Every year, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s (EMO) friends and supporters gather from around the state for the EMO Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner—a joyful and informative recognition of the work of congregations, faith organizations and community leaders who have accomplished extraordinary things in Oregon. This year’s dinner event, entitled “The Power of Hospitality,” will be on the evening of Tuesday, May 25, at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Portland.

Providence Health & Services is our major sponsor, joined to date by Augustana Lutheran Church, the Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell & George Crandall, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, DocuVArt Macadam and Legacy Health System. Over 420 people attended last year’s event, and this year tickets and tables are selling fast.

A silent auction, with the theme of rest and renewal, will feature travel packages, retreats, services, books, gifts and works of art. Proceeds of the auction will support EMO’s ministries. A collection will be taken to support EMO’s work throughout the state; all gifts will be matched dollar for dollar by the Collins Legacy Health System. Over 420 people attended last year’s event, and this year tickets and tables are selling fast.

Best practices forum highlights hospitality in the 21st century church

What does it mean to be a vital and faithful church in the 21st century?

Luis Lugo, executive director of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, will be the featured keynote speaker at a “best practices” forum for church leaders. Lugo will outline the recent research his organization conducted on the changing face of religion in America, with a specific focus on the Pacific Northwest.

In a time when many churches are struggling to keep their doors open and people in our communities are suffering from the effects of the recession, this event is designed to build up our faith communities by providing a venue for churches of every size, denomination and region to share how they are responding to the changing religious landscape in our state and the growing needs of our communities.

“Fostering Hospitality in the 21st Century Church” will take place on Tuesday, May 11, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 147 NW 19th Ave., Portland. This event will provide an opportunity for peer sharing, mutual learning and expanding networks of colleagues, as church leaders share how their congregations are creatively meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

The Rev. Paul Schroeder will begin the day with a Bible study on Hebrews 13:2, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” A panel of religious leaders including the Rev. Charles Lienert of St. Andrew’s Catholic Church, Deborah Loyd, founder of The Bridge Church and adjunct professor at George Fox Seminary, and the Rev. Vicky Stifter of Riverside Community United Church of Christ in Hood River will speak about congregational and community responses to the changes in our society. Facilitated breakout sessions will provide an opportunity for all participants to share and learn about “best practices” on topics such as using technology effectively, community missions, changing demography and creative worship ideas.

Session facilitators include: Todd and Angie Fadel, The Bridge Church; Steve Kimes, pastor, Anawim Community (Mennonite); Jesse Rice, author of The Church of Facebook; and the Rev. Brett Strobel, pastor, Christ United Methodist Church. Additional facilitators have yet to be confirmed. Churches are encouraged to bring teams of 3 to 5.

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Leadership

Let us build up each other

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other ... 1 Thessalonians 5:11

From March 19 to 22, I was in Washington, DC, for Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD), an annual conference on global peace sponsored by more than 45 Christian denominations, service organizations and justice advocacy networks. This year’s theme was “A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees and Displaced Peoples.”

While there may have been unity of spirit and purpose among the EAD attendees about the need for immigration reform, I can report—probably to no surprise to you—that not all who were in the nation’s Capitol that weekend were of one mind on this issue. Out in force on the Capitol grounds were advocates loudly making their case against any type of reform, be it immigration or, on that particular weekend, health care.

It was clearly apparent that partisanship is still a force to be reckoned with in our nation. And sadly, not the type of healthy partisanship that is based on learned ideals and respectful debate. This was the type of hyper-partisanship that calls for further marginalization of undocumented immigrants, building of more border fences, increased mass arrests by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and stepped-up deportations, even if they rip apart families.

In this hyper-partisan atmosphere, some demonstrators spit on elected officials. Others subjected Congressman John Lewis and Barney Frank to racial and homophobic slurs, as they made their way to the House of Representatives for the health care debate.

On Monday, March 22, I joined other religious leaders who met with Senator Harry Reid to discuss the steps needed to get immigration reform legislation introduced in the Senate. Others in attendance included Cardinal Mahoney from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles; the Rev. Jim Wallis of Sojourners; the Rev. John McCollough, executive director of Church World Service; the Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins, president and general minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and representatives from the National Association of Evangelicals and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS).

During our meeting with Senator Reid, we also discussed the divisions in our nation and how best to address them. It became clear to me during our conversation that we need to strengthen our commitment to the renewal of the moral inquiry centered on our interconnectedness rather than our divisions. As such, I found myself thinking that we need multiple places throughout our nation, where people of faith can gather with others—not to shout one another down and carry on in disconnected monologues, but to support just and equitable solutions to some of our country’s most difficult issues.

This led me to think, “What would happen if we approached these issues in a more prayerful manner? What if we created, say, a ‘prayer party’ movement in contrast to the ‘tea party’ movement?”

What would happen if we joined together in prayer seeking God’s guidance—instead of seeking solutions to the issues of the day in popular slogans and one-liners? What would happen if we listened more attentively to one another’s stories—instead of judging each other without any facts or real information about “the other”? And, what might happen if we really opened our hearts to God for guidance, seeking with truly open spirits the best way to respond to the needs of one another?

There have already been hundreds of prayer vigils throughout the country focused on immigration reform and other issues of importance. This more prayerful route is helping to build a movement within the religious community to support immigration reform in a way consistent with the principles of the National Council of Churches (NCC), National Conference of Catholic Bishops, National Association of Evangelicals, Church World Service (CWS) and National Hispanic Leadership Conference.

And in this spirit, the NCC and CWS introduced in the Senate immigration reform legislation that promises to be the healing and transformative power that our world so desperately needs.

And, what might happen if we really opened our hearts to God for guidance, seeking with truly open spirits the best way to respond to the needs of one another?

With a greater emphasis on the power of prayer, it is just possible that our nation’s leaders from both parties can be moved to support stalled immigration reform legislation that will improve not only the lives of more than 12 million undocumented people currently in this country, but the life of our entire nation. And as death penalty reformer Sr. Helen Prejean noted at the end of the EAD, our prayers need to be not just the “nice” prayers that focus solely on the well-being of one another, but the prayers that actually motivate and strengthen actions of compassion and ministry that improve the world in which we live, thus truly making real our concern about each other’s well-being.

We live in a time of great need. In response, let us join together in both prayer and action to improve the communities and the world in which we live. And let us do so guided by the Spirit of unity that promises to be the healing and transformative power that our world so desperately needs.

Greeting cards benefit “That’s My Farmer!”
Support “That’s My Farmer!” in Benton County by purchasing greeting cards by local artist Jan Roberts-Dominguez. The cards feature vibrant watercolor paintings of fruits and vegetables typical of Oregon’s agricultural bounty. Each box contains eight cards (two each of four images) and costs $10 per box. To purchase, please call Victoria O’Nion at (541) 757-1888, ext. 307, e-mail thatsmyfarmer@gmail.com, or send a request to St. Mary’s Catholic Church, 501 NW 25th St., Corvallis, OR 97330. Make checks payable to EMO.
Empoderamiento de la comunidad: Una base para la salud

Community empowerment: A foundation for health

As the Corvallis Congregational Wellness Coalition (CCWC) continues to support changes in the policies and environments of congregations to make healthy choices for food and physical activity accessible to all, it is moving to the next level of community advocacy in its second year. In early February, CCWC collaborated with the Benton County Health Department “Voceros de Salud” program to hold an advocacy training.

Facilitated by the Multnomah County Capacitation Center, it was the first coalition event to be held entirely in Spanish. The majority of the CCWC members are native Spanish speakers, and they felt it was important to have the training to ensure that the community they are a part of and serve has a seat at the table. The Capacitation Center supports congregations to create an action plan for setting. The tool includes a guide for easy choices for all in the congregational eating and physical activity choices become a goal is to shift the environment so that healthy and level of knowledge about wellness. The make to their policies, practices, building and environments to see what changes they can change. In fact, in popular education, the new understanding of society is a preparation to actively work towards social change. In fact, in popular education, the education process isn’t considered to be complete without action on what is learned—whether it be on a personal or political level.

The Corvallis Congregational Wellness Coalition’s next steps include refining an action plan to effect changes in the environment and promote policies that help reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. The coalition also plans to bring Francisco Arguelles to Corvallis for a second advocacy event in Spanish. Arguelles is the co-director of Colectivo Flatlander, an organization that helps build a strong popular movement for social, economic and racial justice. This event will be held in the spring on a date to be determined.

For more information, contact Marcela Arredondo, CCWC coordinator, at (541) 757-1988, ext. 307.

Summit motivates congregations in Earth care efforts

On Feb. 1, 160 people representing 47 congregations packed into the Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center in downtown Portland to learn about being better stewards of creation. The goals of Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns’ first “Earth Care Summit” were to connect congregations with community organizations and learn about the various resources available to green congregations, as well as provide inspiration. Representatives from 28 environmental nonprofits, government agencies and local businesses were on hand to share their resources and answer questions.

The event kicked off with tours of the green features of the LEED certified building. This was followed by a keynote address with the Rev. John Pitney, complete with inspirational music. Several congregational case studies were highlighted throughout the evening, and resource professionals from the City of Portland and Tualatin Riverkeepers presented on the importance of watershed stewardship and what congregations can do to be better stewards. The evening concluded with roundtable discussions on a variety of green topics including sustainable purchasing, community gardens, and worship and creation.

Feedback for the event was positive. One participant said, “I liked the variety of speakers and topics, the inclusion of the folk music, and the yummy, filling feast of food.” Many who attended were interested in follow-up workshops, networking opportunities and a similar event next year, so stay tuned!

Congregational wellness tools coming soon

Over the past year, EMO’s Congregational Wellness Project has been working with Community Health Partnership (CHP), Oregon’s Public Health Institute, to design and test a health assessment tool, the Congregational Health Index (CHI). The CHI helps faith communities examine their environments to see what changes they can make to their policies, practices, building and property use, and their congregation’s culture and level of knowledge about wellness. The goal is to shift the environment so that healthy eating and physical activity choices become the easy choices for all in the congregational setting. The tool includes a guide for congregations to create an action plan for making improvements.

A total of eight faith communities in Portland and Corvallis have served as pilot sites, testing the CHI, and informing EMO and CHP about ways to improve the tool. Many thanks to Corvallis pilot congregations St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Iglesia Cuadrangular Emmanuel and Southside Community Church, and Portland pilot congregations St. Charles Catholic Church, Ainsworth United Church of Christ, Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, Muslim Community Center and Maranatha Church of God for their hard work and invaluable input.

The Congregational Health Index will soon be ready to share with other congregations through a new Web site scheduled to launch in June. The site will also provide

A grant from Providence Health & Service’s Partners in Health Program will support the next phase of work for EMO’s Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) and Congregational Wellness work in Portland, Corvallis and statewide.

The grant will support congregations in expanding access to healthy food and safe physical activity for low-income communities. Goals and activities under the grant are:• Increase access to affordable, fresh food by partnering with local farmers and enabling consumers to use SNAP (food stamps) cards and WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market coupons to pay for items.

• Reach out to clergy and new congregations to share the Congregational Health Index (CHI) and other resources.

• Design a small grants program to be launched in fall 2010 to help congregations using the CHI bring action plans to life with improvements to their policies and practices or buildings and grounds, such as installing an active play area, bike rack or vegetable garden.

• Assist with two congregation-based food gardens.

For more information and to participate, contact Laure Raymond at (503) 221-1054, ext. 216, or raymond@emoregon.org.
Community Ministries

EMO’s Food Services plants edible garden at Patton Home

Ever wonder what’s cookin’ at the Patton Home kitchen, home of EMO’s Food Services and Delizioso Catering? If you’ve sampled the fare at one of our Community Ministries programs, an EMO meeting or a community event, you’ll appreciate the gratitude expressed by our customers for the fresh and nutritious low-cost meals we serve. Students at the Portland International Community School, Nickerson School and Youth Progress frequently tell us they come to school for the food and stay for the education.

Every day, we prepare over 185 meals in our kitchen, including catering service, hot lunches for three alternative schools and the HIV Day Center, meals for Patton Home residents, and frozen entrees for our home-bound Daily Bread Express recipients. Serving up 925 meals per week on average requires a lot of groceries. Some we buy, some we get through donations and some we grow.

Thanks to the generous assistance of Ramsey Landscaping (503-258-7904) and salvaged materials from the Rebuilding Center, roughly 250 square-feet of underutilized land outside the Patton Home kitchen has been transformed into a raised-bed vegetable garden, complete with a cold frame for seedlings. It doesn’t get more local than that!

As you read this, a cornucopia of lettuces, tomatoes, peppers, onions, squash, kale, beans, peas, zucchini, berries and edible flowers are emerging from our fertile soil. We also hope to glean surplus from nearby community gardens.

In addition to supplying our kitchen with the freshest possible produce at the lowest cost, the garden can be used to educate students and community members about healthy and sustainable food practices.

While many food service programs operate with a box cutter and a can opener, we cook the old-fashioned way with a knife, cutting board, and hearty dash of love and care. We also compost and recycle our waste. While our process is more labor intensive, there is no doubt the resulting meals are more appetizing, nutritious and satisfying. As Alice Waters declared in her book Edible Schoolyard, “Good food is a right, not a privilege.” Growing our own produce and employing volunteers will help us keep our meals affordable and our carbon footprint small.

If you want to combat hunger and promote food sovereignty in your community, please consider volunteering in either the Patton Home kitchen or garden. It’s great fun, and we’d appreciate the help! To learn more, call Russ Miller or Dirk Peterson at the Patton Home kitchen, (503) 335-1116.

New City Initiative engages faith community in ending homelessness

On Saturday, April 24, Dr. Susan Holman and C. Paul Schroeder will be the featured speakers for the opening and orientation of the “New City Initiative.”

The New City Initiative is an exciting new partnership between Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) and JOIN (www.joinpdx.com), a Portland-area nonprofit supporting people in their efforts to end their homelessness. The aim of the Initiative is to engage faith communities in ending homelessness.

The orientation launches an intensive six-week course designed for congregations interested in creating community with people experiencing and transitioning out of homelessness. The goal of the project is that each participating congregation will envision and create its own unique response to the crisis of homelessness, a response tailored to the “genius” of that particular congregation. In small group settings, participants in the project will:

- Reflect on communal practices such as “compassionate seeing” and “intentional welcoming.”
- Participate in a day-long immersion into life on the street.
- Invite people who have experienced homelessness to tell their own stories.
- Imagine a new kind of community in which everyone has something to give as well as something to receive.

The New City Initiative orientation will take place at Grace Memorial Episcopal Church, 1535 NE 17th Ave., Portland, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; ample parking is available and lunch will be provided.

About the speakers

Dr. Susan Holman will be speaking on the theme, “Responding to Poverty: Why Learn from the Early Church?” She is the author of God Knows There’s Need: Christian Responses to Poverty and The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia (both from Oxford University Press), and editor of Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society (BakerAcademic, 2008).

Holman is a scholar and writer with dual training in public health nutrition and the religious history of responses to poverty as they relate to human rights. She received her education from Tufts University Graduate School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Harvard Divinity School and Brown University. She serves on the Board of the Stephen and Catherine Pappas Patristic Institute at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School in Brookline, Mass.

Holman currently works as an academic writer and editor at the François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard School of Public Health in Boston, where she also serves as managing editor for Health and Human Rights: An International Journal and is a consultant in the intersection of public health and the history of religion.

C. Paul Schroeder is the coordinator of the New City Initiative. He will be presenting a workshop on “Building the New City,” the new study guide for the six-week course in communal practices. He is the author of On Social Justice: St. Basil the Great. Schroeder is a board member of EMO and currently serves as Faith-Based Services coordinator for JOIN.

Schroeder is the former pastor of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Portland, where he founded CUSINA (Culinary Utensils, Skills, Information and Nutrition Alliance)—a successful four-year program offering Greek cooking classes to people transitioning out of homelessness. In 2009, Schroeder was inspired to launch the New City Initiative, seeking to bring together his research on Basil of Caesarea and his practical experience with CUSINA in order to energize a movement of faith communities engaged in ending homelessness.

For more information on how your congregation or small group can participate in the New City Initiative, contact C. Paul Schroeder at newcityinitiative@gmail.com, or (503) 913-7853.

What can I do about hunger?

So often the problems of the world seem overwhelming. Below is an inspiring note from the grandmother of a young person who is taking action to tackle the issue of hunger in our community.

"Just wanted to share with you a touching story about my granddaughter. Lately, she has been very concerned about people who don’t have money to buy food. So, on her own, with absolutely no input from her family, she came up with the idea to sell hot chocolate to raise money for those in need. So… Keri and Katelyn manned the table… and raised $186.75 (plus a few cans of food) for EMO’s Northeast Emergency Food Program! We are so proud of her."
EMO welcomes new leadership to Community Ministries

Caroline van der Harten has joined the SOAR Immigration/Legal Services team as the new managing attorney. Caroline was born in the Netherlands and came to the United States as a young child with her Dutch father and American mother. She experienced firsthand how difficult it was for her parents and grandparents to navigate the immigration legal system and developed an interest in immigrant issues from a young age.

In law school, Caroline focused her studies and work experience on immigration legal topics. She interned for United States Senator Harry Reid as an immigration caseworker, and she participated in an immigration legal clinic representing victims of human trafficking and domestic violence.

Most recently, Caroline worked in Seattle as an Americanicorps immigration attorney with Lutheran Community Services NW. She served primarily low income refugees and immigrants and assisted them with obtaining legal permanent residency, citizenship and reunifying them with their family members. Eager to continue the work that she is so passionate about, Caroline joined SOAR and looks forward to advocating for Portland’s immigrant community.

Aysmara Grey-Morales was hired for a new grant-funded position—Self Sufficiency coordinator for the Cuban Haitian Assistance Program at SOAR Immigration/Legal Services. As an immigrant from Cuba, she is highly motivated to help other immigrants assimilate to the United States. In Cuba, Aysmara worked as a church pastor and then practiced as a dentist for seven years. In 2003, she won the visa lottery to come to the United States, but she was prevented by the Cuban government from coming until 2008.

Aysmara says that at first transitioning to American life was rather difficult because she had trouble understanding the laws, language and culture of the United States. She even considered returning to Cuba because it was so difficult. But she remained positive, and found her first job with IRCO as an instructional assistant, where she had the opportunity to encourage, advocate and provide personal testimony of how to be independent to newly arriving Cubans.

Aysmara’s passion for working with immigrants comes from her desire to share her personal experience, prevent others from experiencing the suffering she encountered as a new immigrant, and help people like herself adapt to Portland and become successful. Her favorite quote from the Bible is, “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves,” Ecclesiastes 4:12.

Lindsay Ross-Hunt, the new program manager at the HIV Day Center, comes to EMO after working in a multi-service family resource center in Washington County.

Much of her work has centered around advocacy and resource provision in underserved communities and/or populations. She has worn many hats: ESL teacher, social worker, case manager, home visitor, diversity trainer, program manager, community organizer, board member, events coordinator, church speaker, guitar player and knitter, to name a few.

Lindsay is passionate about living in, learning from and serving in the community. She says, “I recall as a young person in one of EMO’s member congregations [Moreland Presbyterian], hearing about the work that EMO was doing and being compelled by the vision of standing together as diverse communities of faith to serve those in need and advocate for a more just world.”

Lindsay is excited to have the opportunity to serve at the HIV Day Center, which she says “is a truly remarkable community of passion, inspiration, brokenness and redemption, where there is never a dull moment to be had!” She enjoys welcoming new folks and talking about the great things happening at the HIV Day Center. Should you like to introduce yourself, Lindsay can be reached at (503) 460-3822 or hrcenter@emoregon.org.

Healthy Kids project aims to provide health care for 80,000 uninsured children in Oregon

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon recently received a grant from the State of Oregon to conduct outreach for the Oregon Health Plan’s Healthy Kids program through faith communities around the state and within several EMO Community Ministry programs.

Healthy Kids sounds great, but what is it? Last year the Oregon Legislature expanded the Oregon Health Plan and added a KidsConnect option to allow 80,000 uninsured children around the state access to health care for free or at a very low cost. Part of this effort is targeted outreach to help families understand and apply for the Healthy Kids program. EMO’s role is to work with faith communities and direct service programs to make that happen.

Families with household income below $30,000 or 300 percent of the poverty level—about $66,000 a year for a family of four—are eligible, and the coverage includes medical, dental and vision care, as well as regular checkups, prescription medicines and mental health services. Children must be age 18 or younger and a legal resident of Oregon.

“I can’t do it alone, so I will be recruiting church staff and volunteers to help spread the word,” said Andrew Plambeck, EMO’s Healthy Kids outreach project coordinator. Your congregation can sign up as a Certified Application Assistance Organization or would like more information about the Healthy Kids project, contact Andrew Plambeck at (503) 221-1054, ext. 211, or aplambeck@emoregon.org.
New resource available: Policy guide on faith and health reform to inform congregations and inspire action

The Oregon Interfaith Health Justice Campaign (OIHJC)—a joint project of EMO with the Archimedes Movement and Oregon Action—has released a guide to health policy for use by Oregon’s diverse faith communities. Titled *Faith & Health: A Religious Perspective on Oregon’s Health System,* the guide is part of a continuing effort to build the capacity of Oregon’s faith communities to advocate for health care reform that provides access to care for everyone in Oregon and the nation. While discussions of health care reform in the media are often reductionistic and laden with partisan rhetoric, the goal of Faith & Health is to help congregations and individuals gain perspective on the issue through clear, accurate information and helpful discussion questions and ideas for action. The guide is divided into chapters that link health policy to faith values, explaining the basic elements of the current health system, exploring the major contours of recent health reform legislation, and suggesting how faith communities can help to build a more healthy future for Oregon and the nation. It includes a helpful directory of Web resources and an appendix of material that can be used and adapted for worship services, vigils, or other congregational or interreligious activity around health reform. The Oregon Interfaith Health Justice Campaign hopes that the guide will spark conversation and motivate congregations to pursue justice in health care. EMO supports the efforts of congregations in the area of health justice advocacy by sponsoring forums and providing action alerts at important moments for health care advocacy.

The “Faith & Health” guide is available as a free PDF download at [www.emoregon.org/healthcare_reform.php](http://www.emoregon.org/healthcare_reform.php). For more information on the guide or other OIHJC events and resources, contact Kevin Finney at (503) 221-1054, ext. 204, or kfinney@emoregon.org.

**Summit to explore solutions for homeless children & families**

The Oregon Interfaith Summit on Homeless Children and Families is set for Thursday, June 24, 2010, at First United Methodist Church of Salem. The one-day event focuses on how better to respond to the increasing numbers of homeless families and children in Oregon, and it will also explore policy advocacy needed to prevent and reduce family homelessness and support the education of homeless children.

The impetus for this summit is rooted in the report released last fall by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo. The report stated that there were over 18,000 homeless children in Oregon public schools during the 2008-09 school year. The number of students who were homeless for part or all of that academic year was up 14 percent from the year before and up 122 percent since the 2003-04 school year. In addition, Oregon was ranked first in the nation for having the highest percentage of its population that was homeless.

In response to these and other troubling statistics, the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon Board of Directors approved the convening of the Interfaith Summit to address the increasing needs of homeless children and families, with the ultimate goal of reversing the trends.

The summit will focus on three key areas. First, it will explore ways congregations, religious networks and faith-based nonprofits are already responding to the growing crisis. Some congregations, for example, have come together across denominational and religious affiliations to work together to provide shelter in congregational settings for homeless families using a model known as the Interfaith Hospitality Network. In other cases, religious communities partner with nonprofit organizations that provide professional knowledge and full-time staff support to assist congregations in providing homeless services. This can be particularly helpful in situations where congregations have had limited experience dealing with the complex issues involved in serving a diverse group of homeless families or individuals. Other parishes, while providing emergency food services, are exploring ways to deepen their relationships with the homeless children and families they interact with in their communities with the goal of creating a true sense of mutual ministry, where people are treated with dignity and respect.

The summit will provide a unique opportunity for faith leaders who are already providing services to the homeless to brainstorm together and share ideas about what is working in their programs, and where they are facing challenges they have not yet overcome. Additionally, congregations who are not currently serving the homeless will be able to learn about a variety of approaches they might use in responding to this growing crisis.

A second focus of the summit will be support for educational opportunities for homeless children and youth in local communities. Currently, federal funding enables most school districts in Oregon to have a part-time or full-time liaison to support educational and other services for students who are homeless. While some larger school districts devote more than one staff person to this task, all of them have a need for volunteer assistance and support. The homeless education liaison is responsible for outreach to homeless children and youth to make sure they are enrolled and ensuring that schools are providing children with the emotional and academic support they need to succeed in school, despite the many challenges presented by their transient living situation.

An important part of the summit will be detailing how faith communities can be appropriate partners with school districts in helping to advocate for and provide volunteer support to homeless students at the school district level and in individual schools.

A third focus is advocacy on behalf of homeless families and children. Issues to be explored include the role faith communities can play during the 2011 Session of the Oregon Legislature to increase funding levels for emergency rental assistance (to prevent family homelessness), shelters and transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing for those families that may need additional help with issues of addiction, alcoholism or mental illness. Additionally, the summit will explore how to best support homeless education programs, including continued state and national level funding for outreach and support staff at both the state and national levels.

The Interfaith Summit on Homeless Children and Families will provide an important collaborative learning and training opportunity that will bring together people of faith and the broader community, including staff from nonprofit agencies, educational leaders and other public officials and agency representatives who serve homeless children and families.

We hope you will plan to be with us on June 24. Cosponsors for the summit are being sought. If your congregation, denomination or nonprofit organization would like to be a cosponsor, please download a sponsorship form at [www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org). If you would like to be involved in further summit planning, contact Kevin Finney at (503) 221-1054, ext. 204, or kfinney@emoregon.org.
Using the power of microcredit to overcome global poverty

By Terry Provance, Oikocredit executive director

Before she received her first loan, Corazon Endonela from the Philippines would take her four children into downtown Manila. There she would spread them out at strategic corners where they would spend all day begging, earning less than $2 each day. With her meager resources, she would feed her family one daily meal—until she heard from a woman friend about microcredit.

Microcredit is not a charity and having never handled money before, Corazon walked into a small village microcredit bank funded by Oikocredit. There she explained to a loan officer what she thought she could do with a loan and conducted the largest financial transaction in her life. She borrowed $35, even though she had no collateral. Oikocredit took a risk by loaning to a poor person, one with creativity and industry.

She bought a used sewing machine and materials. She made nice products and, instead of fanning out her children to beg, she put down a cloth in Manila, put out her wears, and passed by bought her products. She had income and a job. Now her kids could eat twice each day, she could improve her home and save money for her children to go to public school. She felt better about herself and paid off her loan. And, she borrowed another $100 so that she could buy more sewing machines to employ her two sisters and a neighbor—four poor women working for their income and overcoming the injustice of poverty. Such is the good news about microcredit, but the need for making loans is tremendous.

Of the world’s 6.7 billion people, 3.4 billion live on less than $2 per day and 1.4 billion live on less than $1. Yet, all people are created in God’s image and thus are sacred. Such economic injustice and enslaving poverty are an intolerable violation of God’s good creation and a challenge to people of faith who have considerable resources.

Oikocredit is an international community development financial institution that makes low-interest loans to poor people through cooperatives and microcredit banks. Through credit to the poor who have skills and creativity, poverty can be overcome and dignity restored. Today, Oikocredit provides loans in 71 countries with its $655,000,000.

Oikocredit receives its capital from socially responsible investments, mainly from religious constituencies. In its 35 years after being founded by the World Council of Churches, all investors have received interest and full principal upon redemption. No one has lost a dollar because the poor who are empowered with credit are very good at paying their loans, because their lives have changed through the power of loans. Credit is much more reliable and empowering than donations, and poor people maintain their economic participation by repaying.

On March 4 in Portland, EMO hosted two microcredit presentations—one at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church and one at the Interchurch Center—for a diverse group of faith leaders. Those in attendance included the Rev. Aleida Jernigan of the Presbyterian of the Cascades, who explained why they invest with Oikocredit.

“Not only is the Presbytery meeting our investment needs, we are also investing in the lives of individuals and their communities by helping lift them out of poverty.”

You, your relatives and friends, members of your church and your congregation can also help reduce global poverty by supporting Oikocredit and its mission to provide loans. Gandhi said poverty is the worst form of violence. And when Mohammad Yunus won the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for establishing the first microcredit bank in Bangladesh, he stated that poverty is the absence of all human rights. You can help prevent the violence and indignity of poverty by investing in Oikocredit.

You will receive annual interest as well as your full principal returned upon redemption. You can help prevent the violence and indignity of poverty by investing in Oikocredit.

The service will be held at 6:30 p.m. at John Day UMC, 126 NW Canton St.

The pastor of John Day UMC, the Rev. Marcie Collins, envisions the first half of the ceremony as a remembrance of the Holocaust and other acts of hate that have hurt people all over the world. The second half will be a time to recommit to living in a different way, Collins said, living the image of the Kingdom of God.

People of all faiths and no faith are equally welcome to join the service, Collins said, adding, “We hope to construct a place where all can feel comfortable.”

“...a movement in our world”

Collins said, “that wants to say the Holocaust never happened. But when we remember, we lessen the likelihood of it happening again. If we are convinced it didn’t happen, there is nothing standing in the way of it happening again. Ignorance is not bliss.”

Rev. Collins encourages people to do things at home “to remember it happened, that it still is happening, and that we are the ones who can stop it.”

Fostering hospitality

Continued from page 7

leaders. Coffee and lunch are included in the registration fee of $20.

Lugo has been the director of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life since 2004. The Pew Forum is non-partisan think tank that conducts surveys, demographic analyses, and other social science research on important aspects of religion and public life in the United States and around the world. They seek to promote a deeper understanding of issues at the intersection of religion and public affairs by delivering timely, impartial information to national opinion leaders, including government officials and journalists. Their research focuses on religion in four key areas: politics, law, domestic policy, and world affairs.

Prior to joining the Pew Forum, Lugo served as the director of the Religion program at The Pew Charitable Trusts in Philadelphia—a position he held for seven years. Before joining the Trusts, he was a professor of political science for more than 12 years, teaching courses in international relations, Latin American politics, and religion and public policy. After studying at the University of Memphis (B.A.) and Villanova University (M.A.), he took his Ph.D. in political science at the University of Chicago.

Among Lugo’s published works are several edited volumes, including Religion, Public Life and the American Policy and Sovereignty at the Crossroad: Morality and International Politics in the Post-Cold War Era. A native of Cuba, he is listed in Who’s Who Among Hispanic Americans.

More details about the forum, including registration, are available on EMOS Web site at www.emoregon.org. For further information, contact Jan Elfers at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or jelfers@emoregon.org.

2010 Collins Lecture set for Thursday, Nov. 18

Save the date for the 2010 Collins Lecture, “Neighborhoods of Diversity: Welcoming the Stranger in Our Midst,” with keynote speaker the Rev. Dr. S. Wesley Arтаraja, a Methodist minister and professor of Ecumenical Theology at Drew University School of Theology.

John Day UMC to hold “Day of Remembrance”

John Day United Methodist Church (UMC) will hold a Day of Remembrance service on April 21, in honor of Tom HаShоah, the international day of remembrance for victims of the Holocaust. This will be the first year the church has held such a service, which will be a witness against the Aryan Nation who were interested in Grant County in eastern Oregon as a new home.

The service will be held at 6:30 p.m. at John Day UMC, 126 NW Canton St.

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Rev. Collins encourages people to do things at home “to remember it happened, that it still is happening, and that we are the ones who can stop it.”

Photo credit: TSPI (Tulay sa Pagunlad Development Corp)
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 winter issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor (Fund)</th>
<th>Program</th>
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<tr>
<td>Black United Fund of Oregon</td>
<td>NE Emergency Food Program</td>
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<td>Bloomfield Family Foundation</td>
<td>Portland International</td>
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<td>Boeing Employees Good Neighbor Fund of Portland</td>
<td>NE Emergency Food Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cascade AIDS Project, Inc.</td>
<td>HIV Services</td>
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<td>Central Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>Annual Fund</td>
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<td>Collins Foundation</td>
<td>Annual Fund; Theological Education &amp; Dialogue</td>
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<td>Community Health Partnership</td>
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<td>Ecotrust</td>
<td>Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns</td>
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<td>Fremont United Methodist Church</td>
<td>NE Emergency Food Program</td>
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<td>Harris Family Foundation</td>
<td>NE Emergency Food Program</td>
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<td>Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral</td>
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<td>Irwin Foundation</td>
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<td>Joseph E. Weston Public Foundation</td>
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<td>Kaiser Foundation</td>
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<td>Northwest Health Foundation</td>
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<td>Providence Health &amp; Services</td>
<td>Interfaith Food &amp; Farms Partnership</td>
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<td>Robert Wood Johnson Foundation</td>
<td>Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns</td>
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<td>Verizon Wireless</td>
<td>Russian Oregon Social Services</td>
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Honor & memorial gifts (Nov-Dec)

In honor of Kristin E. Bauck
Eric J. Bauck
In honor of Louvene Berman
Jennifer Bransfield
In honor of Guen Burns
Elmer Frimoth
In honor of John & Ann Cotton
Mark F. Cotton
In honor of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority—Aletha Chavis, Patricia Dickerson, Marian Gilmore, Velma Johnson; Sheena Neal; Karis Stoudamire-Phillips; Sharon White
In honor of Frank Drischell
Sophia Kremidas
In honor of Jay Ellicoff
Coral Mallow
In honor of Mark Godley
Heather Munro
In honor of Robert Knapp
Carolyn Knapp
In honor of David A. Lelei
Robert Lelei; St. James Lutheran Church
In honor of Nicole & Kamal Lopez
Jacquelynn T. Dvorak
In honor of Laryn Matson
Lynne M. Hill
In honor of LeRoy F. Owens
Thomas McGrath
In honor of Eugene Rice
Mary Sue Evers
In honor of Don Shields’ birthday
Sally A. Needham
In honor of Strength for the Journey Camp—Lisa Jean Hoefner
In honor of Michael J. Weedall
Susan Weedall
In memory of Maryjean S. Almavivaitz
Marshall Goldberg
In memory of Newton Beadworth
Sue N. Beadworth
In memory of Louis Boston
Clarine M. Boston
In memory of Dean Chambers
Sally J. Bailey
In memory of Geneve Gainer
Jean R. Rameur
In memory of Phyllis Gillett
Mary G. Evans
In memory of Cecily Kizziar
Christopher Crum
In memory of Bill & Ruth Looney,
their memory of generously given love
Shawn S. Looney
In memory of Mattie
Steven K. Green
In memory of David McKay
Joann Devich
In memory of Herbert E. Richards
Lois M. Richards
In memory of Terry Robinson
John M. Sutton
In memory of Judy Rogers
Bruce Rogers
In memory of Jeff Smith
Rachel Carlson
In memory of Les Sorenson
Eileen A. Sorenson
In memory of Eileen H. Starrett
Carla L. Sturgis-Bitag
In memory of Gilbert Wilde
Mike S. MacVeigh
In memory of Davis Wilson
Ben Brown
In memory of Angelina Wither
Gary A. Wither

EMO Annual Celebration

Continued from page 1

Bank, Goplen has also served as president of the Oregon Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and spearheaded many other vital initiatives. 

Albina Ministerial Alliance (AMA) will be honored with the “Vollum Ecumenical Humanitarian Award” for outstanding commitment to humanitarian responsibility that has significantly enhanced the quality of life for all. With its long and storied history of seeking social and economic justice in Portland and the state of Oregon, AMA draws from a deep well of faith to take the lead in forming broad-based coalitions for the community good. Most recently, AMA was catalyst of a coalition to bring about better working relations between the Portland Police Department and the community they serve.

The “Two Pauls Award”—in recognition of outstanding work in the ecumenical spirit of dialogue, service and relations—will be presented to the John Day Blue Mountain Eagle in honor of the newspaper’s leadership in peaceful and determined opposition to the establishment of a headquarters for the Aryan Nations in Grant County. The Blue Mountain Eagle acted as the first catalyst to a community-wide movement that reflects the highest ideals of our faith.

“Ecumenical Service Awards”—given in recognition of special achievements in ecumenical community ministries in Oregon—will be presented to Hadley River Valley Christian Church and the Louis Palau Association’s “Season of Service.”

Join us!

Individual tickets are $60 each; tables seating 10 are $600. For reservations, download a Response Card at www.emoregon.org or call the EMO office at (503) 221-1054. A reception and silent auction begin at 5 p.m.; dinner and awards program begin at 6:30 p.m.

We welcome the donation of silent auction items; all proceeds will support EMO and its programs. Donate a weekend at a vacation home, tickets to a show, travel miles or request a gift certificate from your favorite service business, restaurant or shop.

For more information about the event, including volunteering, sponsorship and auction item donations, please contact Carla Starrett-Bieg or Chris Siemens at (503) 221-1054.

Upcoming EMO events

April 17
Al-Andalus Ensemble: Seeds of Peace. 8 p.m. at Winningstad Theatre, 1111 SW Broadway, Portland. Dynamically fusing graceful music with contemporary flamenco dance, “Seeds of Peace” unifies the world’s music cultures, marrying East and West, as well as Classical and World Music genres. Tickets are $40-$60. Ticket Hotline: (503) 248-0557, www.tojt.com/family_series.html. For more information: music@andalus.com, (503) 230-2379. EMO is co-sponsor of the event.

April 29
Dining Out for Life. At various restaurants in the Portland metro area. See page 5 for details or visit www.diningoutforlife.com/portland.

May 11
Feastinger Hospitality in the 21st Century Church. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 147 NW 15th Ave., Portland. See page 1 for more details.

May 16
Farmers Feed Everyone Benefit Dinner for the Interfaith Food & Farm Partnership. 6 to 8 p.m. at the Church of the Good Samaritan, 333 NW 35th St., Corvallis. Mark your calendars for an evening of local fare, music and community. To register, please call (541) 757-1988, ext. 307, or e-mail thatmyfarmer@gmail.com.

May 25
EMO Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner. 5 p.m. reception & silent auction, and 6:30 p.m. dinner & awards program, at the Portland Hilton, 921 SW Sixth Ave., Portland. See page 1 for more details.

June 17
From Fasti Kitchens to Community Kitchens. 9 to 11:30 a.m. at the Corvallis First United Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe Ave., Corvallis. Join us for a gathering on transitioning from faith kitchens to community kitchens from “Jamin” for the Hungry” coordinator Sara Power and Community Kitchen coordinator Rebecca Weinsteiger, who will lead a workshop on radical hospitality in the kitchen: how to welcome low-income neighbors for cooking classes, food preservation and micro-enterprise. To register, call (541) 757-1988, ext. 307, or e-mail rweinsteiger@emoregon.org.