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Local peacemakers visit Israel and Palestine

By Jan Elfers, EMO director of Congregational Relations & Peace Programs

On October 20, 2006, a group of 22 Oregon peacemakers, led by Rabbi Joshua Stampfer and the Rev. Dr. Rodney Page, embarked on a two-week journey to the Middle East. This was not a typical tourist trip: it was designed specifically to provide the opportunity for fact-finding interviews and discussions with people who are intimately involved in peace work, media, education, human rights issues and government policies.

The 22 participants included three high school students, two from the Portland metro area and another with local ties from Boston. Participants included: Philip and Dorothy Martin, Evona Brim, Alan Ellis, Aviva Stampfer, Adina Menashe, Orly Stampfer, Meg Eberle,

David Lippoff, Peggy Bird, Bob Friedenwald, Fr. Richard Rutherford, Fr. Bill Wickham, Sherry and Paul Fishman, Carolyn and Pete Rux, Jan Elfers, Rabbi and Goldie Stampfer, the Rev. Dr. Rodney Page and Sandi Page.

Peace through education: Peace group visits Givat Haviva and Neve Shalom

The group spent the first two days based at Givat Haviva, an institute north of Tel Aviv that provides education to promote human dignity and equality between Jewish and Arab Israeli citizens and Palestinians. Field visits included nearby settlements, a military checkpoint and the

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Jan Elfers, EMO director of Congregational Relations & Peace Programs, with Arab and Jewish students who attend *Hand in Hand*, an integrated public school in Jerusalem that seeks to bridge the Arab-Jewish divide.

2007 Interfaith Advocacy Day draws focus to family and community stability

Will the 2006 election translate into lawmakers supporting economic fairness and stability, as the Oregon Legislative Assembly convenes this year? Find out at the 2007 Interfaith Advocacy Day at the state Capitol on Feb. 5. Come and join people from many faiths to advocate for "Family and Community Stability: A Value for All Oregonians," focusing on affordable housing, accessible healthcare and the elimination of hunger.

Confirmed speakers include Michael Anderson, The Housing Alliance; Rabbi Michael Cahana, Congregation Beth Israel; Lisa Wenzlick, St. Luke Lutheran Church; and

Patti Whitney Wise, Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force. Other invited speakers include Bruce Goldberg, MD, Oregon Department of Human Services;

addresses from community and political leaders, and meetings with lawmakers, then ends at 4:30 p.m. with prayer and reflection. Morning activities

Will the 2006 election translate into lawmakers supporting economic fairness and stability as the Oregon Legislative Assembly convenes this year? Find out at the 2007 Interfaith Advocacy Day at the state Capitol on Feb. 5.

and Barbara Roberts, former Oregon governor.

The day begins at 8:30 a.m. with worship, advocacy training, keynote

will take place at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 700 Marion St. NE, Salem. After lunch at the church, participants will march

to the Capitol where they will be greeted by a Democrat and a Republican legislator. Following this reception in the Capitol Galleria, participants will then make visits to lawmakers.

Sponsors include: American Jewish Committee; Atkinson Memorial Church; Augustana Lutheran Church; Bilal Mosque Association; Bread for the World; Bridge City Friends Meeting, Peace & Social Concerns Committee; Care to Share; Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ; Church of Scientology, Portland; Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Episcopal Peace and Justice Commission;

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Serving into the future

This column is being written as we move through the Christmas season and into the New Year—the time of year where both celebrations and challenges of the past year and hopes for the future come together.



David Leslie

maining of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis.

The conflicts of note in 2006, however, were not limited to Iraq. Sadly, the struggle between Israel and Palestine continued with the added stress of violence between Israel and Lebanon and in-country violence that pitted Lebanese against Lebanese and Palestinians against Palestinians. The hopes for a two state solution and the end of terrorist attacks and military incursions were not fully realized.

So too, peace in Darfur. Sudanese supported militias—the “Janjaweed”—continued to wreck havoc unabated, and clashes between government forces and rebel groups caused a massive number of deaths and an increased number of refugees.

Fortunately, amongst this carnage were invaluable signs of hope. In response to these conflicts, religious people throughout 2006 continued their witness to the importance of peace. Prayer vigils and lobby visits to Congress to call for the end of the war in Iraq, peace missions to the Middle East, and public rallies in cities like Portland and Eugene to call attention to the genocide in the Sudan were just a few of the signs that we had not grown hard of heart but were conveyors of hope.

Another sign that hopeful people can be catalysts for change was found in the reduced hunger rate in Oregon. Not too many years ago, Oregon was deemed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the “hungriest state in

the nation.” In 2006, our hunger rate dropped significantly due to a massive statewide outreach effort involving all parts of the religious, public, private and philanthropic sectors. At EMO, I am particularly grateful for the leadership of John Elizalde and Rob Wentzien, who staff the Northeast Emergency Food Program and are involved in other efforts to address the root causes of hunger. Their commitment brought hope and support to thousands of people in need during 2006.

Looking back over the last year, I am also mindful of the future of this planet and the pressures that it must bear. Increased automobile usage and gas and oil consumption in China, shrinking ice caps caused by global warming negatively impacting Inuit people, and the urgency to develop technologies to harness renewable energy sources were just a few of the environmental items in the news in 2006. Thankfully, religious communities in Oregon brought the commitment to environmental stewardship to the forefront of their congregational life. This fall, for example, almost 200 congregations in communities as diverse as Dufer, Tillamook, Bend, Ontario, Salem and Port Orford showed the movie *An Inconvenient Truth* and used this as a catalyst for dialogue about climate change and actions that congregations can undertake to address this issue. These efforts make real the honoring of the creation narrative in Genesis and the call to create sustainable and

healthy places that allow us to thrive.

Looking back and gazing forward are what we do at this time of the year. We pause in remembrances of things not fully recognized and hope for new days ahead. Where will you put your spiritual, intellectual and physical energy this year as purveyors of hope in a broken world?

As I look forward to the opportunities before me, I am reminded of the words of the Rev. Emilio Castro, former general secretary, World Council of Churches:

The vision of your future shakes out our frustration, opens our eyes to discern your Spirit. Behind the limits of our human expectations, you are at work. A different tomorrow is possible. ... This vision enlists us, mobilizes us, sends us to work for the future. It is worthwhile to struggle for justice, to work for peace, to announce reconciliation. ... We go into the future with the expectations of the surprises that the Holy Spirit prepares ... with the assurance, O Father and Mother, that you will be there, waiting for us (*Prayers for a Thousand Years*).

May you have a Blessed New Year, full of pleasant surprises!

As I reflect on the past year, I am profoundly aware of the reality of war and the ever-present hope for peace.

As I reflect on the past year, I am profoundly aware of the reality of war and the ever-present hope for peace. Sadly, 2006 will not be known as the year when the conflict in Iraq ended. One year ago, the hope was for a war ended, so too the end of 2004 and 2003. As the fourth anniversary of the war looms, we collectively mourn the deaths of close to 3,000 U.S. military personnel and the more than 20,000 who have been wounded. Additionally, we mourn for and struggle to understand the rationale for a conflict that has resulted in the deaths and

Save the Date: EMO's Annual Community Celebration & Awards Dinner and silent auction on May 10

On Thursday, May 10, representatives from the faith community, cooperative organizations and community leaders from around the state will come together in downtown Portland for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) *Annual Community Celebration and Awards Dinner*. The purpose of the event is to celebrate the work of EMO, as well as church leaders and people of faith who are making a difference in Oregon. As in years past, special recognition and awards will be given to honor ecumenical and interfaith leadership in the state.

The event will be held at the Hilton Hotel, 921 SW Sixth Ave., Portland. A reception and silent auction will begin at 5:30 p.m., with the dinner and program beginning at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50 per person or \$500 for a table of 10. For more information and advance registration, please call (503) 221-1054, ext. 203.

EMO celebrates recent grants & gifts

EMO's Board and staff extend their appreciation to those who have supported our ministries. The following is a list of foundation and community support received by EMO since the Fall 2006 issue of the *Voice*.

Donor (Fund)	Program
Abbott Laboratories	HIV Services
Altria Corporate Services, Inc.	HIV Services
Boeing Company	NE Emergency Food Program
The Bullitt Foundation	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Broadway Cares Equity Fights AIDS	HIV Services
The Collins Foundation	2006 Annual Fund
The Equity Foundation	2006 Annual Fund
Gilead Sciences	HIV Services
The Herbert A. Templeton Foundation	Portland International Community School
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church	NE Emergency Food Program
Juan Young Trust	Portland International Community School
Lamb Foundation	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
The M.A.C. AIDS Fund	HIV Services
Meyer Memorial Trust	Patton Home
Milwaukie Presbyterian Church	2006 Annual Fund
Moreland Presbyterian Church	Russian Oregon Social Services
Northwest Health Foundation	Patton Home
Portland General Electric Co.	Oregon Interfaith Power & Light
Presbytery of the Cascades	2006 Annual Fund
Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust	Portland International Community School
Saint Luke Lutheran Church	NE Emergency Food Program
The Tides Center	Oregon Interfaith Power & Light
Trust Management Services, LLC	Portland International Community School
United Church of Christ	2006 Annual Fund

voice

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Publisher:
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • Greek Orthodox Church
Presbyterian Church (USA) • Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland
United Church of Christ • United Methodist Church
Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

Exploring the common good in the Hood River Valley

By Jerry Bryan, student, Applied Theology at Marylhurst University

Members of EMO's Environmental Ministry Committee gathered in Hood River on a sunny late September day to visit local businesses, farms and irrigation districts that are guided by a commitment to building a sustainable community. Maui Meyer, co-owner of Celilo Restaurant in downtown Hood River, welcomed the group with hot coffee and a reflection on what it means to practice business in a way that integrates ecology, economy and social justice. "I'm an end user dedicated to working with agricultural producers who support a mission of hope," Maui said, "and today you'll be seeing where our food and water come from."

Participants traveled first to an irrigation and hydroelectric water diversion on the Hood River, where the Farmers Irrigation District has installed a horizontally oriented water diversion screen. This innovative screen protects fish from harm and at the same time cleans debris and sediment from the water that is used to irrigate orchards.

The intent behind the screen was to find a way to reduce water conflicts among various stakeholders dependent on Columbia River Basin water. Julie Davies-O'Shea and Les Perkins, representatives of Farmers Conservation Alliance, the Hood River group dedicated to developing solutions to rural natural resource problems, explained that the horizontal screen is the first of its kind to be approved by the natural resource protection agencies for use on streams with salmon and steelhead. It was designed based on the belief that "fish can be our guide" when developing solutions to natural resource problems. "Because we started thinking differently," Davies-O'Shea pointed out. "Our group was able to develop what seems to be a spiritually inspired solution. Now, all money raised in selling screens goes back into projects that contribute to ecology, equity and economy."

The committee traveled next to McCurdy Farms, where Heather and Craig McCurdy treated the group to a picnic with a view of Mount Hood

and thousands of acres of orchards. The McCurdys produce fruit using irrigation water that passes through the horizontal fish screen. Following an opening prayer offered by Gorge Ecumenical Ministries, tour members listened while Heather explained how Ballot Measure 37 poses a dire threat to local agriculture. Measure 37 entitles property owners to file claims requesting that land use regulations be waived or that they be compensated for any lost value they may have incurred because of land use restrictions on their property. "As you sit and enjoy this orchard setting, imagine how your experience would be changed if this wonderful soil were covered with concrete, houses and malls. Try to imagine how we can possibly continue to farm if we're surrounded by suburbia. Fact is, we'll be out of business, and the food you're eating now will be produced far away and shipped in using fossil fuels."

The next stop on the tour was Annala Orchards in the small Hood River community of Oak Grove. The farm is operated by Tim Annala and his family and attracts a lot of attention as a model of a sustainable business. Annala raises a diversity of crops in a contained manner, keeps his operating expenses to a minimum, and offers a wide selection of exotic apples, pears, cherries and wine grapes. He also uses water from the Farmers Irrigation District and over the last 20 years has significantly decreased his dependency on pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

Spiritual values of wilderness

A document on the "Spiritual Values of Mt. Hood Wilderness" was produced by a group of religious leaders who participated in the "Opening the Book of Nature" retreat in September. To view the document and endorse it, go to www.emoregon.org/INEC.htm.



Photo credit: Ross Miller

Field trip participants discuss land use issues, while overlooking Hood River Valley land threatened by potential development.

The day ended at Phelps Creek Winery, where Bob Morris and Heather Staten treated the group to a wine tasting, complete with a view of the entire Hood River Basin. Bob and Heather share the excitement of Hood River's agricultural way of life, and it is fairly easy to get them talking about the water, soils, people and process that go into the wines that they create and share for the common good.

The environmental stewardship and economic issues explored on this day are ongoing and are present in many communities in Oregon. The impacts of, and response to, Ballot Measure 37 are of special concern to the Environmental Ministries Committee. When the deadline for Measure 37 claims arrived on Dec. 4, there were over 6,000 claims. Groups from different perspectives on the issue are calling for the Oregon Legislature to get involved. If you would like to join the Environmental Ministries Committee for continued dialogue and action, please call (503) 221-1054, ext. 214.

A season of linking local farms & faith communities

EMO's Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership completed its first year as a USDA Community Food Project in November.

Highlights of the year include: completed a community food assessment in Benton County and hosted 100 people for a presentation of the results (to download the report, see www.emoregon.org/INEC_food.htm); expanded the "That's My Farmer" program and sold over \$12,000 in farmers' market coupons in Corvallis; and launched four weekly farmers stands operated by refugee farmers at Portland congregations—at St. Philip Neri Church, parishioners bought fresh bouquets from Hmong farmer Yua Lor, and at First United Methodist Church, congregants stocked up on vegetables grown by Meskhetian Turkish refugees.



Also, a community food assessment for inner north and northeast Portland is underway.

Thank you to our 2006 partners for their hard work and enthusiasm! We look forward to an equally productive 2007 season. To participate, please contact Jenny at (503) 221-1054, ext. 214, or inec@emoregon.org, or contact Liv at (541) 757-1988, ext. 107.

Environmental advocacy day to amplify religious voice on global warming

Governor Kulongoski has been invited to provide a presentation on "Clean Energy, Climate Change and Oregon's Future" to kick off the faith community's first advocacy day on global warming and energy stewardship.

The "Interfaith Energy & Climate Stewardship Advocacy Day" will include a panel on what needs to be done to advance renewable energy and energy conservation in Oregon, workshops and an opportunity to visit with your legislators. The event is sponsored by Oregon Interfaith Power & Light, a project of EMO, and the Oregon Interfaith Global Warming Campaign, coordinated by EMO.

The event will be on Monday, Feb. 26, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (registration at 8:30 a.m.), located at First United Methodist Church, 600 State St., Salem. Early registration is \$15 (must be received by Feb. 22); \$20 after Feb. 22. Lunch will be provided.

To register, visit www.emoregon.org to download a registration form or call (503) 221-1054.

Climate stewardship projects set to expand

A significant increase in public awareness on global warming means that 2007 could be an important year for progress on an overarching moral issue of our time. The Oregon Interfaith Global Warming Campaign, coordinated by EMO's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns, will mobilize people of faith to educate the Oregon Congressional Delegation on the moral dimensions of the issue and the need for science-based legislation to address the reduction of global warming emissions. Oregon Interfaith Power and Light is providing new tools for congregations including an energy efficient light bulb fundraiser, energy efficient product shopping cart and a solar congregations initiative. Both projects will sponsor an interfaith advocacy day on energy and climate stewardship focused on state legislation in Salem on Feb. 26.

For more information, call (503) 221-1054, ext. 214.

NEFP manager honored for advocacy work to end hunger

On Nov. 2, John Elizalde, program manager of EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program, was honored with a 2006 Harvest of Hope Award. The award was presented at the Oregon Faith Roundtable Against Hunger's (OFRAH) Fourth Annual Harvest of Hope Breakfast, held at Congregation Beth Israel in Portland.

Elizalde was recognized for his perseverance in using advocacy as a primary way of addressing hunger in Oregon. In addition to managing EMO's emergency food program, he has served for nearly two years as one of the Portland metro conveners of OFRAH and twice hosted the Spring OFRAH Event. Elizalde also serves on the Board of Directors of the Oregon Food Bank, representing local food agencies.

"This is really an award that recognizes the potential within us all," said Elizalde. "What I did was pretty simple: I chaired a meeting of potential advocates and reminded them that they

could be active and effective. We can all do that, with our families, friends, co-workers, community groups. I appreciate the recognition from OFRAH and admire greatly the work done by that fine organization."

The keynote speaker at the event was the Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar, general secretary of the National Council of Churches. Other awardees included the Faith Café, Next Chapter Food Pantry in Ontario, and the United Methodist Church Oregon/Idaho Conference under the leadership of Bishop Robert Hoshibata.

OFRAH seeks to explore the complexities of hunger by engaging diverse religious communities throughout the state in direct service and in developing solutions to the root causes of hunger through education and public policy. For more information, visit www.ofrah.org. For more information about NEFP, visit www.emoregon.org or call (503) 284-5470.



Photo credit: Gary Logsdon

NEFP program manager John Elizalde was honored with a 2006 Harvest of Hope Award for his hunger advocacy work in Oregon.

AIDS pandemic documentary available

EMO's HIV Services has arranged for the purchase, at very low cost, of DVD copies of the AIDS documentary *A Closer Walk*. These DVDs are available to congregations and organizations across the state that choose to show the film on a free admission basis.

This award winning documentary is narrated by Will Smith and Glen Close. The film's director and producer, Robert Bilheimer, is an Academy Award nominee for his film *Cry of Reason*. *A Closer Walk* was conceived with the late Jonathan Mann, architect of the World Health Organization's response to global AIDS.

The film includes interviews with more than 50 women, men and young people from across the globe including Africa, Haiti, Switzerland, India, Nepal, Ukraine, Cambodia and various locations in the United States. The film focuses on the underlying causes of AIDS; the relationship between health, dignity and human rights; and the universal need for action, compassion and commitment to counter what



A Closer Walk director Robert Bilheimer with AIDS orphan and HIV positive child Jancey, in Chennai, India.

has become the worst plague in human history.

The film will be provided at no charge, although we are requesting a donation of \$15 to cover our costs. Additional donations, in support of EMO's HIV direct service work, will also be welcome. Interested congregations or organizations should contact Lowen Berman at (503) 460-3822 or hivcenter@emoregon.org.

Transportation assistance needed for Day Center clients

Would you be willing to help our HIV clients in need of transportation assistance? The EMO Day Center has been providing monthly bus passes to 20-30 of our lowest income clients at no charge every month for the past four years. These passes are a key tool for recipients to get to the Day Center in order to receive services. We know of no other source of bus passes for our clients. To receive the passes, folks must have used the Day Center at least 10 days during the prior month and have incomes below \$650 per month.

This critical benefit costs us approximately \$500 per month. Please consider adopting a client with a \$25 monthly pledge. Or organize your congregation to pledge \$500 for one or more months. To make a donation or pledge, call the Day Center at (503) 460-3822.

Special thanks to Rob Wentzien

Everyone at EMO would like to give special thanks to Rob Wentzien, project coordinator at Northeast Emergency Food Program. After almost 16 years of service, Rob has been called to serve as pastor of the ELCA congregation on Shishmaref Island, off the coast of the Seward Peninsula in Alaska. With a population of approximately 600, Shishmaref is a traditional Inupiat Eskimo village with a fishing and subsistence lifestyle.

During 1997, a severe storm eroded over 30 feet of the north shore, requiring 14 homes and the National Guard Armory to be relocated. Other storms have continued to erode the shoreline an average of three to five feet per year on the north shore. In July 2002, residents voted to relocate the community. This is a major concern of the congregation and will be part of Rob's ministry.

We wish Rob all the best in his new ministry.

Faith Partners completes second step to building addiction team ministries in faith communities

Over 30 clergy, staff and lay leadership, representing 10 congregations in the Northwest, attended the Faith Partners Leadership Training at Westminster Presbyterian Church on Nov. 3. The training was presented by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) and Rush Center of the Johnson Institute and facilitated by Drew Brooks, Faith Partners project manager for the Rush Center.

Faith Partners Team Ministries is a respected and effective approach for addressing addiction issues in faith communities. "The Faith Partners program is the most promising avenue of hope I know," says Jim Nelson, professor emeritus, United Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, and author of *Thirst: God and the Alcoholic Experience*. "Already it has proved it's efficacy in numerous congregations—ingeniously, without overburdening already busy clergy."

The Leadership Training was the second step in a three-step process to starting an effective lay team ministry that addresses the whole congregation. The first step was a consultation

held in May 2006 at Westminster Presbyterian, attended by over 65 participants from around the state. Topics of the recent Leadership Training included the role of the congregation; the scope of the ministry; important tips for clergy and team facilitators; potential barriers to the ministry; and steps, tools and strategies to assure success, including ministry guides and on-going consultation.

The third step of Faith Partners is developing the ministry. Participants will attend a two-day Team Training on Feb. 23 and 24 in Portland (location to be announced). Each participating congregation will send 3 to 10 team members. The training will address specific prevention and recovery strategies, team functioning, connection to community resources and an initial plan of action.

For more information on building addiction team ministries in your faith community, contact EMO at (503) 221-1054 or The Rush Center at (888) 451-9527 or visit www.rushcenter.org.

New program offers free immigration services and classes to Cubans and Haitians

EMO's Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR) initiated a new program in November—the Cuban/Haitian Assistance Program (CHAP). The program is funded by the Department of Human Services Refugee Program.

All refugees need assistance obtaining employment, acclimating to U.S. work culture and gaining self-sufficiency. CHAP aims to specifically assist Cubans and Haitians during this transition period. The program offers SOAR's Cuban and Haitian clients assistance in applying for: (1) Employment Authorization Documents, (2) Green Cards and (3) naturalization. Additionally through CHAP, Cubans and Haitians are offered naturalization classes and an orientation on crime and victimization, including state laws, domestic violence and differences in cultural perceptions on behaviors.

SOAR hired immigration attorney Anna Ciesielski to supervise the new program and Juan Carlos Chavez as the program immigration specialist. Ciesielski has been passionate about immigration since she worked as a legal assistant for an immigration attorney in Eugene, Ore., which inspired her decision to attend law school and work with low income immigrants. Her experience ranges from family-based immigration to representing clients on their asylum claims.

When asked about her work at SOAR, Ciesielski said, "I could not be happier about working for SOAR. It's an incredible opportunity to work alongside really talented people providing high quality services to one of the most vulnerable groups in society."

For more information about CHAP, call the SOAR office at (503) 284-3002.



Photo credit: Yelena Grigoryeva

Immigration attorney Anna Ciesielski (left) supervises the new CHAP program and Juan Carlos Chavez (right) is the program immigration specialist.

Local organizations offer unique training & educational event for clergy

By the Rev. Rod Landes, PhD, Pastoral Counseling Associates of Portland, P.C.

Understanding the Impact of Addiction and Supporting Recovery: Strategies and Tools for Clergy and Other Congregational Leaders

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is partnering with the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) and the National Association of Children of Alcoholics for a day of learning and resources for clergy and other congregational leaders in the Portland metropolitan area. This event is part of a national effort to bring information and support to individuals and family members in congregations who are impacted by alcohol or drug abuse. The presentation is in conjunction with AAPC's Annual Conference during April 26 to 28, 2007.

The project, "Understanding the Impact of Addiction and Supporting Recovery: Strategies and Tools for Clergy and Other Congregational Leaders," will provide information, resources and strategies for local faith-based organizations. The project has three elements:

- A special one-day training for pastoral leadership staff by national experts introducing the knowledge and skills in the *Core Competencies for Clergy and Other Pastoral Ministers in Addressing Alcohol and Drug Dependence and Its Impact on Family Members* (available for review at www.nacoa.org/pdfs/clergyreport04.pdf), and discussing strategies for raising awareness and educating your congregation.
- Free pamphlets (for example, see "It Feels So Bad" and "Alcohol and Drug Abuse Happens in the Best of Families" at www.nacoa/clergy.htm) and posters that can be distributed through an educational program in your congregation or simply placed where other materials are regularly made available for people to pick up.
- Free educational materials that include PowerPoint presentations, discussion guides and drop-in articles for congregational publications.

The one-day conference will be held on Thursday, April 26, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1624 NE Hancock, Portland. There is a \$25 registration fee that covers lunch and materials.

Participants can expect to learn:

- How addiction impacts physical, emotional, mental and spiritual development as well as family life.
- Successful strategies to raise awareness and disseminate information on alcohol and drug abuse for congregation members.
- The alcohol and drug prevention, treatment and recovery services that are available.
- Simple actions clergy can take within their congregations to reduce the suffering caused by addiction to alcohol and drugs.

For further information, please contact the AAPC office in Fairfax, Virginia at info@aapc.org or call (703) 385-6967. Conference information is available at www.aapc.org.

Create a legacy of your faith through a charitable gift

Fulfill your financial and your charitable goals through estate planning and planned giving

All of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) Community Ministries—as well as our public policy voice, environmental advocacy, and theological and interfaith dialogue—are made possible by the generosity of EMO supporters. We are deeply grateful for the participation of all our supporters, who are partners in EMO's work.



Carla Starrett-Bigg, EMO director of Development & Communications

Anyone who has given a donation to help support good work knows the deep satisfaction that comes from stewardship. Today, I'd like to talk about "planned giving," another way to ensure that

the ministries closest to your heart continue to grow and thrive.

To many people, phrases like "estate planning" and "planned giving" conjure up images of the very rich, planning huge legacies to ensure the strength and security of their favorite causes. But using a planned giving vehicle in a financial plan can be a great tool for people at all income levels.

Planned giving can provide benefits for you and your family, as well as helping fulfill your charitable and stewardship goals. Planned giving vehicles can help prepare for possible future needs: health, accidents or unforeseen financial challenges. They can help you provide for your spouse, dependents or other loved ones while reducing the tax consequences of your current assets and future estate taxes.

EMO is fortunate to collaborate with established professionals in the field. Our planned gifts are managed through the Presbyterian Foundation, one of the oldest and most respected financial entities in the United States, as well as through the

Oregon Community Foundation. EMO staff and professionals from these financial institutions are available free of charge to answer your questions and help you fulfill your stewardship goals.

Your gifts can be designed to benefit your ministry of choice now, while protecting your assets or to benefit yourself or a loved one now and your ministry of choice later. Types of gifts include: Charitable Gift Annuities; Unitrusts or Remainder Trusts; Charitable Lead Trusts; Appreciated Securities; Gifts of Life Insurance; Gifts of Real Estate; Permanent Funds; and Increasing Your Gifts through Retirement Plans.

Any of these gifts can be made in the name of a loved one—a concrete and beautiful way to honor or remember a beloved individual. EMO does not offer financial or legal advice. Please consult your attorney or financial professional.

For more information on planned giving options, please call Carla Starrett-Bigg, EMO director of Development and Communications, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 275.

Oregon Interfaith Campaign to Overcome Poverty calls for Oregonians to unite against poverty in our state

In November, EMO launched the *Oregon Interfaith Campaign to Overcome Poverty*—a statewide, grass-roots campaign to bring the importance of and solutions to poverty back into the public's attention, especially among Oregon lawmakers.

For too long poverty has been viewed as a social problem to be dealt with only in terms of charity and personal responsibility, ignoring the social systems that cause poverty. Many in the faith community believe that this approach will only keep people in poverty. The number of Americans without health insurance is at an all-time high of 46.6 million people. In Oregon today, there are 609,000 uninsured—an increase of 16.4 percent, from 12.7 percent in 2001. Wages in real dollars have fallen despite increased profits and productivity nationally. In Oregon, the Gross State Product increased from \$110 billion in 2001 to \$137 billion in 2005, but wages fell and the poverty rate remained unchanged. About one American in eight is living in poverty. The social safety net is

shrinking. Working families are turning to payday loans and other high interest risky loans to help make ends meet.

Why are more Americans going without health care? Why are Americans working harder and earning less? In order to stop this trend, we must change the way we are doing things as a nation and as a society. The *Interfaith Campaign to Overcome Poverty* is designed to help faith communities explore these questions and participate in solutions to poverty that make lasting differences.

If your congregation would like to make a difference by joining the campaign, visit www.emoregon.org/publicpolicyadvocacy.htm under "Call to Action" to download the registration form. Just fill out the form for you or your congregation, choosing only the events in which you want to participate. Each activity is intentionally designed to highlight one of three ways of addressing poverty: education, prayer/reflection and action. Important ways for faith communities to participate in the campaign include bringing a group to Interfaith



Advocacy Day at the state Capitol on Feb. 5 (for more details, see page 1) or by convening an educational forum on poverty in Oregon.

For more information about the *Interfaith Campaign to Overcome Poverty*, call (503) 221-1054.

National Ecumenical Advocacy Days effort for global peace continues to grow

Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice began in 2003 as a gathering of 400 religious advocates concerned about U.S. foreign policy in Africa and the Middle East. In the second year, 2004, over 600 participants from 41 states and 15 countries came together to build bridges across issues faced by the poor and disenfranchised in Asia (Korea), Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. Each year the conference and movement has grown by the hundreds, and in 2006 the conference brought close to 1,000 people of faith together (over 250 young adults) to shape a progressive, ecumenical Christian vision for peace and justice in

U.S. domestic and foreign policy.

This year's *Ecumenical Advocacy Days* will be held from March 9 to 12 in Washington, DC. It is expected that over 1,000 people of faith will gather for workshops, advocacy training, worship and a massive advocacy effort and interfaith rally on Capitol Hill on March 12.

If you are interested in attending and lending your voice to a growing ecumenical chorus of pastors, activists and leaders with the support of the policy staff of both protestant and catholic offices in Washington, DC, visit www.advocacydays.org or contact Michael Neuroth at info@advocacydays.org.

Interfaith Advocacy Day

Continued from page 1



Interfaith Advocacy Day participants march to the state Capitol.

Family Bridge; First Congregational United Church of Christ, Salem; First United Methodist Church, Portland; First Unitarian Church, Hunger Action Group; Fish Emergency Services; HOPE (Helping Other People Eat) Emergency Food Pantry; Interfaith Action for Justice of Central Oregon; Interfaith Council of Greater Portland; Interfaith Disabilities Network of Oregon; Inter-Religious Action Network of Washington County; Islamic Society of Greater Portland; Jewish Federation of Greater Portland; Jubilee Oregon; Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Oregon; Northwest Portland Ministries; Oregon Center for Christian Values; Oregon Faith Roundtable Against Hunger; Oregon Farm Worker Ministry; Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Bishop's Initiative to Eliminate Hunger; Oregon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Portland Jobs with Justice, Faith Labor Committee; Presbytery of the Cascades, Peacemaking Unit; St. Luke Lutheran Church; St. Philip Neri Catholic Church, Peace and Justice Commission; St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal Church; SnowCap; Society of St. Vincent de Paul; Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Beaverton; Tualatin United Methodist (Hilltop) Church; and Valley Community Presbyterian Church.

Groups from congregations and community organizations are encouraged to participate. The registration fee is \$15 and includes lunch and materials. Look for more information and download a registration form on EMO's Web site at www.emoregon.org or call (503) 221-1054.

Jubilee Sunday and Sabbath Year 2007: Halfway to UN's goal, much remains to be done to reduce poverty

The year 2000 was a Jubilee Year, i.e. a year dedicated to living out God's call to remove extreme debt and restore balance in creation and among peoples. Also that year, the United Nations adopted the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty significantly by the year 2015.

The new year, 2007 is halfway to the United Nations' goal year of 2015. Much remains to be done. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, poverty has *increased*, since 1990.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon joins Jubilee Oregon in inviting you to observe Jubilee Sunday on Jan. 21. On this Sunday, the common Gospel will be Luke 4—Jesus' call to fulfill the promise of Isaiah 61 and "proclaim good news to the poor, heal the sight of the blind and let the oppressed go free."

Your congregation is invited to use the extensive free resources available at www.jubileeusa.org to generate worship experience and vision to last through the year. One option is to become a Jubilee Congregation with a commitment to education, awareness and advocacy of the issues and opportunities involved with the faith-based, worldwide Jubilee movement, which is now 10 years old. Another useful site is www.jubileeoregon.org, which features local resources and activities.

Debayani Karr, communications and advocacy



Photo credit: Jubilee Oregon

coordinator for JubileeUSA, says, "In light of the Jubilee message of salvation, redemption, deliverance and liberation, debt burdens that prevent countries from meeting the most basic needs of their people cease to be merely a financial concern for a few and become a spiritual concern for all of us. To advocate and educate for debt cancellation in solidarity with the people of the world's impoverished countries is one way we can participate in God's Jubilee."

For further information, contact Jubilee Oregon through Chris Laing at (503) 704-7254, or Nancy Johns at nancyjohns@comcast.net.

Faith Forum on Genetics to begin second year

The Pacific University's Pacific Institute for Ethics and Social Policy is once again partnering with Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon to sponsor a series of seminars called *Faith Forum on Genetics*. The forums are focused on pastoral care and ethical issues related to stem-cell research, pre-natal screening, and privacy and genetics testing.

Ten churches and denominations are involved in the 2007 sessions, including St. Philip Neri Catholic Parish, Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, Grace Memorial Episcopal Church, First Presbyterian Church in Portland, Murray Hills Christian Church, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Christian Scientist, Seventh Day Adventist, Latter Day Saints and Peace Church of the Brethren.

This second set of seven seminars, made possible by a grant from the National Institute of Health, will begin on Jan. 27, in a half-day colloquium at St. Philip Neri Catholic Parish. Dr. Ted Peters, professor of theology at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, is the keynote speaker. The upcoming sessions will be formatted in the same way as the 2006 forums, with each participating congregation holding five congregationally-specific dialogue/discussion seminars about genetics technologies over the course of a few months. The first and last seminars will be plenary sessions held together with all participating denominations.

For more information about the Faith Forum on Genetics, contact Jan Elfers at (503) 221-1054.

Local peacemakers

Continued from page 1

Arab town of Barta'a, which is actually divided by the "Green Line," marking borders and armistice lines from earlier Arab-Israeli conflicts. About 20 percent of Israeli citizens are Arab, mostly Muslim and Christian.

The group then traveled to Jerusalem, with a stop at Neve Shalom, the only joint Jewish-Arab community in Israel, now home to about 50 families. Jerusalem then became the home base for the remainder of the trip. One foray from Jerusalem was a crossing into Bethlehem, in the West Bank, where a tour included a meeting with Dr. Salim Munayer, a member of the faculty at Bethlehem Bible College.

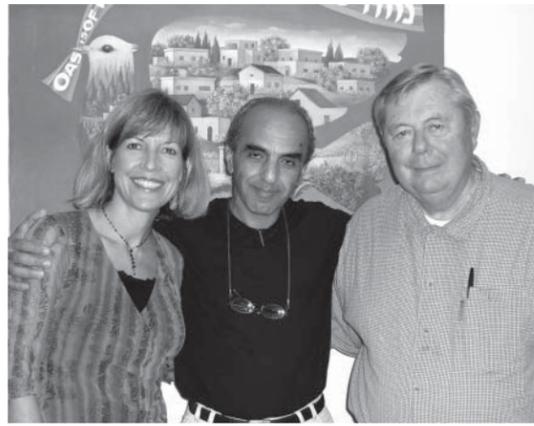
A strong theme that has developed among the various Israeli, Arab and Palestinian peace advocates was the need to "give face to the other." An Arab Israeli spokesperson from Neve Shalom, Rayak Rizek, stated, "Our way is to understand and live with the differences between us, not to change people to be just like me." Rizek went on to say that, "People misunderstand peace. They think that you have to become someone else in order to live with one another. Our presence here at Neve Shalom, choosing to live together as Jews and Arabs in peace, is a political statement."

Another example of an organization fostering peaceful coexistence between the sides is Hand in Hand, a center for Jewish and Arab education in Israel. Established in 1997 and cofounded by Portlander Lee Gordon, Hand in Hand is bringing a revolutionary vision to Israeli education: integrated, bilingual schools where Jewish and Arab children learn together and help their families and communities to live together.

Participants respond to complexities

The varied responses from the Oregon group to their shared experiences reflect the complexities of the issues that frame the conflict. Group members were struck by these complexities again and again, and many voiced their desire for a discussion that transcends painting one side as purely good and the other as purely evil. This polarization does not serve to promote honest, respectful dialogue. Jan Elfers, EMO director of Congregational Relations & Peace Programs, was particularly impressed with the dedicated people—Palestinian, Jewish and Arab—who are forging relationships with one another and refuse to lose hope, despite the many setbacks. Sherry Fishman, also, spoke of the importance of "seeking to know, understand and care for each other."

Alan Ellis was surprised to see the segregation



The Rev. Rodney Page (right) and Jan Elfers (left) with Rayek Rizek (center), an Arab Israeli. Rizek lives at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, which means "Oasis of Peace" in Hebrew and Arabic, where an equal number of Jewish and Palestinian families live, work and educate their children in a community of peaceful coexistence. It is the only such village in Israel.

that exists in Israel. He had been told that Israeli-Arab citizens are not treated as second-class citizens. "What we learned," he reported, is that "separate and unequal conditions exist in Israel." On the other hand, Ellis was also inspired by the strength of the free press in Israel and by the many Jewish/Arab organizations that are working to champion human rights for its Arab citizens and for Palestinians in the occupied territories. He sees the need to focus on basic human rights, both in Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza.

David Lippoff echoed these sentiments. He said that the issue of "right and wrong" became more pervasive as the trip progressed, "especially as applied to basic human rights, civil rights and equal rights." Although it took our nation almost 200 years to legislate and implement civil rights, he added, it "should not have to take other 'democratic' countries that long to embrace similar principles."

The Oregon-based group visited with organizations such as Rabbis for Human Rights, Sikkuy and HaMoked. These organizations are concerned with human rights and civil rights issues and violations in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. HaMoked advocates for civil rights for Arab citizens in Israel and for human rights such as family unification for Palestinians in the occupied territories. The organization also provides direct, hands-on involvement in the prevention of house demolitions and harassment of Palestinians during the olive harvest.

"One of the first steps toward achieving peace and resolving conflict is fact-finding through unfettered dialogue," reflected Lippoff. "This trip was set up to do both." As a result, Meg Eberle noted the group had the opportunity to witness the "vigorous debate in Israel over how to resolve the

2006 Collins Lecture now available on DVD, "Earth on Edge: Choosing Our Future"

"Global warming presents the deepest challenge not only to our physical survival but also to our sense of the divine. Suddenly human beings find themselves enormously large, enormously powerful; can we summon the humility to be stewards instead of troublemakers?"

— Featured lecturer Bill McKibben, environmental essayist, activist and author of the best seller *The End of Nature*.

If you missed the Collins Lecture on Oct. 18, "Earth on Edge: Choosing Our Future," you can now purchase a copy of the DVD. Featuring Bill McKibben and Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, the lecture focuses on sustainability, commonly defined as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Three vital dimensions of sustainability are discussed: ecology, economy and equity, with emphasis on one of the greatest moral issues of our time—global warming.

The DVD is \$13, which includes shipping and handling. Download an order form at www.emoregon.org/ted.htm or call EMO at (503) 221-1054.

conflict. Israelis and Palestinians, like Americans, are not of the same mind. The common thread is that the majority want some resolution: the challenge is how."

"Participants approached this opportunity with open minds and a willingness to share knowledge and insights as well as a desire to learn," Lippoff remarked. "Religion, proven to be a great divider over time, became instead a good convener in this instance." Elfers added, "Participants were willing to think beyond the boundaries of their own particular religious tradition in order to see another perspective."

Participant Fr. Richard Rutherford, a University of Portland professor, said that he returned "much more hopeful that all residents there can live together as equals in peace with justice." He stated that he is even "more optimistic" than in his past visits because of the "work we saw on the ground and the will of the people."

The Journey of Peace group is committed to encouraging future trips that will foster similar opportunities for respectful discussion, fact finding and hands-on experiences that serve to humanize one another and open up the possibility for a lasting peace. Contact EMO for more information at (503) 221-1054.



A wall at Robinson's Arch in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Photo credit: Paul Fishman

8 Calendar of Events

January 13

Receiving Light on the Path: An Interfaith Labyrinth Event.

4 p.m. Interfaith Introduction & Dialogue; 5:15 to 7 p.m. Open Labyrinth Walk—both at Buddhist Daihonzan Henjyoji Temple, 2634 SE 12th Ave., Portland. Led by Eunice Schroeder, D. Min. (candidate), director of Sacred Journey Ministries, and Rev. David Komeiji, Shingon Buddhist Leader. Free will offering; suggested donation of \$5. Co-sponsored by Sacred Journey Ministries, St. Philip Neri Catholic Church and Buddhist Daihonzan Henjyoji Temple. For more information, e-mail SacredJourneyMin@aol.com or call Eunice at (503) 233-2026, ext. 4.



January 16 to February 13

Class: Making Sense of Biblical Texts. Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Bishop Scott Room, 147 NW 19th Ave., Portland. The instructor will be Dr. Richard Rohrbaugh, Professor Emeritus Department of Religious Studies, Lewis & Clark College. How should one go about reading the Bible? After all it is the story of people whose lives and struggles took place in a time and culture very different from our own. To read the Bible through the spectacles of modern civilization is not only to misunderstand but also to lose the richness and color with which the text once spoke. In this course you will look at the way anthropology, archaeology, history and the other tools of modern biblical study can help us make sense of biblical texts. The objective will be to learn to read it on its own terms rather than ours. Registration fee: \$50. To register, contact The Center at (503) 478-1218 or visit www.center-for-spiritual-development.org.

January 18

Information Session: Graduate Studies at Marylhurst University. 7 p.m. at Marylhurst University, 17600 Pacific Highway (Hwy. 43), between Lake Oswego and West Linn. Earn your Master of Divinity, Master of Applied Theology or Doctor of Ministry from Marylhurst University. A great opportunity to meet the department chair in an informal setting and learn if Marylhurst University is right for you. For more information or to place your reservation, call (503) 699-6268 or e-mail studentinfo@marylhurst.edu.

February 3 to March 10

Team Up for Watershed Health. Sponsored by SOLV. Team Up supports watershed restoration by facilitating community partnerships and providing volunteer opportunities. Team Up helps restore Portland's urban watersheds, with ongoing work at over 45 ecologically significant sites. The program adopts each restoration site for eight years. The first three of these years focus on active restoration. The next five years are spent monitoring and maintaining the site to ensure the success of the project. For more information, such as dates and locations, or for registration, visit www.solv.org/programs/teamup_watershed_health.asp or contact Rhyan Grech, rhyan@solv.org, (503) 844-9571.

February 3 to March 10

Tree for All. Sponsored by SOLV. In partnership with the cities of Washington County, Clean Water Services and Friends of Trees, SOLV continues to work with local communities in watershed restoration. For more information, such as dates and locations, or for registration, visit www.solv.org (Tree for All) or contact Monica Kearsley, monica@solv.org, (503) 844-9571.

To submit calendar items for the *Voice*, please e-mail mbush@emoregon.org.

Upcoming EMO sponsored/co-sponsored events

February 5

Interfaith Advocacy Day. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. beginning at First Congregational Church, 700 Marion St. NE, then progressing to the state Capitol, Salem. For more information, see article on page 1.

February 26

Interfaith Advocacy Day on Energy and Climate Stewardship. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (registration at 8:30 a.m.) at First United Methodist Church, 600 State St., Salem. For more information, see page 3.

May 10

EMO Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner with Silent Auction. Silent auction at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. at the Hilton Hotel, Pavilion, 921 SW Sixth Ave., Portland. Tickets are \$50 per person or \$500 to sponsor a table for 10 people. For more information, call (503) 221-1054.



February 6 to April 7 or March 2, 3 and March 15 to 17

Basic Training for Parish Nurses and Health Ministers. Feb. 6 to April 7, Tuesday evening sessions from 6 to 9 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the University of Portland, 5000 N. Willamette Blvd., Portland; or March 2, 3 and 15 to 17 from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Tuality Health Education Center, 334 SE Eighth Ave., Hillsboro. Sponsored by Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries in partnership with the University of Portland, School of Nursing, this nationally endorsed curriculum trains nurses and health ministers in an approach that integrates faith and health, values the total person, and promotes wellness and prevention. The participants will study the role of the faith community in health, healing and wholeness, review the history and philosophy of parish nursing and examine in detail the functions of a parish nurse/health minister. The cost of the course is \$350, which includes course materials, resources and three class credit hours issued by the University of Portland. Attendance at the entire program is required to qualify for a certificate of completion. To receive a brochure or to register for the course, contact Debra Waring, director of Education, Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries, at (503) 413-2341 or send an e-mail to metroprn@spiritone.com.

February 16 & 17

Lecture and workshop with Marcus Borg, "Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary." Lecture at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 16; workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Feb. 17—both at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 147 NW 19th Ave., Portland. Almost two thousand years after his death, Christians are deeply divided about who Jesus was and what it means to follow him. Internationally-known historical Jesus scholar Marcus Borg introduces us to a Jesus we have never really met before—a religious revolutionary who brought transformation, not doctrine, drawing from a reality centered in God. Borg will present his latest book and explore a Jesus who remains the decisive revelation of God, emphasizing practices rather than beliefs and a faith characterized by deep commitment, gentle certitude, and personal and political transformation. Join others in this opportunity to learn about Jesus from a leading Biblical scholar and best-selling author. Marcus Borg is Hundere Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University and author of *The Heart of Christianity*. Sponsored by The Center for Spiritual Development. Lecture cost: \$15 general, \$5 students. Workshop cost: \$50 general, \$15 students. To register, contact The Center at (503) 478-1218 or visit www.center-for-spiritual-development.org.



May 5

Doxology Service of Prayer and Thanksgiving. 8:30 a.m. at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 3131 NE Glisan St., Portland. In the year 2007, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church will mark its centennial, celebrating 100 years of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and maintaining the unique traditions of the Greek Orthodox faith in the Pacific Northwest. In honor of this occasion, a special Doxology service will be held. Following the service, an ecumenical breakfast, sponsored by EMO, will be offered at 9 a.m., during which His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, will reflect on the theme "The Second Century of Orthodox Witness in America." To attend the service and ecumenical breakfast, please call Catherine Lingas at (503) 292-0451 or e-mail clingas@hevanet.com by Feb. 1.



Interfaith Services

A series of interfaith services is being sponsored by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, The Interfaith Alliance-NW Oregon and the Interfaith Council of Greater Portland. These services will provide participants with the opportunity to worship with people of different faiths in churches, temples, mosques and synagogues. The topics will be on moral issues we are facing as people of faith.

January 21: How do we as people of faith advocate for a moral budget? 4 to 5:30 p.m. at Augustana Lutheran Church, 2710 NE 14th Ave., Portland.

February 18: How do we as people of faith protect our earth for future generations? 4 to 5:30 p.m. at Nichiren Buddhist Temple of Oregon, 2031 SE Yamhill, Portland.

March 18: How do we as people of faith help bring peace to this world? 4 to 5:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Church, 1011 SW 12th, Portland.

April 22: How do we as people of faith support all religious beliefs? 4 to 5:30 p.m. at Congregation Neveh Shalom, 2900 SW Peaceful Lane, Portland.

May 20: How do we as people of faith support families? 4 to 6 p.m. at Muslim Educational Trust, 10330 SW Scholls Ferry Rd., Tigard.

For more information, call EMO at (503) 221-1054.