the Spokane River from them.

Phones, internet were off so diocese used Facebook

Power was out at Paulsen House, which houses the Episcopal Diocese. High winds uprooted a 100-year-old balsam tree, leaving limbs and debris on the property, said Bishop Jim



Manito youth visit neighbors.

Waggoner, Jr.

With no phone or email, staff communicated by Facebook, said communications director Cate Wetherald, adding that the West Central Episcopal Mission opened to serve neighbors and invited people whose frozen food might spoil to donate it to the mission.

"As we offer prayers and stand ready to respond, we remember those without heat, sustenance and resources for communication and recovery," said Jim, encouraging those with power to offer neighbors a place to warm up and recharge.

Red Cross set up shelters

The American Red Cross in the Greater Inland Northwest opened a shelter at 11 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 18, at the Girl Scouts facility, 1404 N. Ash St. Beds, meals and electricity were available. People could bring their small pets, if they had cages.

Other shelters were open at Valley Assembly of God, 15618 E. Broadway, and Cheney United Methodist Church, 204 4th St.

Residents going to shelters were to bring sheets, clothing, personal items, prescriptions, diapers and baby items. Nurses were available to help with medical issues.

Valley Assembly of God invited anyone without power to come

to the building during the day for warmth and recharging. On Facebook, they recruited people to help with tree removal, roof repairs and other cleanup.

"Let's demonstrate love by action," they said.

Coeur d'Alene had shelters

In Coeur d'Alene, a Red Cross shelter was set up at Coeur d'Alene Bible Church, 5350 N. 4th.

The Kootenai Humane Society temporarily sheltered dogs.

Real Life Ministries in Post Falls helped shelter some folk and assisted others with food, cutting wood and other needs.

Kaleidoscope Community Services moved some people who lost trailers into motel rooms.

Lake City Community Church in Coeur d'Alene helped people through its food bank.

Mike Bullard of the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters posted an emergency citizen's inquiry number: 208-446-2292.

Churches opened buildings

Several Spokane area churches that did not sustain damage or lose power, opened their doors all day for neighbors to come in for warmth, coffee, meals, charging electronic devices and a place for children to play. Among them were Veradale United Church of Christ, First Presbyterian, Audubon Park United Methodist and Life Center.

"People came," said Kristi Burns of Life Center.

Audubon Park also offered showers, and provided an overnight stay for one family, referring others to warming shelters.

Agencies form COAD

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints and the Seventh Day Adventists are working together with Spokane Emergency

Services and others through Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) to support local schools that opened as warming shelters and provide meals.

"Our Bishop's Storehouse also provided 6,000 canned foods at the warming centers and the Adventist Better Living Center food pantry," said David Ross. "Many of our young missionaries have helped and will continue to assist in the warming centers. Many members are helping cut trees and remove storm debris throughout the community."

Colfax churches help

On Thursday, Colfax Baptist Church offered a warming center, and the United Methodist Church served a free community meal.

All Saints served its meal

Even though power went off at 4 p.m., Tuesday, the food was prepared for the weekly 5 p.m. dinner at All Saints Lutheran Church. "We opened early and fed about 60 folks by candlelight and distributed what we could," said Alan Eschenbacher, the pastor. "There was no physical damage to the building. Power was still off as of noon Thursday."

Because power was still out on Sunday, they and other Lutheran churches without power encouraged members to go to Salem Lutheran Church.

Second Harvest held Tom's Turkey Drive

As Second Harvest geared up for Tom's Turkey Drive, the windstorm and power outages meant three Rosauer's stores were closed. Two reopened and the community responded, so they met the goal of raising enough to provide 11,000 Thanksgiving

Continued on next page

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Some offer reflection on the storms of life

Continued from previous page
meals to families in need in Spokane, said Rod Wieber, chief resource officer at Second Harvest, whose facilities had no damage or power loss.

"About 1,000 fewer clients came to pick up the dinners," he said, noting that with power out, some did not have refrigeration to store the food. Second Harvest gave 600 extra meals to the Salvation Army.

Whitworth campus lost power and many trees

Jim McPherson, chair of the Whitworth University communication department, was back on the internet on Thursday, "writing from a building with two toppled trees on it. The campus had downed and leaning trees everywhere, and getting through Spokane can be challenging with lots of trees in streets and non-functioning traffic lights."

On Thursday, the Whitworth campus, which had suffered damage to buildings, and loss of power and many trees, resumed campus life while clean-up was underway, he said.

Winds damaged buildings at academy in Spangle

The near-hurricane-force winds uprooted and felled hundreds of trees and caused building damage to the Seventh-day Adventist Upper Columbia Academy in Spangle. It also downed powerlines and caused some property damage at the Upper Columbia Conference office building of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

By three p.m. Tuesday, the storm grew so strong that Upper Columbia Conference sent staff home for safety.

On Wednesday, Upper Columbia Academy faculty reported some trees down on campus. One went through an eave on a faculty home, but the roof was still intact.

The girl's dorm and music building roofs suffered damage. Plastic on the campus greenhouse, a source of fresh vegetables for students, was shredded.

Classes resumed by Friday.

South Hill church had damage to live nativity

South Hill Seventh-day Adventist Church said the nativity village they had been building since mid-October suffered damage from the winds. Three



Tangles of wires and trees clogged streets, impeding traffic.

structures and the village gate, were ruined beyond repair.

Event director Nancy Engle said, "This has set us back, but we're going to have to have a work bee the next few Sundays to be back on track to open Sunday, Dec. 4."

The annual Journey to Bethlehem nativity pageant has been part of Spokane's South Hill holiday festivities for nine years. It features more than 120 actors and 30 live animals. It usually draws more than 5,000 people.

"People make it part of their holiday tradition every year," said senior pastor, Paul Blake. "We can replace damaged set pieces with rented tents. It's about telling the story of Jesus and overcoming problems like Jesus did."

As a labor of love, a committee of 20 prepare for the event all year.

The Journey to Bethlehem opens at 6 p.m., Friday, Dec. 4 at 57th and Freya and continues from 5 to 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 5 and 6. For information, visit jtbspokane.org.

N-Sid-Sen director reflected on power loss

Mark Boyd, managing director of the Pacific Northwest United Church of Christ camp N-Sid-Sen on the east shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene, reported the loss of power reflectively:

"Today the sky is alive with the promise of calm and yet we await

the arrival of heat and light," he said. "I am reminded of the minor inconvenience that this is for us in the bigger picture of the world as a whole."

"For most of us, this storm will be a story to be told rather than a life to be lived as it is for so many others," Mark said. "So today I am grateful for temporary storms in my life."

Hamblen spokesperson also offered a thought

"This temporary loss of electricity is minor compared to what many in our world are experiencing," said a spokesperson for Hamblen Park Presbyterian Church in Spokane.

Conference arranged webinar for clergy

Recognizing that dramatic weather events—drought, fires, dust storms, smoke, crop failures and now wind storms—hit some areas of the Pacific Northwest United Church of Christ Conference harder than others, Conference Minister Mike Denton arranged a 90-minute webinar on secondary trauma.

Clergy, who may feel they can never do enough, may experience chronic exhaustion or diminished creativity, which can be signs of "secondary trauma" for clergy and other who care for people who are affected by traumatic events, said Mike.

Salvation Army is celebrating 125 years of using red kettles

As shoppers enter and leave 62 Spokane businesses from Nov. 20 to Dec. 24, they hear the sound of ringing bells, inviting them to drop donations in red kettles for the Salvation Army.

This year is the 125th anniversary of the Red Kettle program, which brings in \$400,000 to support Salvation Army programs all year in Spokane, said Dan Curley, development director.

Today, donations to kettles at Christmas help support nearly 30 million people served by shelters, after-school and addiction-recovery programs, summer camps, disaster relief and other social services, he said, adding that the army employs 200 low-income people and has several hundred volunteers ring bells.

The idea began in 1891, when Captain McFee in San Francisco wanted to serve a free Christmas dinner to the poor. From his days as a sailor, he remembered large pots for charitable donations on the pier in Liverpool, England. With permission from authorities, he put a similar pot at the Oakland Ferry Landing at the foot of Market Street, so people going to and from the ferries could see it. He thus launched the tradition that has spread around the United States and world.

By Christmas 1895, 30 Salvation Army locations on the West Coast used kettles. *The Sacramento Bee* described the Army's Christmas activities and mentioned the street-corner kettles, Dan said.

Then two young Salvation Army officers instrumental in using the kettles, William McIntyre and N.J. Lewis, were transferred to the East, and took the idea there. In 1897, McIntyre prepared Christmas kettle plans for Boston, but other officers refused to cooperate for fear of "making spectacles of themselves," Dan said. So McIntyre, his wife and sister set up three kettles in the heart of the city. Kettle efforts in Boston and other locations nationwide resulted in 150,000 Christmas dinners for the needy.

In 1898, *The New York World* hailed the kettles as "the newest, most novel device for collecting money," adding that a man is in charge so contributions are not stolen. In 1901, kettle donations in New York City provided funds for the first mammoth sit-down dinner in Madison Square Garden, a custom that continued for many years, said Dan.

Kettles are now online and at sites in countries such as Korea, Japan and Chile, many European countries and Australia. Online Red Kettles make donating simpler and have raised millions of dollars in the past seven years.

This year, The Salvation Army encourages people to share their reasons for making donations at #RedKettleReason. It's a chance for people to share how their donations are making a difference, Dan said.

Contributions to kettles enable The Salvation Army to bring the spirit of Christmas to those who would otherwise be forgotten all year—to the aged and lonely, the ill, the inmates of jails and other institutions, the poor and unfortunate," said Dan.

In the United States, kettles, although changed since the first utilitarian cauldron in San Francisco, help make it possible for the Salvation Army to serve 30 million people each year.

For information, call 329-2732.

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January 20
Thea Loughery
'Healing the Hearts
of our Children'

February 17
Dr. Jerry Sittser
'God and Virtue or Self
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Spokane area resettles about 600 refugees, who become citizens, pay taxes

continued from page 1

Relief started in war-torn Europe as War Relief, the humanitarian arm of Billy Graham's National Association of Evangelicals.

For 36 years—since receiving Vietnamese boat people—World Relief has resettled refugees in the United States. It is one of nine organizations on contract with the State Department, resettling 10 percent of the 70,000 to 85,000 refugees the United States accepts annually.

World Relief is now the only organization in Spokane and one of five in Washington state resettling refugees.

"We resettle about 20 percent—nearly 600—of the 3,000 refugees coming to Washington State. Most are women and children," Mark said.

There are also World Relief offices in Tri Cities and Kent. The other four agencies in the state are Catholic Charities, Lutheran Community Services, International Refugee Committee and Hebrew Refugee Services.

In recent years, refugees arriving in Spokane are coming from Iraq, Afghanistan, Burma, Congo, Sudan, Cuba and former Soviet republics—Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia and Moldavia. Many lived in refugee camps an average of 17 years, he said.

Most Slavic refugees coming today come through family reunions, arranged after refugees have become citizens.

While a few Cubans have come to Spokane, most are resettled in Florida and Texas.

Mark said that 6 million Congolese have been displaced over 10 years.

In 2014, he began seeing people from Syria in the Middle East and Colombia in South America.

Today, 4 million Syrians have left Syria or are internally displaced. One in six people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee, and one in 10 in Jordan is.

Since the attacks in Paris, many Americans began to worry that there may be terrorists among refugees, but Mark reassures that those approved for resettlement have been carefully vetted.

Mark expects that of the 10,000 Syrian refugees approved to come to the United States, perhaps two families may come to Spokane.

"Refugees are cleared by five federal agencies. They are the most thoroughly vetted people who come to the U.S. The process takes about two years, beginning with interviews in refugee camps," he said.

Of 20 million refugees in the world, the U.S. resettles less than .5 percent.



Mark Kadel discusses 70 years of World Relief's work, focusing on 36 years in Spokane.

"It's the least our country can do as a humanitarian gesture," he said, adding that many refugees were farmers, professionals, professors, doctors and engineers.

Most experience a degree of post-traumatic stress disorder, so World Relief has help from counselors at Lutheran Community Services.

When it resettles refugees, World Relief, as the sponsor, is required to recruit volunteers and community support, including donations of furniture and funds. Some refugees are to be employed and financially self-sufficient within six months.

"For every dollar donated to us, World Relief generates matching funds of an additional \$2 for rent and other necessities. Beyond money, we need community support, in-kind gifts and volunteers," said Mark.

World Relief Spokane's \$2 million budget comes from private, federal and state funds.

"It's in the state's interest to help people be employed, so they become citizens and pay taxes. How many companies brought 528 people to Spokane in 2014 to add to the tax base and diversity in Spokane?" Mark asked rhetorically, noting that World Relief receives refugees at the airport nearly every week.

Along with empowering refugees, World Relief's mission is "to empower local churches to serve vulnerable people around the world and to give churches the tools they need to show Jesus' unconditional love.

"We reach out through people in a variety of churches who set aside fear and welcome

strangers," Mark said. They can do mission without leaving home.

More than 100 volunteers from 30 congregations are involved, welcoming refugees at the airport, teaching them English or life skills—such as how to operate a stove or how to shop.

"It's rewarding to see refugees thankful for the kindness they experience after escaping from the persecution and trauma they experienced so much of their lives," Mark said. "We want them to find peace here."

Of the World Relief Spokane staff of 35, half are former refugees, foreign born or had experience abroad. Staff speak 25 languages.

Mark spent nine years in Albania, Kosovo and Greece, helping repatriate refugees there.

Active in a church youth group in Boise, he managed an Albertsons bakery for 21 years. In 2002, he volunteered at the World Relief office in Boise and was hired.

He ran the World Relief office in North Carolina for three years and has been in Spokane for nearly six years.

"I am thankful every day for

the love, grace, hope and mercy my Savior gives me. My faith

sustains me to allow God to work through me to love and welcome strangers," said Mark, who attends Life Center North and often speaks at other churches.

"I'm interested in learning about different cultures and world visions," he said.

Born abroad, the first generation usually seeks to preserve the best of their culture.

Born here, the second generation typically wants to fit in, so they adapt to American culture and independence, Mark said.

"We encourage refugees to preserve their culture and language," he said.

"The third generation is American," said Mark, whose forebears were German, but he does not know the language or traditions.

"Americans are not a melting pot, but a mosaic," he said, quoting former President Jimmy Carter.

For information, call 484-9829, email wrsokane@wr.org or visit worldreliefspokane.org.

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Transitions' five programs help women to find stability and new opportunities

Continued from page 1
support group.

They shop, cook and share dinner Monday through Friday, gaining life skills in the process. Case managers help women find housing after six to eight months there.

"After women leave the program, there is support with access to case managers, recreational activities and holiday celebrations," Edie said.

About 30 women participate. Of 28 women at Miryam's House in 2014, 15 found housing, five gained employment and four furthered their education.

In 1991, Sr. Cathy Beckley, SNJM, started what is now the Women's Hearth primarily for women in recovery and on the street. She was also in recovery, Edie said.

It began as a place to be safe during the day as the Women's Drop-In Center, first on Jefferson, then on Howard, and for eight years at 920 W. Second.

Of 1,403 women served in 2014, there were about 18,700 visits, 997 life-skills classes and 26 women found housing.

New Leaf is the newest program. It grew out of the Women's Hearth's recognizing the need for job training.

Dominican Sister Sheila Fitzgerald started it in 2006, to provide job training—like teaching someone to fish, rather than giving them a fish.

Women working with New Leaf prepare and sell baked goods, does catering and has major orders for its granola from Sacred Heart and the Department of Corrections. They serve both breakfast and lunch at a café open Mondays through Thursdays at Catholic Charities.

Some are trained for eight weeks in cashiering, taking orders and customer service. In the kitchen, women have six months of training. Some go on for education. A vocational specialist helps women find work, coordinating employment services with the YWCA and St. Margaret's Shelter.

In 2014, 45 women had job training, 17 found jobs, nine furthered their education and 97 had one-on-one job readiness support.

The Transitional Living Center, which came about to change families' lives, houses and provides support services for homeless women and children in 15 apartments and one permanent housing unit.

It includes counseling, support groups, parenting education and the EduCare childcare for formerly homeless children.

In 2014, it served 29 families with 56 children, 24 found housing, seven mothers furthered their education and four found employment, and 34 children had supportive care.

Previously Edie was development director at Volunteers of America, after working in the Regional Support Network of Spokane County Mental Health for 10 years, learning about government grants, HUD and Medicaid.

She and her husband, Redhawk Rice-Sauer, minister of Origin Church, formerly Covenant Christian Church, moved to Spokane 20 years ago from Nashville, Tenn., where she was associate director of the YWCA for eight years.

Edie earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and church history in 1979 from Hiram College in Northeast Ohio, and a master of divinity degree from Vanderbilt Divinity School.

"Since I was in seventh grade I felt called to ministry, but a ministry of social services, not serving a congregation," said Edie, who has also served on the Disciples of Christ General Church Board, on the General Board Historical Society and as moderator for the Northwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

"Transitions' values align with mine. They are values of being sensitive to the whole person, not just to someone's mental health, but their overall wellness, nutrition, spiritual health, healthy relationships, community and support system," Edie said. "The focus is on respect and justice-making."

She believes that Transitions' strength is in someone saying, "yes," when they could have said, "no."

"Yes is our word," she said. "It's a forever 'yes.' So people who have lost their way find solace, and we place pavers for them to walk their lives back together."

"Women learn that not only is housing possible, but also wholeness and healthy relationships are possible," she said.

"We know lost isn't forever unforgivable, invisible or forever gone. It is a temporary state of being, a limited time," Edie said.

"So often women and families come to us lost, stuck in the fog," she said.

"Their relationship with us will be unique, tailored just to meet their place along the pavers of life," she added. "Their stories will change from no's to yeses as they come through the door."

"The fog will lift. The pain is temporary. Yes, they can find a job, find a home, depend on us," Edie said. "God created them, and they are good."

For information, call 328-6702

Providence begins CPE program Feb. 1

Providence Health and Services and Sacred Heart Medical Center will establish a program of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in Spokane after a 15-year hiatus.

The Rev. Kent Schaufelberger, CPE manager, has provisionally accredited the program as a satellite of Providence Portland Medical Center in Portland Ore.

CPE is interfaith professional education for ministry, bringing theological students, ministers and lay persons into supervised encounters with persons in crisis. With the feedback for peers and teachers, CPE students develop new awareness of themselves as persons, as well as the needs of

those to whom they minister.

Through doing theological reflection, studying behavioral sciences and learning processes for helping people, participants develop skills in interpersonal and inter-professional relationships

with interdisciplinary teams.

An extended unit starts Feb. 1 and continues through May 19. Applications are due by Jan. 8.

For information, call 474-7312 or email kent.schaufelberger@providence.org.

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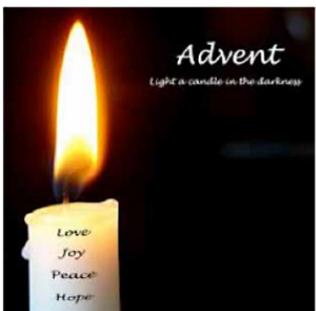
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We invite you to join us for reflection and contemplation.

Over 30 years, issues have ebbed and flowed, creating new programs

For the 30 years that Marilee Roloff has worked with Volunteers of America (VOA) of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho, she has seen issues ebb and flow. One year's cause célèbre became forgotten after a few years.

When she started, a big issue in the state and national levels was street kids. Interest waned. Now it's back.

"The State Legislature passed the Homeless Youth Act of 2015 to encourage focus on prevention and on developing more effective models than just sheltering youth. Now the focus will be on transitional housing," she said.

Marilee advocated for the law, along with Trudi Inslee, the governor's wife, who led the effort. Two Seattle foundations will hire a director to help mobilize the Homeless Youth Program.

"Through the years, churches have kept up their interest and been a great support for Crosswalk," Marilee said. "They continue to serve meals and help with projects."

For many years, there was little attention to veterans or chronically homeless people. In the last five years, interest has grown.

"We have two homes for veterans. Goodwill Industries has support services for veterans and their families," she said.

For the chronically homeless, VOA and Catholic Charities are building two 50-unit buildings to house homeless people. Marilee will continue with VOA until they are built next summer.

"Some things are the same. We have committed staff and volunteers. People miraculously appear," she said. "Their quality has not changed."

"I've been surrounded by caring people—staff, volunteers, clients and donors," said Marilee.

"Congregations have been consistent at Crosswalk, Hope House and Veterans Housing," she said. "Hundreds of churches are involved in some way—from serving a meal to painting Alexandria house. There are many ways to help."

Volunteer diversity ranges from sixth graders from All Saints School serving tortellini soup to retired people preparing food.

Government and private funders now place more emphasis on demonstrating outcomes, Marilee said. One criterion is housing stability, assuring someone is still housed a year later, either in the shelter, transitional housing or long-term housing.



Marilee Roloff is always glad to show the books in her office.

"The goal is to stop the cycle of people moving in and out of homelessness," she said.

Another outcome expected is for people to be employed or receiving regular social services.

A third expectation is for people with mental health issues to be stabilized and to have income, so they are not wandering the streets.

Marilee is inspired to see many become healthier, finish school and go into drug treatment.

"Working with the people we serve, however, we realize some can't get better, but we can't give up on even the most difficult people," she said. "Some have too many strong difficulties, and we can just hold hands."

Success varies individually.

For some, it may be that they go out of their apartment to play bingo or go to a potluck. For others, it may be to coming to the lobby to take a turn answering the phone. For still others, it may be agreeing to go to counseling.

"I learn something every week," she said.

Recently a resident was having a psychotic breakdown with hallucinations and making threats.

"Most of us were concerned about safety and thought of calling the police," Marilee said. "One staff member, however, suggested that we realize how frightened that person must be."

That helped defuse the situation.

"I've also learned that there's no magic solution that works for everyone. Everyone is different and needs something different," Marilee said. "We see that with our children. They have different needs, personalities and insecurities. We can't paint with a broad brush, but every day there are new adventures and possibilities in what might work."

She also finds that the mental health system is now more nimble and adaptive to individual needs.

"We understand that both mental health and physical symptoms connect with housing," she said. "How can someone be healthy if he or she does not have a place to live?"

Marilee also sees mental health improving as more case managers go to where people are living. If someone is unemployed, it's not just a matter of talking, but finding a home and a job. Or it may require sending someone to a dentist.

"Mental health issues range from the not so serious to very serious," she said. "It's an area of people's lives that needs attention."

She said announcing her retirement early energizes her to decide what she wants to do.

Marilee, who grew up in Creston in a stable family and attended Washington State University, served with VISTA for a year working with low-income seniors and teens in Spokane. She finished studies in political science at Eastern Washington University in 1973. She worked in Seattle, then Wenatchee and back to Seattle with a program for street kids. While working with that program, she met former VOA Spokane director Ken Trent, who wanted to start a street kids program in Spokane and hired her in March 1985. Crosswalk opened in November 1985.

"VISTA was a turning point in my life. Wearing overalls, I followed Sr. Lois Marie, SNJM, who wore a habit, visiting single-room occupancy, low-income housing to find people who were sick, hungry or lonely," she said. "We began a senior services

Christmas Bureau serves 30,000 Books are Marilee Roloff's niche

After Marilee Roloff retires in summer 2016 as executive director of Volunteers of America Spokane, she expects to continue as one of 400 volunteers. Her niche for many years has been providing books for the Christmas Bureau.

Seventy years ago, the Christmas Bureau, coordinated by Catholic Charities Spokane, The Spokesman-Review and Volunteers of America, began giving gifts and food for people in need. It will provide gifts and food vouchers for 30,000 this year.

It is open from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Dec. 10 to 12, and 14 to 19, at the Spokane County Fair and Expo Center, 404 N. Havana.

"It's an example of a constant," Marilee said, "because everyone understands how children would feel if they did not have a toy at Christmas."

For information, call 358-4254 or email jlee@ccspokane.org.

program in a small center on Madison, where we served lunch.

"Now there are all kinds of senior services," said Marilee, adding that when someone died, Sr. Lois Marie rented a bus to take seniors one-and-a-half blocks to Our Lady of Lourdes for a memorial service and brought them back for cake and ice cream. "Everyone knew we would do the same for them. It was a powerful lesson in how important it is for people who are lonely to know they will not be forgotten."

In her family and community, she never feared being alone.

"I had a strong foundation in faith. I was taught that we are to love one another, take care of the poor and that Jesus loves us," she said. "I've learned that other faiths also have strong beliefs. It hurts to see fighting among religious groups."

The motto of VOA, a nondenominational organization, is "to go wherever we are needed and do whatever comes to hand," Marilee said. "Our mission is to uplift all people, not just recipients, but also the givers. One day, someone may be a recipient, and another day that person may be a giver."

For information, call 624-2378 or visit voaspokane.org.

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NAACP leader offers overview of legislation strengthening civil rights

Hilary Shelton recognizes that each of the 38 units of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have become stronger through struggles they have experienced to advance civil rights.

Speaking at Spokane's 2015 Freedom Fund Banquet, he said the audience reminded him that blacks, whites, Christians and Jews were among the founders of the NAACP, which first met in secret 107 years ago in Niagara, Ontario, and was then founded in 1909 in New York to today.

"Our eyes have always been on the prize," Hilary said.

"The NAACP magazine is called 'The Crisis' because that's what many have experienced as the organization has sought to help the country live into the Constitutional vision of equal protection under the law, an audacious vision," he said.

Because he is the NAACP's Washington D.C. Bureau director and senior vice president for advocacy, he urges passage of U.S. civil rights legislation.

In 1914, anti-lynching legislation the NAACP introduced in the U.S. Senate was blocked. Since then, the NAACP has won many legislative victories, including an apology by the Senate for blocking the anti-lynching bill.

"We need to move from apology to fix the damage done," said Hilary.

He recounted victories over the years and ongoing concerns.

In 1918, the NAACP boycotted the film "Birth of a Nation," for its stereotypical images of blacks.

"We won Brown v. the Department of Education in 1954, marched on Washington in 1963, and gained passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, the Voting Rights Act in 1965 and the Fair Housing Act in 1968, but hate crimes still happen and our freedom continues to be under fire."

Hilary said the struggle didn't end in the 1960s with Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.

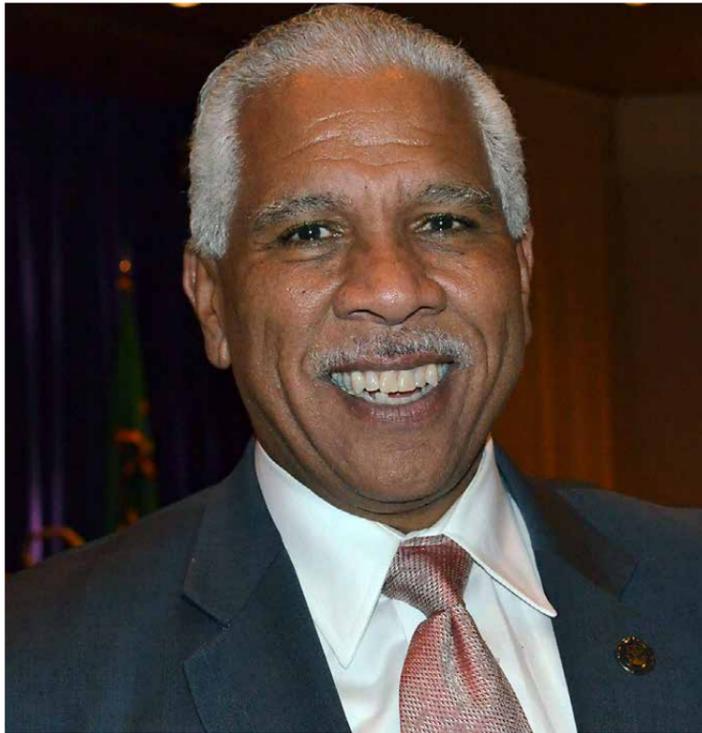
"Much has changed and much has not changed," he said.

Other laws that passed include: the Civil Rights Restoration Act in 1987, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 and the Reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act in 2006.

Then the first African American President moved into 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. in 2008.

"It has been an amazing six and a half years standing with President Barack Obama in the West Wing of the White House as he has signed more of our civil rights agenda into law," Hilary said.

While the present is still a dangerous time and some believe there's little that can be done, Hilary pointed to progress with President Obama signing laws for fair pay, hate crimes prevention,



Hilary Shelton of the national NAACP speaks in Airway Heights.

state children's health insurance, student aid, a minimum wage increase, ending racial profiling, the Affordable Care Act, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and government sponsored Enterprise Reform.

Still more needs to be done. Hilary wondered "how many students could we send to Harvard University for the billions we have spent on wars that should never have been?"

He said it's a problem that people can work 40 hours a week with no vacation, but still earn below the poverty level for a family of four.

Hilary is convinced that "without the NAACP standing watch on them, there is little adult supervision on Capitol Hill. That "supervision" comes through the NAACP "grading" members of Congress on how they address "the bread-and-butter of the Civil Rights agenda." He encourages people to look at that "report card."

"We have won a lot, but our most basic and fundamental freedom is still under attack. There have been quite a few setbacks that we must challenge," he said.

One is the need for gun control. "Gun-related deaths are the most preventable form of death," he said. "Someone profits off the death and destruction of our people. Being tougher on crime and using the death penalty do not solve crime. Of those executed, 35 percent have been innocent. Lynching by any other name is still lynching.

"There are challenges ahead," he said. "Public education is failing. More people need jobs

and health care." He called for abolishing the death penalty, fixing the broken criminal justice system's racial discriminatory use of mandatory minimum sentences and ending stand-your-ground laws.

"Some people are doing great in Spokane, but those doing well have a false notion that everyone is doing well," said Hilary, who grew up on the "wrong side" of Highway 40 in St. Louis, Mo.

Hilary then told of a friend he grew up with, Ronald Jones. In high school, they competed for grades in AP courses and for scholarships. They both graduated with honors.

Ron worked three years, married and had a son. When the boy was three, his wife died in childbirth.

Ron worked hard to raise his two sons. He took them to school and came home at 3 p.m., knowing that from 3 to 6 p.m., students might get in trouble. He went over their homework. When the oldest was in 11th grade, he sent him out one evening to the corner store for milk and bread.

There was a scuffle over drugs and a shot. It struck his son in the chest. Ronald sat in the gutter holding his son, pressing on the wound, praying, "Please don't take him. He's got the grades. I have his tuition."

He heard a siren. Bright lights shined. He held his son as his breath grew shallower.

Assuming the boy was dying because of drug dealing, a reporter asked, "What did you do wrong?"

"I worked hard so he could have it all and would have great values and a vision, but if I had to do it over, I would have done the same

for the boys who pulled the trigger as I did for my sons."

Hilary called for people to be part of the solution, to join the 500,000-member NAACP to make sure "America secures the promissory note Dr. King spoke of more than 50 years ago.

"The fight is not over. There is still so much to be done," he said.

"The struggle continues." For information, call (202) 463-2940 or email hoshelton@naacpnet.org.

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Tragedy leads mother to educate other mothers on preventing SIDS

By Kaye Hult

Out of her passion for education, children and helping others, Liz Montgomery organized the nonprofit Inland Northwest SIDS Foundation in Coeur d'Alene in 2012. Her son, Mason Rae, died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in 2003.

Involved with the Seattle-based SIDS Foundation of Washington in Spokane, she felt called to continue its mission, when it lost funding and canceled the 20-year-old Fallen Leaf Run. She started the foundation in Coeur d'Alene.

Liz said Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) is now the preferred phrase over SIDS, with SIDS as a subcategory.

When an infant dies from unknown reasons, there is an autopsy and a review of the baby's health history.

SIDS is specific. Eighty to 90 percent of SIDS deaths occur in unsafe sleeping situations.

Mason Rae had been napping on a couch that was too soft. Covered with a heavy blanket, he was too hot. Liz had no idea that situation was unsafe.

The INW SIDS Foundation's focus is education on safe sleep habits. They recommend no pillows in a crib, no bed sharing, no crib bumpers, no sleeping on a couch and making sure an infant sleeps on her or his back.

"Education is important for new parents," Liz said. "They can't keep their baby safe if they don't know how to do it."

The foundation seeks to certify birthing hospitals in Idaho in safe infant sleep practices. Certification requires that staff be trained in safe sleep practices, the hospital have a safe sleep policy and educate new parents before they are discharged. Hospitals can adopt more rigorous guidelines for higher levels of certification.

A certified safe sleep leader hospital also replaces receiving blankets in the nursery and NICU with wearable blankets to model no loose bedding in cribs. They agree to an annual evaluation.

A certified safe sleep champion does more. It affiliates with or becomes a local Cribs for Kids® partner, and provides safe sleep alternatives to at-risk parents. It also does community and media outreach on safe sleep. Cribs for Kids does the certification.

"Many medical providers are not up to date on safe sleep recommendations," Liz said.

In addition to education, the foundation offers grief support to those who experience a SUID/SIDS loss. It is pregnancy-loss and infancy specific. A peer support group meets monthly.

The foundation does a national



Liz Montgomery finds power in sharing her story.

mailing of support packets with information on children, grief and all types of losses.

"Previously, there was no education or family support in Idaho," said Liz. "Montana and Oregon also have no programs."

The foundation, which grows every year, holds three events.

- A Candlelighting Ceremony for anyone who has lost a child of any age is at 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 13, at the Share Hope Memorial Garden at 8th and Gilbert.

- On Mother's Day, women gather at Elk Point for a light lunch, crafts and an opportunity to mingle with others who have had a similar loss. Liz said some years are hard, and holidays are hard.

- The Run for the Angels on the first Sunday in October expected 600 this year, but about 800 came. More than 100 volunteers helped.

Because of the INW SIDS Foundation and Idaho Rep. Luke Malek, Idaho has taken a stance on SUID/SIDS. Gov. Butch Otter proclaimed October Safe Infant Sleep Awareness Month in Idaho.

It was an opportunity to raise awareness of these deaths.

As a child growing up in a close family in St. Maries, Liz wanted to be a teacher or librarian. Her parents exposed her to culture and a variety of people.

"I use my family values and life experiences with people I meet," she said. "Those make us who we are with the gifts we have."

After high school, she earned an associate degree at North Idaho College and then a bachelor's degree in education in 2000 at the University of Idaho.

Liz began teaching 14 students in five grades in Avery, Idaho. She and her husband, a firefighter, had a daughter, Holly.

Mason Rae was born Nov. 4, 2002. He died on April 23, 2003.

Liz became lead teacher at HeadStart on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation in Plummer.

After a year, she began doing psychosocial rehabilitation at Valley Vista in St. Maries, doing home visits with adults and children with mental illness.

Having had a "wonderful childhood," she said, "I didn't know about poverty or that not everyone was like my family. Schizophrenia is real! Poverty is real! Both are in my community!"

Liz worked seven years with Valley Vista, and then was homeless outreach coordinator at the YWCA in Spokane.

After serving two years on the Spokane Homeless Coalition, she became a life-skills coordinator for mentally disabled people at Trinity Group Homes in Coeur d'Alene. Liz was on the Region 1 Homeless Coalition Board.

"I had no idea about the nonprofit world, or the needs and gaps they fill," she said. "Nor did I understand the struggles people have."

After Trinity, Liz worked for four years with children at Mountain States Early HeadStart and in Rathdrum Center.

Along with her work with the INW SIDS Foundation, Liz works at United Way of Kootenai County as program coordinator for Ready! for Kindergarten. It serves 150 families with children from birth to 5 years old in Rathdrum, Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene school districts.

She offers classes to teach parents to play with a purpose, using puzzles, books, counting beads and other age-appropriate learning tools.

"Parents are their children's first teachers. We give parents tools so they can be confident in teaching their children," Liz said.

"If children enter second grade with poor reading skills, they will continue at a lower reading level throughout school," she said.

Liz credits her Catholic upbringing for giving her passion to help others.

"Things happen in our lives that give us pause, such as Mason's death," she said. "We don't know why things happen. Now I realize that my telling others his story is

a gift that helps them."

She is also on the Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Death (COIIN) Team for Idaho.

"I do what I do because I am blessed," she said.

"When we do what we're supposed to be doing, we are blessed," she said.

For information, call 208-557-4371 or info@inwsids.org.

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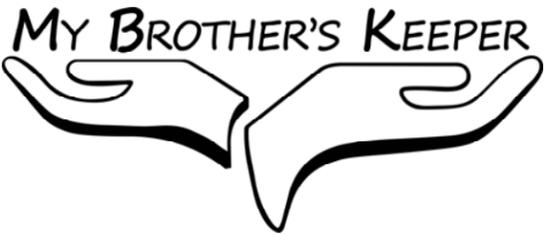
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Dialogue is the most important thing faiths can do in today's world

Dialogue among people of different religions may seem impossible in today's world of extremism and hate. How can we begin to speak with those we see as the "other" or as our enemy? When we give in to fear, we're likely to buy and use more weapons, as if violence will end terror.

At least dialogue among religions can help us dispel the misuse of religion to justify violence and injustice.

When people of different faiths gather, as they did Nov. 16 and 17 at the Ecumenical Center of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Geneva, Switzerland, they experience how dialogue enhances respect, friendship, trust and awareness of people and faith beyond what the headlines portray. The eighth meeting for dialogue with the WCC and the Center for Inter-religious Dialogue (CID) is reported on at oikoumene.org.

Mohammad Ali Shomali, founding director of the International Institute for Islamic

Studies in Qum and director of the Islamic Center of England, encourages Christians and Muslims to see themselves not as members of different religions, but as different branches of the same religion, rooted in the God of Abraham.

"Although different prophets came in different times and places and spoke different languages, they were sent by the same God. In the end of time, there will be only one school and that is the school of God, in which different prophets or teachers may teach, but there would be only one authority and one syllabus. We should be united under God, but we may benefit from different teachers," he said.

Heidi Hadsell, president and professor of social ethics at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, points out that a fruit of 20 years of dialogue is that the partners today can "speak honestly with each other and trust each other." When that happens, they can hold each other responsible.

She said the process of dialogue between the WCC and CID since 1995 can help the faiths address urgent questions.

The Rev. Bonnie Evans-Hills, interfaith advisor for the Diocese of St. Albans, England, pointed out that "those who kill don't care whether they kill Christians, Muslims or Jews." With all being targets, she advises that the faiths "pull together and love one another." She added that rather than young people being pulled away from religions by secularism, young people are more likely disenchanted because the exclusivism of faiths invites violence.

In this issue, the story of John and Joan Weekes exemplifies how exclusive claims of one church tore at the ties of one family, until John's pilgrimage through post-war damage in Asia and Europe. He experienced an accepting chaplain and accepting people as he visited in Europe and America. That opened him to accept different people, and stand in solidarity with them when

hatred threatened their lives and freedom.

The story of Mark Kadel helping hundreds of people and congregations live out and be enriched by welcoming strangers who come to Spokane as refugees, exemplifies how community and society grow when we overcome our fears of refugees.

Hilary Shelton of the national NAACP reviews the legacy of legislation that has challenged racial bigotry and separation in the United States, and the long road ahead in education and dialogue so we unite to secure freedom and equality for all people.

In addition, two stories tell how Transitions and Volunteers of America help marginalized people gain education, jobs, new beginnings and hope for their lives.

Both rely on the faith community working together in cooperation, based on respect from years of dialogue and understanding common concerns and values.

May we continue to be in dialogue.

Mary Stamp - Editor

The Gift of Christmas in peace, something greatly needed in these times

Peace refers to "living in harmony" or "a good relationship between persons or between groups." Peace means being free of violence, conflict or crises or the absence of war and hostilities. Peace is different from prosperity, wealth and riches.

In matters of social or economic welfare, it means the establishment of equality, and a working political order that serves the true interests of all.

In Hebrew, the term for peace, which is commonly used for greeting, is "Shalom." The root of the word means basically "to restore." Shalom has a cognate within the Arabic language, "Salaam," which not only refers to peace, but also includes justice, good health, safety, well-being, prosperity, security and friendliness, among others.

This concept can apply to relationships both on the personal level and between groups or nations.

The opposite of peace is violence, crisis, war, disharmony, agitation and hate.

When violence happens, it disturbs or disrupts peace. That violence will either continue or decline, depending on how we respond.

In these times, there are many acts of violence and threats of violence around the world from the family level up to the global level. These continue to cause fear and confuse us, preventing us from listening and often leading us to judge others.

Being able to listen, to carefully listen to the other, to lend a hand to help and to forgive are the keys for peace.

Opening up one's heart to listen and to forgive will lead to forgiveness and to a change of heart. Such actions always have healing powers for wounds that have been caused by violence and crises.

Christmas is a gift that was the result of a change of the heart by God. It has led to forgiveness and the restoration of relationship between humanity and God.

In this time of violence, everyone longs

for peace. We are coming to the time of the year when we celebrate Christmas and the holiday season.

For Christians, peace is central for Christmas, just as it is for Thanksgiving. We just celebrated the day of Thanksgiving, when families come together to say thank you.

In this month, families come together to celebrate Christmas as the birth of Jesus as a time of Peace on Earth.

It is the greatest gift that anyone should have. Christmas is the time of the year when people receive and share gifts with each other.

Big stores and companies always take advantage of that spirit to sell products and in a way have hijacked the true meaning of Christmas. They have secularized the message of faith to the point that much of that message of peace becomes lost in the process.

Families and friends look forward to the

season of exchanging gifts—gifts given and shared in love and with kind hearts.

In Luke 2:14, we return to the night of Christ's birth, the angels sing to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth PEACE among those with whom he is pleased."

Peace, for Christians, has to do with the Peace of Christ and with the gift of Peace at Christmas. We always look forward to that time of the year.

As we are coming into the season of gift exchanges, we do not need to give up hope, for we all know that hope will always overcome fear.

We remember that love will always be stronger than hate, forgiveness will always be stronger than revenge. In this season, may we all acknowledge that the greatest gift of Christmas and of this holy season is PEACE.

Ikani Fakasiiki
Contributing Editor

Commentary

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpt

National Council of Churches calls media to avoid sensationalizing hateful rhetoric

The National Council of Churches calls on all candidates for office to refrain from utilizing speech that reflects hatred of others and results in the division of society as a way to promote their candidacies.

We similarly call on media covering the candidates and their campaigns, debates and addresses to exercise care not to sensationalize such rhetoric at a time when we should be lifting up our best values, living out the democratic process.

Our democracy has many building blocks. It is not perfect, but these blocks together define the national effort to form a "more perfect Union" (preamble, U.S. Constitution). The preeminent witness to this national effort is the democratic election process that provides opportunity to anyone to seek office, including the presidency.

Among the current candidates for president are corporate leaders and government leaders; children of immigrants; men and women; rich and poor; and people of different ethnicities and races. This diversity reflects the heterogeneity of America and the value we place on it.

We have, however, also heard hostile rhetoric, unfortunately by some of the candidates themselves, aimed at undermining the rich complexity of our society. Immigrants have repeatedly been denigrated and even threatened with expulsion. Suspicions have been cast upon religious minorities. Racially bigoted statements have been made by candidates

even as we struggle to confront the wave of violence against unarmed black men, women, and children in our communities.

We express our deep concern about the language of requiring a religious test for public office as deeply prejudicial and contrary to the founding principles of our Republic. We also ask for an end to anti-migrant rhetoric that dehumanizes some members of our human family.

In recent weeks, candidates for office were called upon to "pledge and commit to the American people that they will uphold and defend the freedom of conscience and religion of all individuals by rejecting and speaking out, without reservation, against bigotry, discrimination, harassment, and violence based on religion or belief." (The Pledge: A Commitment to Religious Freedom, Oct. 23, Washington National Cathedral). We support this pledge and encourage candidates to do so as well.

We call for an end to hostile and demeaning rhetoric based on race and gender. In the 21st century, such rhetoric should be a thing of the past, something we read about in history books and not part of the history we make today.

We, the member communions of the National Council of Churches, admit we have much to confess about our own hostile actions and demeaning language about race and gender. We have become critically aware of how our own language has contributed to the divisions in this country.

We ask the candidates to engage in the

same kind of self-reflection, to speak to our highest common ideals, and to work together with those who elect them to form a more just society.

Steven Martin
National Council of Churches

From beginning to end, Advent is about the beginning and the end, or purpose, of time. It culminates in the incarnation of God, Jesus of Nazareth, for us.

For us, many years later, this month is still about endings and beginnings, measured by our calendars, the seasons and our budget cycles. It seems a good time to put all this in perspective.

I've heard a good deal of anxiety about money this fall. Since sending a letter about the synod budget drive, I have heard two important lessons I want to share.

The first comes by way of a quotation from our minister at Bethlehem Lutheran in Spokane, Steve Wee. Steve says the only stewardship advice he remembers at Luther Seminary came from Professor Roy Harrisville. He is reputed to have said in a time of financial need, "Ask God [for what you need], and tell it to the people."

It sounds like wise advice to me to address our prayer to the creator of everything, and to hold onto God's blessings. It's non-accusatory but informative. We're entrusted with a response.

The second lesson came from a text chosen by Anne Lohrmann Van Kley for her ordination. It's the story of the feeding

of the 5,000 according to St Mark, chapter 6, beginning at the 30th verse. In this story Jesus tells the disciples, "You give them something to eat" after the disciples wonder where and how they are to buy food for so many.

Jesus sends them into the crowd to gather what the people have, and they return with five loaves and two fish. Jesus blesses this meager offering and invites the disciples to distribute it.

We know what happens next. After everyone has eaten they gather 12 baskets of leftovers.

I hear in this story a call for us to offer what we have and then to trust God to make it enough for the day, even expecting more than enough!

In these Advent days of expectation and hope, I pray we will listen carefully for the needs of the world and church, and then offer what we have in the expectation that Jesus will make it enough and more.

Our trust that this is enough is founded on God's doubling-down on the human family and sending the only Son in a form unlikely to have generated much hope, a baby. We know the end of the story, God's desire to save comes wrapped in vulnerability but will, in the end, be more than enough for all who trust this Word.

Bishop Martin Wells
Eastern Washington Idaho Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

Calendar of Events

- To Dec 19** • **"Jesuits and the Arts Series,"** Jundt Art Museum, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 313-6843
- To Dec 20** • **L'Arche Christmas Tree Lot,** 815 E. Mission, 483-0438
- Dec 1-13** • **Tree of Sharing,** Northtown, Riverpark Square and Spokane Valley malls, 808-4919 or treeofsharing.org
- Dec 2** • **The Fig Tree mailing** and delivery, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave., 9 a.m.
- **Silent Day of Prayer,** the Most Rev. Thomas Daly, IHRC, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 448-1224, ihrc.net
- **Carla Peperzak: Her Real Life Story** Protecting Lives of Jews as a Dutch Resistance Operative, Northwest Museum of Arts and Cultures, Johnson Auditorium, 2316 W. First, 6:30 p.m., northwestmuseum.org
- Dec 3** • **Fig Tree Board,** Emmanuel Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., noon benefit and 1 p.m. board, 535-4112
- **Holidays at the Hearth.** The Women's Hearth, 920 W. Second Ave., 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., 328-6702, mtracey@help4women.org
- **Spokane Interfaith Council** "Meet the Neighbors" postponed from Nov. 19, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave., 6 p.m.
- Dec 3 to 6** • **"Nutcracker,"** Spokane Symphony, The Fox Theater, 624-1200, spokanesymphony.org
- Dec 4-6** • **"Christ in the Cradle-Manger** of Our Hearts, Advent Weekend Retreat, Fr. Curtis Seidel, IHRC, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd, 448-1224, ihrc.net
- Dec 5** • **"The Gifts of Advent: A Retreat Day,"** The Franciscan Place, 1016 N. Superior, 483-6495, sjfconline.org
- Dec 6** • **South Hill Christmas Tree Lighting,** Manito United Methodist, 3320 S. Grand, 6:30 p.m., 747-4755
- Dec 7** • **Chanukah Family Celebration,** Southside County Center, 3151 E. 27th Ave., 5:30 p.m., 443-0770, jewishspokane.com
- **"Celtic Christmas Concert,"** Affiniti, Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague Ave., 7 p.m., 448-9568
- Dec 8** • **Spokane Police Accountability & Reform Coalition,** 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- **YWCA's Little Black Dress,** Nectar Tasting Room, 120 S. Stevens, bring new woman's bra for Our Sister's Closet, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., 326-1190, ywcaspokane.org
- Dec 9** • **Inland Northwest Death Penalty Abolition Group,** 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- **Veterans for Peace,** 35 W. Main, 6:45 p.m., 838-7870
- Dec 10** • **"Love and Outrage Poetry Salon,** Boots Bakery & Lounge, 24 W. Main, 7 p.m.
- Dec 10-12, 14-19** • **Christmas Bureau,** providing food vouchers and books and toys to families in need, Spokane Fair & Expo Center, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., not open Sunday, 509-358-4254, jlee@ccspokane.org
- Dec 11** • **"Understand How Diversity Affects Classroom Dynamics,** Student Interactions and Office Climate, WSUS/EWUS Diversity Events Subcommittee for Case Studies in Diversity Issues in Higher Education, SAC 401A, noon to 1 p.m., 358-7554
- Dec 11, 12** • **Annual Christmas Candlelight Concert,** St. Aloysius Catholic Church, 7:30 p.m. Friday, 2 p.m., Saturday, 313-6733
- Dec 13** • **Gingerbread Build Off,"** Christ Kitchen Fundraiser, Davenport Grand Hotel, 333 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., children's activity 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., ccckministry.org/2015cms/events
- **"Handel's Messiah,"** Community Sing-Along, First Presbyterian Church, 318 S. Cedar, 2:30 p.m. rehearsal, 4 p.m., 747-1058
- Dec 16** • **"How Saint Nicholas Became Santa Claus,"** Cocoa and Contemplation with Deacon Tom Heavey, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 9 a.m., 448-1224, programs@ihrc.net
- Dec 17** • **PJALS Holiday Party,** celebrating 40 years of work for peace and justice with poetry, exhibits and a program, 35 W. Main, 5:30 to 8 p.m., 838-7870
- Dec 17-20** • **"All Is Calm,"** World War I story of an evening of camaraderie, music and peace among German and American soldiers on the Western front, Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague, 7:30 p.m., Thursday to Sunday, 2 p.m., Sunday, ticketwest.com
- Dec 18-20** • **"HIStory,"** 20th Annual Christmas Concert, Singing Nuns, Mt. St. Michael, 8504 N. St. Michael's Rd., 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 467-0936, ext. 121 or SingingNuns.com
- Dec 20** • **German-American Christmas Service,** Eberhard Schmidt, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th Ave., 3 p.m., 928-2595
- Dec 21** • **NAACP Monthly Meeting,** 35 W. Main, 7 p.m., 209-2425
- Dec 24** • **Christmas Eve Service,** Spokane Ministers Fellowship, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, 3909 W. Rowan, 7 p.m., 777-4603
- Dec 26** • **Spokane Christmas Church Walk** and Carol Sing, American Guild of Organists Spokane, Central United Methodist, 318 W. Third, Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington, and Central Lutheran, 518 S. Bernard, 2 to 4 p.m., 535-7145
- Dec 31** • **New Year's Eve Watchnight & Installation Service,** Spokane Ministers Fellowship, Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, 806 W. Indiana Ave., 10 p.m.
- **First Night Spokane,** downtown, 4 p.m. to midnight, 795-8691, firstnightspokane.org
- Jan 6** • **The Fig Tree mailing and delivery,** St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th Ave., 9 a.m.

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Christmas dinner is interfaith, expressing lifelong learning of acceptance

John and Joan Weekes will celebrate Christmas in Portland as they have for five years, sharing dinner with their son, granddaughters, his Jewish neighbors and an Ethiopian Muslim woman.

Laurene and Bob Mullen, the neighbors, helped raise their son John's daughters, Lauren and Mackenzie, after their mother died 17 years ago.

Zubeda Hlkadir lived with the Mullens in high school. They are now helping her go to college to be a social worker. She grew up in a mud hut. After her father was killed, she walked with her mother and brother to a refugee camp.

"It's great to participate at Christmas with Jewish, Christian and Muslim friends and family," said John. "They accept us and we accept them. They are part of my son's family."

"Zubeda reminds us we take much for granted," he added.

For John and Joan, members of Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ in Spokane, it's a fitting expression of their experiences of accepting and being accepted by people of different religions, races and cultures and sexual orientations.

Their church is "open and affirming," welcoming people no matter where they are on their journey of faith.

John, who was born in North Dakota, said his parents and family were Catholic.

In the Spokane neighborhood where he grew up, he began attending the youth group of a church that told him the only way to heaven was through their church.

"I wanted to greet my parents in heaven, so I felt I needed to convert my parents," he said, describing the tension that created.

After graduating from high school, John joined the Army, serving 18 months as World War II was winding down. He was stationed in Okinawa and then in Korea in 1946, when the Japanese surrendered in Korea, and Korea was split into the North and South.

Visiting Japan on leave, he saw the devastation after the atomic bomb in Hiroshima and after the firebombing in Tokyo.

At the age of 18, he was overwhelmed by the horror he saw.

"I couldn't comprehend that the Japanese would rather die than surrender. I couldn't imagine what terrible things guerillas did in Korea," said John.

As a sergeant, he was ordered to go to a village to kill or capture a guerilla leader. When he and his fellow soldiers broke in the door



John and Joan Weekes look forward each year to gathering with family and friends in Portland.

of a wood structure in a deserted village, they found a missionary and children singing, "Jesus Loves Me."

"It bothers me what a waste war is," John said.

In Korea, the chaplain, who led Catholic, Protestant and Jewish services, "taught me about accepting other faiths," he said.

When he came home, he approached his family in a different light.

Still seeking understanding, he went to Europe and saw post-war devastation as he hitchhiked for five months, living on \$1 a day, staying in parks, bomb shelters, concentration camps, displaced person camps and homes.

"In Cologne, I saw horrible damage from 1,100 plane raids," he said. "While it was hard to see the destruction, I had been trained to be desensitized to it, but it has bothered me through the years."

John went to Vienna, which was in the Russian Zone behind the Iron Curtain.

When he was hitchhiking, the first vehicle that stopped had Russian troops. They took him to the border.

Then he walked across a bridge

over the Danube River into the American Zone.

"The Russian soldiers accepted me," he said.

At refugee camps, refugees shared their food. At displaced persons' camps, he learned that German soldiers came home to find their houses bombed and families gone. They might find an envelope saying where they went. The Red Cross helped reunite families, he said.

"Seeing how people helped each other strengthened my faith in people," John said.

When he came back to the U.S., he had \$20.23 and hitchhiked for five weeks down the East Coast to a mission in Washington D.C., staying overnight with hill people in Tennessee, picking cotton with blacks in Arkansas, staying with people in Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico. In Arizona, a Navajo family picked him up.

After five weeks, he arrived home with 73 cents.

"I had been accepted by all of them," he said.

John studied medicine and philosophy for a year at Gonzaga University, and then went to Washington State University,

graduating in 1952 with a degree in pharmacy.

Joan, who was born in Chicago, earned a degree in music and education in 1953 at Washington State University and taught piano for three years in Pullman.

They were married in the summer of 1953 at Westminster, which her family attended and where they raised their two children.

John was a pharmacist for more than 50 years. For 32 years from 1957 to 1985, he owned Greenough's grocery, restaurant, pharmacy, hardware, service station and beauty salon a block up from the church. He also owned a pharmacy on the North Side.

Joan taught third grade for about three years at McKinley and Franklin elementary schools and then taught children and adults piano in her home. She still teaches two adults.

For many years, John ushered and was a leader at Westminster, and Joan taught Sunday school.

"I believe that God wants us to accept everyone, including those who hold different beliefs,"

she commented.

Westminster was and is "a church that shared the faith in Christ by welcoming and accepting people," John said.

Through the years, John and Joan have marched with African-American brothers and sisters for civil rights, with the Jewish community to oppose the Aryan Nations threat, and with gays and lesbians in the Pride Parade.

In the Civil Rights era, they joined a protest march from Westminster to Calvary Baptist.

"We were in solidarity and held discussions on civil rights in our church," John said.

When the Aryan Nations threatened the Jewish synagogue and defaced Temple Beth Shalom in the 1980s, the Weekes marched with the Jewish and ecumenical communities from Temple Beth Shalom to the Cathedral of St. John as a sign of moral support.

"We took our children to Jewish services," John said.

Since their church became open and affirming to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people—to all people wherever they are on their faith journey—they have marched in some of Spokane's Pride Parades.

"I am proud of our church's stands on civil rights, the Aryan Nations and LGBT concerns," said Joan.

"The biggest thing I see in the community is the change toward more acceptance on race and religion," said John.

John and Joan have traveled to 70 countries in Asia, Africa, South America and Europe to see and learn about different places and cultures.

They began their travels after their children were grown.

John has also been impressed while on those trips, that so many countries that were once U.S. enemies in war are now U.S. friends.

"Acceptance changes us," said John.

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