



Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

Mary Stamp, editor
editor@pncuccnews.org

325 N. 125th St. - Seattle WA 98133 • (206) 725-8383 or (800) 954-8777 or (509) 535-1813

February 2016

New building named after one of founders

Plymouth Housing Group offers permanent supportive housing.

Thirty-six years ago, Sylvia Odom was one of the founding members of Plymouth Housing Group, formed by members of Plymouth UCC in Seattle.

On Feb. 11, there is an open house at the 65-unit building, which will be called Sylvia Odom's Place in honor of her work with the program. It is the 14th building the group has built.

Ground breaking for this \$17 million facility, which meets Evergreen Sustainable Development Standards, was in September 2014. People will begin moving in on Feb. 16.

Its modern studio apartments will be for low-income adults whose long-term success with round-the-clock support services in other Plymouth Housing Group buildings has equipped them for
Continued on Page 4



Brigitta Remole, pastor at Plymouth, is with Sylvia Odom, second from left, a founding member of the Plymouth Housing Group, Paul Lambros, PHG executive director, and Catherine Colwell, Plymouth member and widow of David Colwell, who was senior minister and played a key role in the efforts to form the PHG.

Photo courtesy of the Plymouth Housing Group

Annual Meeting 2016 theme is 'Out on a Limb'

Plans are underway for the Pacific Northwest Conference UCC Annual Meeting 2016 April 29 to May 1, at the Wenatchee Convention Center with the theme, "Out on a Limb."

Delegates and visitors will share what they and their churches are doing that is risky and out on a limb, said conference vice moderator and Annual Meeting planning coordinator Scott Ward of Magnolia UCC in Seattle.

"We covenant to support one another, share with one another the joys and sorrows of ministry, and regularly gather for prayer and celebration together," said conference moderator, Andy CastroLang, pastor of Westminster Congregational UCC, describing the purpose of annual meetings.

**Annual Meeting is
April 29 to May 1
at Wenatchee
Convention Center.**

The inspiration for the theme is Proverbs 25:11: "The right words at the right time are like golden apples in a silver setting."

"When we gather for Annual Meeting we enjoy meeting new and old companions from around the Conference, we offer clever workshops, smart speakers, wonderful music and art, Saturday night socializing, and worship throughout our time together," she said.

Rob Leveridge, a UCC pastor and singer/songwriter, will be the guest musician, leading song and story.

There will be business to conduct and new congregations to welcome into the Pacific Northwest Conference.

The Planning Team for Annual Meeting are Genevieve Heywood of Veradale UCC, Tara Leininger of First Congregational UCC in Metaline Falls, Maureen McLain of MagnoliaUCC, Jan Shannon of Westminster UCC, Scott Ward of Magnolia UCC, and Arlene Hobson, conference administrator.

The Ministry Resources Committee is making personal contacts with leaders on conference committees as part of recruiting volunteers to fill vacancies.

Continued on page 11

In welcoming, we need to be clear what we offer

Conference Comments



By The Rev.
Mike Denton
Conference
Minister

*Whoever
you are,
wherever
you are,
you are
welcome
here?*

*What is the
'here' we
welcome
people to?*

I like espresso. I like the taste of it, the color of it and the art of creating a good one. I like the fact that it doesn't take a long time to drink but still makes me pause to enjoy it. Within four blocks from my home, there are seven different places I can get an espresso, and they all do it a little bit differently with a different machine, a different blend and a different atmosphere.

Although each has the same basic product, they each have a unique take on it.

Although, being Seattle, I wouldn't be surprised if there was an auto parts store that served espresso. I don't go to a coffee shop looking for auto parts nor do I go to an auto parts store looking for espresso. If I walked up to a counter at either and asked for the other I could expect an odd look back and a reply, "We don't have that here."

Asking at either if they knew where I might get the other would be OK and, if they knew of something, it would be kind to suggest it but the fact they don't have the particular product I'm looking for at that moment doesn't mean they're doing something wrong.

It doesn't mean they've excluded me. They just don't have what I'm looking for.

At many of our churches, Sunday morning begins with the words, "Whoever you are, wherever you are, you are welcome here." It's one of the best, most used phrases to be popularized by the denomination's identity campaign more than a decade ago.

I can't tell you how many churches or search committees I work with who state this phrase as something they think is unique to their church. There's a lot of good compassion, hope and intent in this short phrase. It's a beautiful ideal.

It also might be one of the more problematic phrases we use in our UCC life. I respect it as an aspirational goal, but those coming to our churches hear it as a commitment, and it's not a commitment we've always committed ourselves to.

More accurately, it's a three part commitment, and we all too frequently completely underplay what might be the most important part.

The "whoever" and "wherever" both really depend on our struggling with "here."

"Here" is where our heart is. "Here" is the place where our mutually agreed upon vocation is discerned through the lens of our faith, our values, our traditions and study.

"Here" has boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behavior, processes, relationships and expectations.

The welcome is meaningless unless it's clear what we're offering, who we are and who we think God might be calling us to be.

Our churches are not blank slates that invite everyone who walks in our doors to draw upon but communities with a pre-existing vocation that are willing to invite anyone with a similar vocation to join us.

Just to be clear, I'm not suggesting that our churches need to remain monolithic, unchanging institutions. We are called to a reflective life that exposes the ways we participate in the culture of oppression and dominance, dismantling that culture within and without our churches.

As Christians, change and transformation need to be a part of our vocation. However, when we invite people into our doors without clarity about the "here" we're welcoming them to—including naming those areas we're falling short—we're setting people up to feel betrayed.

We run the danger of substituting our goal of extravagant welcome with what can feel like a bait and switch. Clarity about "here" gives us the opportunity not to simply extend an extravagant welcome but a genuine one.

So, how might we do that?

I know the idea of church membership has been taking some hits over the last several years, but I think the moment of exploring membership is a great moment to further explain and be in conversation about what "here" is, and the "here" we might be able to create together.

More about that in your next issue of PNC News.

Transitions announced

Gary Southerton was installed Jan. 22 as pastor at Broadview UCC.

David Zaworski recently began as trained intentional interim at Everett UCC.

Nathaniel Mahlberg will be installed March 5 as pastor at First Congregational Church of Walla Walla, UCC.

Marvin Eckfeldt is moving to a retirement living apartment and downsizing. He has a 1977 commemorative United Ministries wall-plate, a symbol of the 13 year journey the Pacific Northwest UCC Conference, the Northwest Region of The Christian Church (Disciples) and the Washington-Oregon District Church of the Church of the Brethren in shared ministries and acts of justice and peace. He received it from a UCC colleague and would like to pass it on to someone who will appreciate it. *For information, email marveck@comcast.net.*

National Youth Event is July 26-30

Pacific Northwest Conference youth in grades eight to 12 will join youth from across the United States at the United Church of Christ National Youth Event July 26 to 30, at Walt Disney World, Florida.

In 2016, Disciples of Christ youth will join in this once in four years event that includes workshops, speakers, worship and community service, plus a day at the Disney parks.

PNC youth will gathering July 23 to 25 in Seattle for a pre-event with service projects and community building. They will stay at a local church and fly together.

Youth who are participating in the NYE are asked to attend the Annual Meeting to meet, be commissioned by the conference and participate in fund raising..

The estimated cost of the trip is to be \$1,200 with financial assistance available through the PNC and local churches fund raisers, said Kristen Almgren, Tara Barber, and Staci Schulmerich, coordinators.

For information, email [Kristen.almgren@gmail.com](mailto:kristen.almgren@gmail.com), barbertara@hotmail.com or staci@rbcucc.org.

Plymouth sets concerts

Plymouth Church UCC at University and Sixth Ave in Seattle presents Chanticleer in concert at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 5.

Called "the world's reigning male chorus" by The New Yorker magazine, the San Francisco based Grammy award-win-

ning ensemble, celebrates its 38th season. Praised by the San Francisco Chronicle for their "tonal luxuriance and crisply etched clarity," Chanticleer is known for its seamless blend of 12 male voices ranging from soprano to bass and original interpretations of vocal literature, from Renaissance to jazz and popular genre and contemporary compositions.

Tickets, \$35, are available at PlymouthChurch-Seattle.org or BrownPaper-Tickets.com.

Children, adults role play

Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry's Faith and Family Homelessness Project invites children from age 12 up and adults to role play a month in the lives of low-income families and meet others who care about the issue, from 2 to 5 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 31, at Plymouth Church, 1217 Sixth Ave. in Seattle. Middle school youth will provide sandwiches. Proceeds benefit the poverty concern of their choice.

Preregistration is done by emailing HuntHauh@SeattleU.edu or calling 206.296.6954. For information, call 206.622.4865 ext. 10.

Horizon House has new info

Horizon House, known for its forward-thinking approach to senior living, has added "Possibility Papers" to its communication mix. Director of communication Hollis Palmer said they "hope to provide information for consumers and colleagues on a variety of creative aging topics."

The first report will be, "Good and Good for You, Healthy Eating Supports a Healthy Planet."

For information, call 206-922-2776 email hollisp@horizonhouse.org

National UCC head's installation includes Plymouth UCC in Seattle

Rev. John Dorhauer, the new General Minister and President of the UCC, will be installed in three worship services in three different parts of the country over the weekend of April 15 to 17.

The last of these services will be in the Pacific Northwest Conference at 3 p.m., Sunday, April 17, at Plymouth Church in Seattle. The other celebrations are in New York and Chicago. The whole of the UCC is engaged in mission together. The work of the national setting belongs to us all," said John. "We are literally going coast to coast with this as a way of giving testimony

to that shared mission."

An article in United Church News that talks about this weekend of activities is at ucc.org/news_dorhauer_april_installation_going_coast_to_coast_in_series_of_worship_services_01222016

Ritzville Church has conversation

Zion Philadelphia UCC in Ritzville is offering a conversation on environmental issues as seen by UCC members east of the Cascades. It will be held March 18 and 19.

Some of the issues include agriculture life with climate change, salmon, Hanford clean-up, water quality and quantity, energy - renewable, oil and coal. Members will talk about how they deal with the environment in their daily lives and work.

Members of eastside UCC churches can share environmental concerns in 20 minute presentations with 10 minutes of questions.

The program begins with a spaghetti dinner at 6 p.m., Friday, followed by a presentation until 8:30 p.m. At 9 a.m., Saturday after a pancake breakfast, there will be presentations until noon. There will be afternoon tours. Housing is available.

For information, call 360-337-0975 or email zionphiladelphia@gmail.com. RSVP by March 11.

Grieving Church retreat set

A retreat on "The Grieving Church," how grief affects churches, will be held from 4 p.m., Monday, April 4 to breakfast, Wednesday, April 6, at N-Sid-Sen. Register at pncucc.org.

Spokane forms RESULTS group

A Spokane area RESULTS group began meeting in January at Westminster Congregational UCC. RESULTS is a volunteer organization that creates the political will to end poverty, said organizer Randy Crowe, retired managing director of N-Sid-Sen. He is concerned that worldwide more than 16,000 children under the age of five die from preventable causes, like pneumonia or malaria.

"We can spend a few hours a month to use our voices to save a child's life," he said. "RESULTS advocates are volunteers, not paid lobbyists."

Volunteers receive training, support and inspiration to become advocates who advise policy makers to make decisions that improve access to education, health and economic opportunity.

For information, call 232-9589 or email randycrowe.crowe@gmail.com.



First 13 buildings based on 'housing first' model

Continued from page 1
more independent living.

Caseworkers will identify skills tenants can develop and will connect them with volunteers to teach those skills.

When these tenants move into more independent living at Sylvia's Odom's Place, their apartments will be available for others to move into from shelters or off the streets for the intensive services those units provide, said Lynn Beck, chief development officer with the Plymouth Housing Group (PHG).

The ground floor will house two retail spaces, adding to 21 commercial tenants in Plymouth's portfolio.

Throughout the years, Sylvia has continued to volunteer for PHG, which provides housing with 24/7 support services to its nearly 1,000 formerly homeless tenants.

In 1980 when Sylvia chaired the Plymouth Congregational UCC's Mission and Community Service Board, she helped create and chaired

a housing task force. That task force, which was to provide affordable housing for homeless people in downtown Seattle, became a separate nonprofit, the Plymouth Housing Group.

Sylvia, the daughter of a sharecropper in Archie, La., grew up in a home made of sticks and mud during the Great Depression and World War II. Sharecropping, she said, was "slavery in disguise."

Her father always had food to share from his garden. Her mother modeled kindness and adjusted to what life brought.

While "being poor is living at the bottom of the pit with no place to go, I always hoped tomorrow would bring new answers and solutions. I never gave up. I was always hopeful someone would lift me up. So I continue to live in hope that things will change," she said.

An uncle made it possible for her to have an education. She attended Alcorn A&M University in Lorman, Miss.

After graduating, she joined her sister and brother-in law,

who was stationed in the Navy in Bremerton. Over the years, her siblings and parents moved to Bremerton and Seattle.

Sylvia did student teaching to be certified to teach and spent 32 years teaching elementary school in the Highline School District of West Seattle, where she lived with her husband, son and daughter. She worked in school administration several years before retiring. In 2007, she moved into Horizon House.

Her son's first grade teacher had invited her to the adult forum at Plymouth. Sylvia continued attending and became active in the church.

Sylvia served on the Plymouth Housing Group board until 1984 and was involved with half a dozen affordable housing projects. She has continued to volunteer since then.

The PHG's first project was to preserve the Seven Seas Hotel as apartment housing.

In 1987, it leased the Payne Apartments, setting aside the first units for Northwest AIDS Foundation clients.

The Gatewood project in 1991 was the first total apartment building rehab.

Lynn said PHG's vision is to eliminate homelessness through providing permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless people.

"At Plymouth, we follow the Housing First model," she said, "bringing in single adults who are homeless because of mental illness, trauma, substance use disorders, medical needs and disabilities. Most are chronically homeless."

Many of the people are disabled. With Plymouth's "wrap-around" support, they have gained housing stability.

"We wanted to name our newest project in honor of someone who has made a major contribution to Plymouth Housing Group," said PHG executive director Paul Lambros. "Not only was Sylvia key in our founding, but also she remains involved with PHG. There was no other contender."

For information, call 206-374-9409 x143 or visit plym-

Prospect UCC divests from fossil fuel investments

At General Synod in 2013, participants passed a resolution urging UCC congregations to divest from fossil fuels or engage in shareholder activism with fossil fuel companies, said Meighan Pritchard, pastor of Prospect UCC in Seattle.

Prospect UCC recently acted on this resolution, moving all its endowment funds from the United Church Funds moderate balanced fund to the United Church Fund's new Beyond Fossil Fuels moderate balanced fund (<http://ucfunds.org/beyond-fossil-fuels/>). This new fund screens out companies that extract and process fossil fuels, which are the cause of climate change.

Prospect's treasurer, Jim Miller, provided information to the congregation about the re-

turn on investment of the new Beyond Fossil Fuels funds. Given the decline in coal and the recent low oil prices, the Beyond Fossil Fuels funds have performed slightly better than funds that include fossil fuels.

After having a few weeks to think about divestment and ask questions, Prospect members voted unanimously in favor of divesting. One email to the United Church Funds and the deed was done, just five days before Christmas.

Prospect contacted GreenFaith to add its name to a growing list of congregations and other religious bodies that have taken this action: <http://www.greenfaith.org/programs/divest-and-reinvest/listing-of-known-religious-divestment-efforts>.

Although the question of return on investment arose during discussion, the main reason Prospect chose to divest was to take a stand on the issue of fossil fuels and climate change, said Meighan. Divesting was one way to do that.

"That divested funds are currently outperforming other funds was a bonus," she said.

"Prospect members recognize that we all use fossil fuels and that it is up to each of us to reduce our carbon footprint," she said. "We don't want to make money from industries that are helping to destroy the planet. Divestment doesn't necessarily affect the bottom line of the industries, because whatever shares we sell, someone else buys, but it does make a statement that we revoke the social

license of fossil fuel companies to continue with a 'business as usual' plan that requires destruction of the planet."

According to Fossil Free, as of September 2015, 400 institutions representing \$2.6 trillion had pledged "some form of divestment commitment."

By early December the numbers were more than 500 institutions worldwide representing over \$3.4 trillion in assets. The fossil fuel companies cannot help but notice the gaining momentum of the divestment movement, she said.

Meighan invites other congregations to be the next to divest from fossil fuel companies.

For information, call 206-322-6030 or visit the *Beyond Fossil Fuels Funds* at ucfunds.org/beyond-fossil-fuels.

UCC justice advocates challenged Walmart again

UCC justice advocates turned out Friday morning, Nov. 27, in Federal Way to support Walmart low-wage workers.

“There were 15 of us from All Pilgrims, Everett, Normandy Park, Northshore, Plymouth and Prospect UCC churches, along with Michael Ramos, executive director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle,” said Steve Claggett of the PNC Justice and Witness Ministries Committee who helped organize the event.

Two graduates of the UCC Justice Leadership Program were among those gathered.

The group helped bag \$5,225 worth of food to put on display and distribute to Walmart low-wage workers.

“That amount of food represented the Walmart CEO’s daily food ration in contrast to a meager display of the \$4.95 of food the average Walmart worker can afford daily,” Steve said.

“We sent word out to the workers that they could pick up a bag of food. The managers took names of those who went out for food. One was fired for taking food based on the assumption that taking food was participating in the protest,” Steve said.

The next week, several went back with a petition signed by 5,000 people asking Walmart to reinstate Mary Watkins, who said the company retaliated against her after she spoke out for a wage increase, he said.

The manager would not



Display depicts amount of food an executive at Walmart can buy on his salary and the amount a worker can buy.

Photo courtesy of Steve Claggett

take the petition, which they eventually dropped on the floor of the manager’s office.

Several of the group and one other UCC person took part in a Black Lives Matter rally later in the day in downtown Seattle where they again unfurled the UCC justice banner.

Steve is promoting an initiative that would increase the state minimum wage to \$13.50 per hour, higher where local ordinances require it, and would mandate sick, family and safe leave for employees. The initiative was filed in January and is going through a vetting process.

Petitions should be available in mid-February.

“To be safe, about 325,000 signatures will be needed by the end of June for it to be in the November ballot,” he said.

While neither a \$13.50/hour or \$15/hour wage is a livable wage for most families, Steve said the initiative would be “a huge step forward for Washington families” and it will benefit from attention by national candidates to our growing income inequality and the diminishing middle class.”

The initiative is supported by a coalition of more than 30 organizations with Working Washington, one of the leaders—workingwa.org.

The Justice and Witness Ministries Committee will provide details on how members of PNC churches can become involved in the campaign.

For information, call 206-795-9475 or email claggett@comcast.net.



Fifteen UCC justice advocates challenge Walmart and call people to care for the poor.

Keystone opens building for UCC churches to discuss collaborating on economic justice

Keystone Congregational UCC recently opened its building for members of UCC congregations to meet and discuss how they might better work together for economic justice. This is an outgrowth of an ad hoc Seattle area UCC group that has worked two years on living wage and economic inequality.

The meeting was also to decide if the group might want to form a ministry network under the conference.

“Such networks provide a means to raise a stronger and more persistent voice for the systemic changes we need, said Steve Claggett of All Pilgrims UCC. “Washington State ranks last on tax re-

gressivity in the extent to which our tax system falls on the backs of the poorest.”

The Justice and Witness Ministry Committee seeks names of contact people in the UCC congregations, people who are interested in social justice and advocacy. For information, call 206-795-9475 or email claggett@comcast.net

Former missionary seeks to speak on mission

Ruth Brandon, a member of the PNC and Disciples of Christ Region Global Ministries Committee, served for eight years as a missionary in Mozambique and seeks to keep people informed about Kim and Eric Free, an Oregon couple who are missionaries with the United Church of Christ in Mozambique.

She wants people in Northwest churches to be aware they are part of a world wide church.

Through study and Global Ministries, Ruth has been in various African countries, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Brazil.

She has been to Kenya, Chile and Cuba with conference and local church partnerships. She spent a week in 2014 at Oaxaca, Mexico, studying roots of migration. It's near Guatemala on the route of migrants.

She also served two terms on the Global Ministries Board, ending in 2006.

The native of Vermont gave an overview of her involvement in mission, as a local pastor and on conference staffs before she moved to Everett in 2013 to be near her son, 44. She is now involved at Everett UCC.

While she was studying at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Eduardo Mondlane, a graduate of Presbyterian missions who had worked at the United Nations, spoke about his people's experience under Portuguese colonialism and their efforts to gain independence.

Ruth and her husband, who were involved in anti-apartheid and civil rights movements, responded when Eduardo invited them to teach at the Mozambique Institute, a school for Mozambique students in Dar es Saalam, Tanzania. After graduating from seminary in 1966, she taught there until 1969. Because the Portuguese educated few Africans beyond a couple of years, she taught middle school to students from 12 to 21 years old. The students had



Ruth Brandon was at the PNC Leadership Retreat at N-Sid-Sen.

fled from Mozambican cities or rural areas at war or liberated in Northern Mozambique and were as refugees in Tanzania.

After being ordained in 1973 in Wisconsin, she went with her husband to teach again until 1976 at the FRELIMO Secondary School, helping it move as independence approached from Tanzania to a former Portuguese military base inside Mozambique.

“The churches sent us for a ministry of presence, which is now the way for missionaries to serve,” Ruth said. **“By our presence and our teaching we were to show that God loves and cares about them.”**

The Portuguese government and Catholic Church had worked together. The government appointed priests, who supported the government and military,” Ruth said. **“The church was equated with the colonial power. In contrast, we were there because we were Christian, simply to express God’s love. We brought a new image of Christians who respected African culture and understanding.”**

Independence came in 1975 while she was there.

Ruth returned to Mozambique again from 1990 to 1993, and worked with the United Congregational Church of

Southern Africa, a five-nation church. The Mozambique Synod assigned her to teach ethics at the ecumenical seminary and to start a new church in Maputo, the capital. The new church included educated people who worked in good jobs in government and business, while the local church at the time had only fourth-grade-educated pastors who feared educated members might go elsewhere.

Ruth’s appointments were ecumenical, with Presbyterians Methodists, United Church of Canada, the United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ.

She served congregations in Massachusetts, and was on the staff of the Southern, Central Atlantic and Ohio conferences.

Her ordination was while in campus ministry in Wisconsin. She completed an STM degree on “church and world issues” in 1984, the year she divorced.

Now at Everett UCC, a church with 50 attending on Sundays, she is social action and mission committee chair. The committee connects diverse ministries of the church, including its free Thursday meal that serves 100 to 250 people. It also has a food pantry and uses part of its land for a Volunteers of America community garden that provides food for the meals and food pantry.

The church also helps at the Interfaith Association’s shelter and hosts a CROP Walk. Many groups meet at the church, including one for GLBTQ youth.

“Because we care, we stay in the community to serve it,” Ruth said.

Everett UCC shares its building with a Marshall Islands UCC church, a Micronesian church and a new Disciples of Christ church. The DOC has a drop-in center there for people from shelters to come in the mornings for coffee, conversation and information.

“Some in the UCC may think we can choose to follow Jesus or not,” she said, **“but in Mozambique, I witnessed that Jesus gives life. In the face of poverty and devastation from war, they have no doubt that Jesus got them through.”**

Churches were key in ending the war. They trained people in peacemaking and how to live again with people who had wreaked havoc and terror among them. When the war ended, the Christian Council of Mozambique exchanged sewing machines, hoes and other items for about 500,000 weapons for a Guns to Sculpture program that turned guns into art.

“Church people in Mozambique are our partners, not just a place for charity,” Ruth said. For example, when the synod told visiting Americans of a desire to build their own office building—rather than going from house to house—they rejected the offer to send volunteers to build, saying they just needed money for materials.

The Mozambicans could design and build their own building. For local church-building projects with no foreign help, Mozambican faithful would raise a few dollars at a time and add a layer or two of bricks gradually over many years until complete.

For information, call 937-367-4978 or email arembem@mac.com.

Global Ministries Committee rebuilds, recruits

Even while the Global Ministries Committee for the Pacific Northwest Conference UCC and the Northwest Region of the Disciples of Christ is re-organizing following the death of its chair in a November car crash, plans are underway for a delegation to visit partners in the East Seoul Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) from May 16 to 23.

The Global Ministries' Disciples of Christ chair Lillian Moir of Blaine died in an accident in November near the Lummi Reservation.

With no UCC co-chair, the committee asked Ed Evans, who previously was on the committee and co-chair, to return. He agreed to function as convener.

The committee last met in January 2015, when they had agreed to continue to support partnerships with churches in Korea and Germany, as well as working with the UCC and Disciples nationally to determine a possible third partner.

The committee, which is to have eight UCC and eight Disciples members, now has seven UCC members and four Disciples. They met in January to discuss recruiting, the partnerships and other roles. They will have a retreat in June to build relationships in person.

The partnerships are about relationships and friendships, and sharing with people of different cultures and churches, Ed explained.

"We are looking for people who are interested in rebuilding our connections with the Berlin-Brandenburg Synod of the United Evangelical Church in Germany," he said.

Ed, who is organizing the visit to South Korea, said there are now five participants in that delegation. There is space for up to 10 to participate.

"Usually when we have



Ed Evans presents a peace candle as a gift from Suquamish UCC to Jung, Byeong-gil, pastor of Song-Pa Church in Seoul presents candle to Ed Evans.

Photo courtesy of Ed Evans

visited the PROK, our partners have shown us social justice and other ministries, such as My Sister's Place for women in the sex trade, plus early child education, the demilitarized zone and peace village near the border, a homeless shelter and PROK national offices," said Ed. "We also join in daily worship at churches."

The PROK is proud to be a liberal progressive voice in South Korea, having broken from the Presbyterian Church of Korea over theology and biblical inerrancy in 1953, Ed said.

The partnership with the PROK in East Seoul was established in 1993. A delegation from the South Korea came in 1994, and a PNC delegation went in 1995. The last delegation went in 2010.

Ed, who began serving on the Global Ministries Committee in 2005, has videos online of his experiences in 2010 and

2012 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxUpRinBrkg>.

In 2012, Ed went for five weeks to help pastors enhance their English speaking skills.

"The power of partnerships is in the relationships I have formed. I talk frequently with some friends on Skype," he said, adding, "There is value to be exposed to people of faith in a different cultural setting."

When Ed was preparing to return home, one pastor commented that Ed would likely forget his new friends.

"I promise I will not forget you," he said.

As part of the English grammar lessons, Ed had pastors write about how they would take social justice to the pulpit or how they would talk of their desire to reunify.

"Most were interested in preaching the Gospel as they understand it, not in talking about what is wrong with the government," he said.

Ed found that churches there average 100 members and they, like churches here, lament their decline and want to grow, so they are bringing guitar music into their worship.

Jim Spraker, who has also been involved in the German partnership, will join Ed and Jean Kim in Korea after he visits in Vietnam.

Others who will be part of the delegation include Darrel Goodwin of Liberation UCC in Seattle and Andrew Conley-Holcomb of Admiral UCC in Seattle.

Ed said the visit in May is an opportunity to learn more about the struggles Korean sisters and brothers of faith confront on a daily basis and to learn about their life, ministry and outreach.

It is also an opportunity to learn what's behind the call by Global Ministries of the UCC and DOC to continue to pray for peace and reconciliation in Korea—a nation that has been divided for more than 60 years. While there may be discussion of reunification, there's a divide among South Koreans on that.

At the last General Synod of the United Church of Christ, a resolution was passed calling for Peace, Justice and Reunification in the Korean Peninsula.

The Global Ministries area executive the Rev. Xiaoling Zhu wrote about the General Synod resolution at http://www.globalministries.org/witness_for_justice_pursue_healing_justice_reconciliation_peace_and_reunification_in_korea#.

Ed estimates that the cost will be around \$1,200 roundtrip from Seattle to Seoul. The flight will be the only cost for participants, because Korean hosts will provide home stay housing with Korean families, food and transportation.

For information, call 360-683-4704 or 360-670-1073, or email edevans@aol.com.

PNC team gives training on faith and science

A team from the Conference is presenting a training on “Science as the Voice of God: Exploring the Intersection of Faith Journeys and Scientific Inquiry” from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 20, at Magnolia UCC in Seattle.

Ron Cole Turner of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary will lecture by Skype.

He seeks to empower participants to have a “bold public voice” on the difference the UCC makes by embracing how science informs, challenges and deepens theological understanding and how vital it is for UCC members to have a voice on ethical issues raised by new technologies.

Local scientists connected to faith communities will respond to issues raised, and participants will dialogue on theological, ethical, liturgical and evangelistic issues.

The event is sponsored by four churches—Admiral, Broadview, Magnolia and Prospect UCC churches in Seattle—with the support of the PNC Justice and Witness Committee and the Church Development Committee.

Participants will explore how the UCC is open to science and what can be learned religiously through scientific discovery, said Joan Henjum.

She is helping coordinate the event with Andrew Conley-Holcom of Admiral UCC, Scott Ward of Magnolia UCC, Meighan Pritchard pastor at All Pilgrims UCC and Gary Southerton pastor at Broadview UCC.

“In the UCC, we recognize that our ability to reason and question are gifts from God,” said Joan. “We welcome the findings of our scientists as



Andrew Conley-Holcom, one of the event organizers, describes the need for faith and science discussions in congregations.

they learn about where we came from, how to keep ourselves healthy, how to care for creation and more.”

The workshop will explore some of the issues at the faith-science crossroads, practice ways to talk about these issues, send participants home with resources and network for continuing the conversation.

The day will feature a Skype presentation by theologian Ron, a panel conversation with some local experts, and opportunities for participants to draw on their own collective wisdom.

“We will look at the big picture of why we need science and faith to be in dialogue and how we can look at some new scientific developments

through a faith lens,” said Andrew, who earned a master’s degree in anthropology in 2010 at Western Washington University in Bellingham.

He grew up in Wayside UCC in Federal Way, but left the church for 15 years and came back while in Bellingham through leading an interfaith youth camp as a spiritual humanist from 2006 to 2010. He became youth minister at Bellingham UCC and then completed an MDiv at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley in 2014.

Andrew said the workshop grew out of discussion at the PNC annual Leadership Retreat in June 2015 at N-Sid-Sen on connecting churches through planning events. He met with Joan and discussed articles she

had read on the intersection of science and faith.

“Our goal is to help teams of a pastor and five lay people understand how to help their congregations engage in the dialogue on science and faith as part of church vitality, helping connect with the community, beginning recycling projects, and doing more effective and meaningful outreach and advocacy,” he said.

The event is being held at Magnolia because it has the space and technical capability with its IT setup for doing a Skype lecture.

Andrew hopes that pastors and laity who participate will mobilize for Earth Day in April and engage in advocacy and activism.

“If the church engages with the science community they can develop interfaith or inter-philosophical dialogue,” said Andrew, who expects 50 to 80 participants.

“As a public intellectual, the pastor does not just need to have information but also must engage people to think about the world and life,” said Andrew.

“The program is open enough so people bring knowledge and information, and structured enough so people feel safe to engage even if they wildly disagree with others in the group,” he said.

John Dorhauer, the general minister and president of the national United Church of Christ, highlights faith and science as one of three key domains where the denomination needs to engage, along with interfaith connection and race.

For information, call 206-512-7537 or email pastor Andrew@admiralchurch.org.

Festival of Preaching scheduled April 11 to 15

“Preaching and Worship for Justice” is the theme for the fourth Festival of Preaching and Worship Monday through Thursday, April 11 to 14, at First United Methodist Church, 180 Denny Way in Seattle.

There are three pre-festival workshops offered by Eugene Cho, Ted Smith, and Tony Robinson. Separate registration is required for these workshops.

There are many opportunities to connect with ministry professionals and lay participants. The event seeks to inspire through preaching, engage through worship and connect through conversations to equip people to serve Christ in the world.

The planning team includes Cory Maclay of Plymouth UCC in Seattle, who is the festival director, along with representatives of Presbyterian, United Methodist, Disciples of Christ and Free Methodist Churches, and the Seattle School of Theology and Psychology.

There are nine featured preachers.

- **Ayanna Johnson Watkins**, a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) pastor and social worker based in Memphis, Tenn., seeks to build transformative community and nurture each person’s God-given purpose. Her experiences as a youth pastor in Chicago and lead pastor of a multicultural congregation she helped found, and her time as a community organizer and counselor informs her preaching.

Her first sermon, based on Luke 4:1-13, will consider temptation and what winning looks like in the context of a just world. Her second, “Waiting on the World to Change,” based on Isaiah 58:1-8, asks, given the current political and social reality, how to anticipate and prepare for a new day.

- **DJ del Rosario**, ordained an elder in the United Methodist Church in 2009, was associate pastor at Faith UMC



Worship at a previous Festival of Preaching. Photo from Cory Maclay

in Issaquah and pastor of Lynden UMC before becoming senior pastor at Bothell UMC. He helps the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry relate to the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry.

He will use the text Ezra 1:1-3 to preach about ministry with people on the spectrum.

- **Eugene Cho**, the founder and lead pastor of Quest Church, an urban, multi-cultural and multi-generational church in Seattle, is the author of *Overrated: Are We More in Love with the Idea of Changing the World Than Actually Changing the World?*

He, his wife Minhee and their three children are founders and visionaries of One Day’s Wages (ODW). This grassroots movement that seeks to alleviate extreme global poverty will be the focus of a pre-festival workshop.

His sermon for the opening worship Monday afternoon is based on Amos 5:21-24.

- **Ginger Gaines-Cirelli** recently became the first woman to serve as senior pastor of historic Foundry UMC in Washington, D.C. A pastor-theologian for more than 20 years, she has a ministry that encourages radical hospitality, spiritual practices, and solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

Her two sermons will use technology as a backdrop for considering the power of the Easter story. On Monday night in “404 Error: Not Found” based on Mark 11:1-19, she’ll ask what it means to believe in a Jesus who was dangerous enough to be arrested and killed by the state. On Wednesday in

“The Life App” based on Mark 16:1-8, she will guide listeners to consider the power of the empty tomb and the empty spaces in their lives.

- **Karen Oliveto**, senior pastor of Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco, is a scholar-activist pastor, who has served in rural and urban communities on the East and West Coasts in parish and campus settings. She is an adjunct professor at Pacific School of Religion and Drew University’s doctor of ministry program, and the co-author of *Talking about Homosexuality: A Congregational Resource*.

She will preach Tuesday night and participate in a facilitated panel conversation with Quinn Caldwell.

- **Paul Brandeis Raushenbush**, now senior vice president for public engagement at Auburn Seminary, was the executive editor of global spirituality and religion at The Huffington Post from 2009 to 2015.

An ordained American Baptist minister, Paul speaks and preaches at colleges, churches and institutes around the country. He regularly offers commentary on religion and society. His first book is *Teen Spirit: One World, Many Faiths*. He edited the 100th anniversary edition of Walter Rauschenbusch’s book, *Christianity and the Social Crisis – In the 21st Century*.

He will participate in a facilitated panel conversation with Ted Smith on Tuesday morning and preach Wednesday afternoon.

- **Quinn Caldwell**, pastor of Plymouth Congregational

UCC, a progressive church in Syracuse, N.Y., co-edited *The Unofficial Handbook of the United Church of Christ*. He contributes to *The Christian Century*, the UCC’s Stillspeaking Daily Devotional, and *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary*. His most recent book is *All I Really Want: Readings for a Modern Christmas*.

He will preach Wednesday evening and participate in a facilitated panel.

- **Ted Smith**, associate professor of preaching and ethics at Emory University’s Candler School of Theology, studies how everyday church life intersects with fundamental questions of religion, politics and culture. His book, *Weird John Brown*, works through memories of the abolitionist to understand relationships between race, religion, law and violence.

His pre-festival workshop, “Preaching without Notes,” is for people who have never tried to preach without notes and for those who have done so for a long time. He will cover various ways to preach without notes, and discerning when it is fitting to use a manuscript.

- **Tony Robinson**, a preacher and teacher, consultant and coach to congregations and their leaders, is the author of more than a dozen books including *Transforming Congregational Culture* and *Changing the Conversation*.

Tony, who has taught and lectured at numerous seminaries, founded the Festival of Preaching NW in 2010. For 13 years, he wrote a column for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, “Faith Matters.”

His pre-festival workshop, “The Preaching Lab,” asks eight participants to bring a “work in progress” sermon they want to strengthen.

For information, call 206-622-7278 or visit festivalofpreachingnw.org.

Stars stretch 60 feet across the Kirkland sanctuary

Ryan Lambert, pastor at Kirkland UCC since 2014, invited those at the service of lessons and carols on Christmas Eve to imagine themselves laying on their backs, gazing at the stars and thinking of their place in the universe.

To help with their imagining, he, his wife Shauna, and daughters Grace, 13, and Marin, 8, had set up an array of stars hanging from tulle stretched from the balcony to a large star over the cross.

“Think of our place in the universe this holy night and our beloved place in the universe connected with the night Jesus was born,” he said.

Ryan and Shauna had seen a similar display of stars in the sanctuary at First Congregational UCC in Bellingham during the ordination of Andrew Conley-Holcomb there last year. Ryan said that Bobbi Virta had created them for her ordination there.

Shauna, who had the vision of how to do it, ordered white lightweight tulle, a netted fabric, to stretch 60 feet from the balcony at the back of the sanctuary to a 14-foot star over the cross. They hung 130 gold cardboard stars of different sizes from the tulle using fish line.

“We made the star over the cross with a layer of gold fabric and a shimmering fabric over wire and lathe,” he said. “White Christmas lights hang along the side walls, adding to the effect.”

“When people came in we wanted them to think of the journey of the shepherds and magi under the star,” Ryan said.

Members were excited to see the worship space transformed, he said. The display was up until Jan. 10.

Sharry Nyberg, minister of Christian education at Bellingham First Congregational UCC, said their Epiphany stars were created for the 2004 ordination of Bobbi Virta, who was Christian education coordinator there for 15 years before



An array of stars fill the Kirkland UCC sanctuary for Christmas Eve worship. Photo by Ben Von Ullrich



Epiphany stars stay up through the Epiphany season at First Congregational Church of Bellingham UCC Photo by Sharry Nyberg

she went to seminary. She is pastor of the United Church of Ferndale.

Bobbi and her son Markus, then 16, cut out 88 stars from gold posterboard and had help attaching them with fishing line to tulle stretched from the balcony to the cross.

Sharry said they use them through the Epiphany season, which ends Sunday, Feb. 7.

“Sometimes there is a little breeze. The tulle doesn’t move but the stars sway. The children look up in awe,” said Sharry.

Last year, the Epiphany stars were up for Andrew’s ordination and the first Sunday for Sharon Benton, Bellingham First’s new led pastor.

Bobbi said the architecture at Ferndale is different, so members used stars they decorated and hung in the sanctuary for her installation in 2007. Now they have 3-D stars with lights inside hanging at the front of the sanctuary.

“I like stars. They bring the outdoors inside, reminding us of the mystery of the cosmos and our connection to each other because all beings are made of stardust,” she said.

For information, call 425-822-3811 or email ryan@kc-cucc.org, or call 360-734-3720 or email sharry@fccb.net.

Bethany UCC's pastor meets with President Obama

Angela Ying, pastor at Bethany United Church of Christ in Seattle, as a minister and social justice leader in the community, was invited to meet with President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama at the White House on Dec. 12.

Angela represented Bethany United Church of Christ, Seattle, the Pacific Northwest Conference and the United Church of Christ during her visit.

Only 200 leaders were invited to personally meet with the Obamas at the White House.

Angela, the founding pastor of Bethany UCC, was given this opportunity because she was awarded by the City of Seattle for her social justice work.

Bethany United Church of Christ continues to be in the forefront of social justice in the community and city through its justice work.

Bethany was founded in 2000 as an intentionally multi-racial, multicultural and inter-generational church. It is about a third Asian, a third black and the rest white, Hispanic, Native American and mixed races. Its music styles reflect its diversity.

When the former Beacon Ave. UCC, which had roots back to 1906, dwindled to a few members, they partnered with Plymouth UCC in Seattle to start the diverse church.



Angela Ying, center, converses with Michelle Obama.

Now the Facebook entries for the inclusive justice filled community of faith often begin: "You are Beloved! I am Beloved! We are Beloved! All are Beloved of God!"

Church staff sent a list of some of the current justice and outreach ministries of the church.

Its work with immigrants and refugees includes partnership with Syrian refugees and their families.

Bethany's youth leadership is working on ending institutionalized racism, economic injustice and police brutality.

Its Freedom School, Seattle Young People's Project, Black Out, Youth Undoing Institutionalized Racism and Ending the Prison Industrial Complex operate on the Bethany UCC campus in partnership with the church.

Each year, the church feeds 50,000 guests and distributes

food through its church food bank, which is 12 noon 2 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays.

In addition, Bethany provides free half-day and full-day preschool, or a sliding scale for families who cannot otherwise afford preschool in its neighborhood. The preschool is offered in partnership with Refugee Women's Alliance.

Bethany members work to raise the minimum wage, find safe housing and speak out that "all are beloved of God."

Bethany UCC provides "dynamic and diverse" worship and music every week, as a cross-cultural, multi-racial, ethnically diverse, open and affirming congregation.

Angela, who is senior pastor of Bethany UCC, is the first, second-generation Taiwanese American ever ordained in the United States.

She was one of six women awarded at City Hall by the city of Seattle for her community work in justice and peace.

Angela has also been invited to be a keynote speaker and pastor in residence at her alma mater, Princeton Theological Seminary, where she received the preaching and urban ministry awards, as part of their Engle Institute.

For information, call 206-725-7535 or email office@bethanyseattle.org.

Nominees being sought, focus is on connection

Continued from page 1

They are seeking 80 individuals to serve on the boards, committees and tasks forces beginning in 2016.

"That's a great many servants needed, but we feel confident that a coordinated effort will yield a terrific set of covenant partners. We need everyone's help," said Ministry Resources members Cindy Bauleke, Deborah Baden, Jan

VanPelt, Linda Crowe, Randy Crowe, Sara Weaver and Dee Eisenhower.

To submit nominees, call Cindy Bauleke at 360-303-1941 or email cindy@bauleke.com.

Instead of having the usual guest speaker at Annual Meeting, the focus is on connection and community with several unexpected happenings, said Scott Ward, director of commu-

nity life at Magnolia UCC.

There will be 20, 60 and 90-minute workshops and an art gallery, being arranged by Scott.

"We are looking for artists from across the conference to submit art pieces to the gallery. Any medium with a focus on the theme, 'Out on a Limb.'"

Scott said planners expect to welcome the new Minister of Church Vitality and that person

will preach at the Friday evening worship service.

Mike Denton will preach for the Sunday morning worship.

For information, call 206-969-2671 or email scott@magnoliaucc.org.

For information on registration, contact PNC-UCC, 325 N 125th Street, Seattle, WA 98133, email pncucc@gmail.com or visit www.pncucc.org.

Camp theme is on 'Fearless Faith'

"Fearless Faith, Courage in Community" is the 2016 theme and curriculum for PNC 2016 summer camps.

Each day the study guide has some variation on the theme, beginning with "Together, the Courage." The first day based on Genesis 12 is on the courage to show up. The second day on Ruth is on the courage to trust. The third day on Genesis 45 is on the courage to forgive. The fourth day on Daniel 3 is on the courage to stand. The fifth day on Esther 4 is on the courage to do justice. The sixth day on Acts 10 is on the courage to

change, and the last day on Matt. 28 is on the courage to connect.

Wade Zick, managing director at Pilgrim Firs, Mark Boyd, managing director at N-Sid-Sen, and Katy Lloyd and Kristin Almgren, Outdoor Ministries Task Force co-chairs, met with summer directors at Kirkland UCC on Jan. 23. They spent the day discussing camp, curriculum, culture changes and worship at camp.

"We are excited to know we have a great team of directors getting ready for our campers," said Mark.

2016 N-Sid-Sen camp schedule

Junior & Senior High Midwinter Retreat

March 11 to 13 - grades 7 to 12

Women's Retreat - May 20 to 22

Work Camp - June 13 to 18

Young Adult - June 17 to 19

Tod Camp, Jen Towner & Max Aquino

Kid's Camp - July 3 to 6

Gale Peterson & Trudy Lambert

Intermediate Camp - July 3 to 9

Esther Sanders & Kim Schulz

Senior High Aqua Camp

July 10 to 16

Tony Kliment & Sheila Thieme

Family Camp #1

July 24 to 30

Ryan & Shauna Lambert

Junior High Aqua Camp

July 31 to Aug 6

Sarah MacDonald & Dana Sprengle

LGBTQ Camp

Aug 5 to 7 - Jan Shannon

Family Camp #2 - Aug. 7 to 13

Janet Malley & Andrew Conley-Holcom

For information,
call 208-689-3489
email mark@n-sid-sen.org
register at n-sid-sen.org

2016 Pilgrim Firs camp & retreat season

Men's Retreat - Jan 28 to 31

Work Camp - May 5 to 8

LGBTQ Spiritual Renewal Retreat - May 27 to 29

PNC Counselor & Director Retreat - May 20 to 22

LGBTQ Retreat - June 3 to 5

Work Camp June 16 to 19

Senior High Camp

June 27 to July 2

Kristen Almgren & Andrew Conley-Holcom

Junior High Camp

July 3 to 9

Susan Andresen & Rich Porter

Kids Camp - July 10 to 13

Eric Anderson

Intermediate Camp

July 10 to 16

Katy Lloyd & Sandy Cheatham

For information,
call 360-876-2031
email wadezick.pf@gmail.com
register at n-sid-sen.org

Environmental Justice camp set

N-Sid-Sen on Lake Coeur d'Alene will host an Environmental Justice Workshop Wednesday to Friday, March 9 to 11 to train participants to teach classes in their own congregations. The train-the-trainer program will look at how people of faith can work for environmental justice and help create a sustainable, healthy and inclusive community, said Meighan Pritchard, environmental justice curriculum trainer for the national United Church of Christ (UCC). She is also half-time pastor at Prospect UCC in Seattle. For two years, she was minister of environmental justice for the national UCC.

Participants will explore a faith-based approach to environmental justice: gratitude, humility, responsibility, justice and community. Each theme includes biblical readings, selections from the video, "Renewal," insights from respected leaders and study questions. Participants will also look at water management practices in urban and rural settings with Janet Torline of the Kootenai Environmental Alliance in Coeur d'Alene. The session will also address working through environmental despair to build communities based on hope, and creating plans for participants to share the workshop materials in their communities.

"Renewal" includes stories people from many faith backgrounds responding to environmental issues in their communities, she said. The workshop costs \$100 and is co-sponsored by the PNC and UCC Justice and Witness Ministries.

For information or to register, call 208-689-3489 or visit n-sid-sen.org/camps_and_events.htm.

Camps plan campaigns for mattresses and more

Both N-Sid-Sen and Pilgrim Firs are joining in "Sweet Dreams," an Adopt a Mattress Campaign to replace the 334 mattresses at both sites.

The total cost of the project is \$50,000, which will be raised by people making tax-deductible donations to adopt mattresses, with a suggested amount of \$250 per mattress.

"One of the joys of going to a summer camp or weekend retreat is the assurance of a restful night's sleep, and that takes a good mattress," said Mark Boyd at N-Sid-Sen and Wade Zick at Pilgrim Firs.

"Next year we will be dreaming even bigger dreams of a capital campaign that will fund some projects for both camps," said Andy Castro-Lang, conference moderator, and Mike Denton, conference minister.

The plans for N-Sid-Sen

include construction of pedestrian paths under Highway 97, construction of lodge-style, year-round housing for older guests and relocating the manager's residence to the North Cove area.

At Pilgrim Firs, the proposals are to create RV sites, improve staff housing, construct a program and performing arts building and acquire additional acreage.

For the "Sweet Dreams" Adopt a Mattress campaign, checks may be sent to the Pacific Northwest Conference with "camp mattress" in the memo line. They may be mailed to the conference office, 325 N. 125th St., Seattle WA 98133.

Online contributions by credit card may be made at pn-cucc.org and click the donation button.

For information, call 206-725-8383.