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Who is our neighbor? Imagining beyond our borders

Who is our neighbor? What "borders" do we create between people: geographic, cultural, religious, economic, political? How can we live together respectfully in diverse communities?

The current national debates surrounding the migration of people, immigration reform, and cultural and religious diversity provide a rich context for discussing these questions from a theological perspective. The *2010 Collins Lecture* will tackle the central challenges that we face as we strive to live into Jesus' words in Matthew 25:35, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." How we choose to face these challenges has crucial implications for our shared future.

Join us on Thursday, Nov. 18, to explore this provocative issue at the *2010 Collins Lecture*, "Who Is Our Neighbor: Imagining Beyond Our Borders." The lecture will be held at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary of the downtown First Baptist Church, 909 SW Eleventh Ave., Portland.

The *Collins Lecture* keynote speakers will be the Rev. Dr. S. Wesley Ariarajah, a Methodist minister and professor at the Drew School of Theology, and the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC) and an ordained Assemblies of God pastor. With their personal histories and professional expertise,



The 2010 Collins Lecturers will be the Rev. Dr. S. Wesley Ariarajah (left), professor at the Drew School of Theology, and the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez (right), president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference.



Ariarajah and Rodriguez will offer their insights on the topic.

Ariarajah was the deputy general secretary of the World Council of Churches'

(WCC) and the leader of the WCC's Council for Interfaith Dialogue for ten years. He has given lectures, conducted

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World AIDS Day connects local to global

On Dec. 1, around the world and throughout the United States, communities will come together to mark the 22nd annual *World AIDS Day*. This is an important time to remember the 25 million individuals lost to HIV/AIDS and the 33 million global citizens living with the HIV virus today, including over 1.1 million Americans.

To commemorate the day and raise awareness throughout the Portland metropolitan area, local and global HIV/AIDS service organizations have again joined together to mobilize schools, faith-based organizations, businesses and community-based

organizations in becoming involved in raising HIV/AIDS awareness. One of those local service providers is EMO's HIV Day Center, which provides over 700 meals each month to low income people living with HIV/AIDS in addition to counseling, recreational therapy, computers, phones, laundry, clothing and showers.

In honor of *World AIDS Day*, the HIV Day Center will hold its annual fundraising breakfast from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. on Dec. 1 at Concordia University in Portland. The keynote



speaker will be Ronault "Polo" Catalani, the City of Portland's program coordinator for New Portlanders and author of *Counter Culture: Immigrant Stories from Portland's Café Counters*. All donations will go towards sustaining the HIV Day Center.

Local area AIDS organizations have created a website that will serve as a hub of information for *World AIDS Day* in Oregon. Visitors to the site can view the events calendar, sign up to publicize their event, download a toolkit to help with event planning, and even read and share personal

stories. Visit the website at www.worldaidsdaynw.org.

In addition to finding local events to attend, please consider hosting one of your own—show a movie, host a dialogue, listen to someone's story, craft an artistic response or participate in a vigil.

Nearly everyone in the world is touched by HIV/AIDS. On Dec. 1, 2010, we can all do our part to help make people aware.

If you wish to attend the HIV Day Center breakfast, or would like assistance in putting together an event, contact Lindsay Ross-Hunt at hivcenter@emoregon.org or (503) 460-3822.

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Annual Report
Voters' Guide to
Ballot Measures

Do borders make good neighbors?

Lately, I have been thinking a lot about borders. Much of this interest has been sparked by the complex dynamics along the United States-Mexico border. The more laws we have passed and the more miles of fence we have added in attempts to stem illegal immigration, the more dangerous and unstable the border lands seem to have become. It is just possible that these security-military “fixes” may in fact be creating more problems than they are solving.

And this is a reality in many other border regions in the world. Afghanistan-Pakistan, South Korea-North Korea, India-Kashmir, Columbia-Ecuador and Israel-Palestine are all places where current conflicts and simmering tensions cause people to flee for their lives or hunker into an uncertain existence. While borders can provide helpful geographic, political and cultural definitions and demarcations, these same borders can become oppressive and life denying. They can also be transitory and fade over time, such as the borders that defined what is now the former Soviet Union. Here today; gone tomorrow.

So then how should we understand these borders, which help shape who we are and our relationships with one another? Two recent experiences related to this year’s Sept. 11 commemorations offer insights into this question. First, when Pastor Terry Jones spewed Christian imperialistic language to



David Leslie

promote his “burn the Koran day,” already existing religious borders were heightened, and people felt even more divided, denigrated and fearful. His actions were hardly reflective of Christian hospitality. Nor did he take seriously the Biblical mandate to welcome the stranger in our midst, remembering that we were once strangers, and that someday in the future, we may find ourselves the minority or the stranger in need of friendship and support.

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know

What I was walling in or walling out?

And to whom I was like to give offence.

“Mending Wall”
by Robert Frost

Contrast this with my second experience on Sept. 11, when I attended an interfaith gathering at the Rizwan Mosque in Portland. Here, people of differing faiths and cultural backgrounds stood together as peacemaking partners. As I was profoundly reminded that morning, it is at times like this when borders and barriers between us become more permeable. Open doors replace the theological checkpoints that keep communities apart and isolated from one another.

As is detailed on the first page of this edition of the *Voice*, this year’s EMO Collins Lecture, on Nov. 18 at First Baptist Church in

Portland, will address the theme, “Who Is Our Neighbor? Imagining Beyond Our Borders.” We are blessed to have the Rev. Dr. S. Wesley Ariarajah and Rev. Samuel Rodriguez with us to help us think more theologically, critically and strategically about borders and barriers and the faith community’s response to the migration of people. Related to the issues we will discuss that evening is the question of how we can create community and better share

our responsibilities to one another across the many borders that divide us. I hope that you will be able to be a part of this timely event that promises to have implications for our life together in Oregon and beyond our own state borders.

Robert Frost’s “Mending Wall” has these important lines: “Before I built a wall I’d ask to know/ What I was walling in or walling out?/ And to whom I was like to give offence.” Good words for the past, present and future.

Habitat for Humanity celebrates 1,000th home in Oregon

In the last 25 years, Habitat for Humanity affiliates have built more than 700 homes in Oregon, and in 2010 they’ll raise the walls on the 1,000th home in our state!

Habitat for Humanity is celebrating this incredible achievement on Sunday, Oct. 10, when the 1,000th home will be dedicated in Springfield, Ore. Following the dedication, a reception and dinner will be held at Lane Community College in Eugene, with a keynote speech by Senator Jeff Merkley.

For more information about Habitat for Humanity’s work in Oregon or to make a donation, please contact Patricia Day TenEyck at (503) 249-1194, or make a difference by lending a hand at your local affiliate.

NCC Governing Board presses call for immigration reform

For the second time in two years, the National Council of Churches (NCC) Governing Board has issued a call to government officials and church leaders to take action on comprehensive immigration reform.

The first resolution was also endorsed by the board of Church World Service (CWS) and adopted by the NCC/CWS General Assembly in November 2008. The current resolution, “A Call to Action on Comprehensive Immigration Reform,” was issued in response to SB 1070—the Arizona law intended to mandate local police to determine the nationality of persons they detain, which many fear would lead to racial profiling by police, social service providers and members of the community.

The board’s statement committed members “to engage national, state and local legislatures to voice our opposition to Arizona’s anti-immigrant SB 1070 and similar laws that have been introduced in more than 22 states.” In addition, the resolution called on the president and Congress “to recommit themselves to the comprehensive, effective and humane reform of immigration laws and enforcement structures” and called upon member communions and “millions of faithful Christians who worship in our churches to actively engage national, state and local legislatures to insist on comprehensive immigration reform at every level.”

The resolution was adopted by unanimous voice vote during the Governing Board’s meeting in September. The resolution was presented by the NCC’s Immigration Task Force: David Leslie, executive director of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Jen Smyers, Church World Service; and Jan Olav Flaaten, executive director of the Arizona Ecumenical Council.

voice

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

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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

Tool helps faith communities combat obesity & chronic diseases

With help from EMO's new Congregational Health Index (CHI) tool, eight pilot faith communities in Portland and Corvallis are taking action to fight childhood obesity and promote health within congregations and their surrounding communities. The tool was created under the Congregational Wellness Project (CWP), which is funded by a two-year grant ending in 2010 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The CHI is now available in as a download or fillable PDF form at www.faithandwellness.org.

Changes implemented by participating faith communities include installing community gardens, bike racks and playground equipment; hosting produce wholesale buying clubs; incorporating physical activity into religious education and social time; and developing guidelines for healthier fellowship refreshments.

The CWP's mini-grants made some of these projects possible. Due to their helpfulness to congregations, the mini-grant program will be refined and expanded under a grant from Providence Partners in Health.

One participating congregation, Holy Redeemer Catholic Church and School in north Portland, removed a portion of their parking lot and created an in-ground garden this past spring with support from the Providence grant. The garden serves as an educational tool for students at their K-8 school and their summer program for low-income families to learn about healthy eating, environmental issues and caring for the Earth. Some of the produce will be used for school lunches. This summer's produce was included in emergency food boxes for the church's onsite St. Vincent de Paul food program.



Photo credit: Holy Redeemer Catholic Church

Holy Redeemer removed a portion of their parking lot and created an in-ground garden, which serves as an educational tool for students at their school and their summer program for low-income families to learn about healthy eating, environmental issues and caring for the Earth.

Produce donated to the pantry thus far has been well received. "It is completely gone within the first 30 minutes of the pantry being open," says Holy Redeemer's parish nurse, Desiree Senffner, who is also the church's wellness team leader. "They are very excited to hear that the produce is picked that morning."

The garden will also serve as a model for other congregations interested in creating community learning gardens. "Amazing things happen when someone finds a way to connect the community," Senffner adds.

The CWP will invite fall applications for mini-grants to new congregations that complete the CHI (download at www.faithandwellness.org). Awards will be granted in early 2011. To receive an application, contact Laura Raymond at (503) 221-1054, ext. 216, or lraymond@emoregon.org.

Upcoming EMO sponsored & cosponsored events

October 23

Cool Congregations Workshop. 1 to 4:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St., Eugene. This interactive workshop will equip a team from your congregation to conduct a nationally-tested program to help members of congregations reduce their carbon footprint and at the same time build community and save money. Pre-registration required. To register a team of two to five from your congregation email awarren@emoregon.org. Handbook and CD, with all you need to conduct a program, is included. We are also in need of volunteers. Call (503) 221-1054, ext. 210, for more information. Download registration brochure at www.emoregon.org. Cost: \$20/person or \$50/team of three or more from your congregation. Scholarships available.

November 18

2010 Collins Lecture, "Who Is Our Neighbor? Imagining Beyond Our Borders." 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 909 SW Eleventh Ave., Portland. See details on page 1.

November 21

Fifth Annual Festival of Faith. 2 to 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 147 NW 19th Ave., Portland. This year's theme: Stewardship of Our Earth: Interfaith Community in Action. For more information, contact Janet@ifcgp.org

or call (503) 238-1155. EMO is a member of event sponsor, the Interfaith Council of Greater Portland.

December 1

World AIDS Day: EMO's HIV Day Center Annual Breakfast. 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., Concordia University in Portland. See details on page 1.

January 31

Earth Care Summit. 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Neveh Shalom, 2900 SW Peaceful Lane, Portland. EMO's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns invites all congregations interested in being better stewards of creation to a celebration and gathering of congregations going green. The event will include a locally-grown dinner, silent auction and presentations from congregations about their greening efforts. Resource people from the community will be on hand to discuss a variety of greening topics applicable to congregations including community gardens, sustainable purchasing for congregations, energy efficiency and more. Come network with others and be inspired! Congregations and denominations are encouraged to cosponsor and will receive a free registration. Download cosponsorship form and registration form at www.emoregon.org. For more information, contact Alison Warren at (503) 221-1054, ext. 210, or awarren@emoregon.org.

New health resources available on Web

Congregational Health Index

Your faith community can create an environment that promotes wellness for congregants and the wider community. EMO's Congregational Wellness Project (see article on this page) offers tools, resources, personal support and mini-grants to help congregations enact policies, practices and new ways of using your building and land so that healthy eating and physical activity choices are available to everyone. One of those resources is the Congregational Health Index (CHI), an assessment tool and planning guide to help your faith community identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Download the CHI at www.emoregon.org or www.faithandwellness.org.

Religion & Health Care: An Interfaith Study on Religious Values and Health Policy

The study guide was developed as a tool for individuals and congregations who want to explore the relationship between their religious convictions and the complexities of health policy. It provides perspectives from a variety of religious traditions. Discussion questions and ideas for action lend the guide to effective use in small group, class or workshop settings.

Download a PDF of the guide at www.emoregon.org. For more information, contact Kevin Finney at (503) 221-1054, ext. 204, or kfinney@emoregon.org.

Earth Words winners

Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns announced winners of its 2010



Earth Words contest in August. The grand prize winner was the Rev. Dr. Steven Koski of First Presbyterian Church in Bend, whose sermon was titled "Earth Day: As Big as Christmas and Easter." The two runners up were the Rev. Brook Berndt of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Vancouver, Wash., and the Rev. Katherine Jesch, a Unitarian minister from Portland.

Each winner received a gift certificate for energy efficient light bulbs from www.ShopIPL.com and a gift certificate from Powell's Books.

To see transcripts of the winning sermons and guidelines for the 2011 contest, go to www.emoregon.org/power_light.php. *Interfaith Power & Light* will also hold its National Preach-In on Global Warming in February 2011; for details, go to www.interfaithpowerandlight.org.

4 Development & Fundraising

Immigration program receives \$100,000 grant for New Americans Initiative

On Sept. 17, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced that EMO's Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR) Immigration/Legal Services will receive a grant of approximately \$100,000 to begin the New Americans Initiative.

With the New Americans Initiative funding, SOAR Immigration/Legal Services will provide free citizenship classes and free legal services for immigrants interested in applying for citizenship. The program will also provide four citizenship workshops in Portland, Salem and Hood River throughout the year, where immigrants can meet with an attorney and complete their citizenship application. It will reach out to poor and disabled residents who came from Burma, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mexico, Somalia and the former Soviet Union.

Lutheran Community Services Northwest also received funding to expand enrollment in English as a second language classes. The grants came from \$7.8 million disbursed through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to 75 organizations in 27 states and the District of Columbia. The New Americans Initiative begins in October.

For more information or to get involved, contact the SOAR office at (503) 284-3002 or soar@emoregon.org.

EMO welcomes new members

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) welcomes the new members listed below, which have been approved by the EMO Board of Directors. Our growing list of members reflects the vibrant community of faith in Oregon and enables us to establish partnerships, so we can better serve the needs of people in our state.

Congregations: Central Presbyterian Church, Eugene; Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, Eugene; Hillsdale Community United Church of Christ, Portland; and Peace Church of the Brethren, Portland.

For information on how your congregation or faith organization can become a member of EMO, contact Jan Elfers, Membership Relations director, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or jelfers@emoregon.org.

Collins Lecture: Who is our neighbor?

Continued from page 1

seminars and led conferences in many parts of the world. Ariarajah draws on a wide range of personal experiences as a child, student and Methodist pastor in Sri Lanka, where over 90 percent of the people are Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim. Together with his later years working for the WCC in interfaith dialogue and as a student of Hinduism, Ariarajah brings unique insights into the topic of cultural and religious pluralism. He joined the faculty of the Drew University School of Theology and its Graduate School as professor of Ecumenical Theology in 1997.

In his role as president of the NHCLC, Rodriguez heads America's largest Hispanic Christian organization, the Hispanic National Association of Evangelicals (HNAE), with 25,434 member churches. HNAE frames comprehensive immigration reform as a "moral imperative." As the leading spokesperson for Hispanic Evangelicals, Rodriguez has been a

featured speaker in White House and Congressional meetings on Hispanic American issues and justice concerns. He recently met with President Obama, urging the president to address the moral and spiritual dimensions supporting immigration reform and asking for immediate action. Rodriguez has been featured in several media outlets and was interviewed by Bill Moyers in 2008 about faith-based politics and immigration. His nonpartisan commitment enables Rodriguez to meet with both sides of the aisle, contextualizing the nexus between church and society.

The two keynote lectures will be followed by a moderated question and answer period.

The registration fee for the 2010 Collins Lecture is \$10 per person. For more information or to register, download a registration brochure at www.emoregon.org or call the EMO office at (503) 221-1054.

EMO celebrates recent grants & gifts

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Board of Directors and staff extend their appreciation to those who have supported EMO's ministries. The following is a partial list of foundation and community support received by EMO since the *Voice* summer issue.

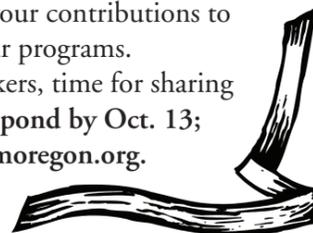
Donor (Fund)	Program
Ecotrust	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Broadway Cares Equity Fights AIDS	HIV Day Center
Hoover Family Foundation	Portland International Community School
Luis Palau Association	Shared Housing
MAC AIDS Fund	HIV Day Center
Oregon Community Foundation	Northeast Emergency Food Program at Luther Memorial
Oregon Food Bank	Northeast Emergency Food Program at Luther Memorial
Pazzo Ristorante	HIV Day Center
Por Que No Taqueria	HIV Day Center
Portland General Electric Co.	HIV Day Center
Southminster Presbyterian Church	Shared Housing
University of Oregon Foundation	Oregon Interfaith Power & Light
Westside Community Church	Shared Housing



EMO Volunteers, past & present, are invited to attend our Volunteer Appreciation Celebration!

Wednesday, Oct. 20, 2010, 4 to 6 p.m.
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Great Hall
1624 NE Hancock St., Portland

Please join us as we say "thank you" for your contributions to Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and our programs. The celebration will include music, speakers, time for sharing and light refreshments. **RSVP: Please respond by Oct. 13;** call (503) 221-1054 or email csiems@emoregon.org.



Honor & memorial gifts

Gifts in Honor June through August

In honor of John Elizalde & Paula Johnson's marriage
Gail Baack; Graham Taylor

In honor of Jackie's birthday
Maria A. Gales

In honor of Mark W. Weidkamp
Kenneth M. Weidkamp

In honor of Donald J. Barrett
Marsha Barrett Grosjean

In honor of Lowell Greathouse
Lila Palmiter

In honor of Bonnie & Eryn Balog and their Partners
Stephen P. Balog

In honor of Jan, Carla, Jenny, Jennifer & Michelle
Jocela Mae Cunningham

In honor of Rodney Page
Linda Buerger

In honor of Alison Warren
Lloyd Meyer

Gifts in Memory June through August

In memory of Bill Hughes
Bromleigh S. Lamb

In memory of William H. Hogan
Diane Hogan

In memory of Ethel Johnson
Christian P. Heil

In memory of Ronald Clarke
Lula G. Clarke

In memory of Kenneth Worrall
Dorothy W. Worrall

In memory of William Gallemore
Dan Blair

In memory of Pearl Sutton
Shirley J. Sutton

In memory of Howard B. Somers
Rob Closs

In memory of Eileen Starrett
Matthew & Carla Starrett-Bigg

In memory of Bob Gruwell
Charles Poling