

## *Media Release*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE:** Oct. 29, 2010

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## **Clergy Breakfast inspires faith-based health equity work**

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership will host its "Clergy Wellness Breakfast," a free event to provide inspiration and practical resources for faith leaders interested in health ministry, health equity issues and a faith-based approach to chronic disease prevention. The breakfast will be held at Westside Community Church at 4000 SW Western Blvd. in Corvallis on Tuesday, Nov. 9, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Benton County Health Department staff will speak about how the environments in which we live, work, learn, play and worship impact our health, especially in terms of obesity and chronic diseases. EMO staff will share information on the Congregational Health Index (CHI) assessment tool, which was developed through a partnership with Oregon Public Health Institute under EMO's Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-supported Congregational Wellness pilot project. The CHI helps congregations examine their buildings, grounds, policies and practices, and use their findings to create policy and environmental changes to sustain healthy choices among congregants. Other wellness resources include a mini-grant program as well as a website, [faithandwellness.org](http://faithandwellness.org), which features a free download of the CHI, sample policies and other information for creating healthy environments.

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### 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

Pastor Josue Gomez of Iglesia Emanuel Cuadrangular will talk about his congregation's experience using the CHI, and there will be a time for participants to ask questions and share with everyone what they are doing in their own faith communities.

Partners that were part of the pilot program have chosen a variety of activities to bring wellness to their faith communities, such as: implementing nutrition guidelines for congregational meetings and fellowship time, displaying nutrition information next to food options, making physical activity a regular part of religious education or social time, creating raised bed gardens on their property and installing a bike rack.

There is no charge for the clergy breakfast; however, pre-registration is requested by sending an RSVP to [emo@emoregon.org](mailto:emo@emoregon.org) or calling: (503) 221-1054 by Nov. 5. For more information, contact Laura Raymond, Congregational Wellness project coordinator, at [lraymond@emoregon.org](mailto:lraymond@emoregon.org) or (503) 939-7507, or visit [www.emoregon.org/events.php](http://www.emoregon.org/events.php).

*Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) 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. 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 interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.*