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Microenterprise Handbook for Congregation Kitchens Available

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) is pleased to announce the publication of "Creating Opportunity through Micro-Enterprise: Faith Kitchens as Micro-Business Incubators." The new handbook that outlines how congregations can practice good stewardship of their resources, support economic development and build bridges in the community by using their kitchens to support micro-enterprise businesses.

The handbook is informed by IFFP's experience in starting up a microenterprise program at First United Methodist Church in Corvallis. Thanks to funding support from a USDA Community Food Project grant, Presbyterian Hunger Program, United Methodist Global Ministries and Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the congregation opened up their kitchen to low-income entrepreneurs needing kitchen space to launch their business. In these tough economic times, many people are looking for alternative sources of income to support their families, and congregations often have underutilized kitchen space that can be used to support start up businesses, along with a mission to help those in need.

"Food-based micro-enterprise incubators can play a key role in the empowerment of low-income people, especially immigrants who face language and cultural barriers in traditional workplaces and in small business entrepreneurship," states the handbook. Commercial kitchen space can often be hard to find and very expensive to use or rent for a low-income entrepreneur.

This newly published handbook contains information on licensing, getting support from the congregation and community, along with a list of resources, sample forms and an assessment tool. The Micro-Enterprise handbook is available for free download at www.emoregon.org/food_farms.php or you may purchase a hardcopy for \$10 postpaid. To purchase the handbook, send a check to EMO-IFFP, 0245

MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

African Methodist Episcopal Church ☉ American Baptist Churches of Oregon ☉ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ☉ Christian Methodist Episcopal Church ☉ Church of the Brethren ☉ Community of Christ
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon ☉ Episcopal Diocese of Oregon ☉ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ☉ Greek Orthodox Church ☉ Presbyterian Church (USA)—Presbytery of the Cascades
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) ☉ Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland ☉ United Church of Christ ☉ United Methodist Church ☉ Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

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Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO's) Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns connects, inspires, informs and empowers people, congregations and religious institutions to work for justice and the care and renewal of the Earth. The Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership empowers faith communities, farmers and neighborhoods to build rural-urban alliances and innovative partnerships for just and sustainable food systems that promote community health. EMO is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.