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## At the crossroads in Oregon

### Why EMO recommends a YES vote on Measures 66 & 67

In this issue, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is providing a brief version of our customary voters' guide to ballot measures—this time for the Jan. 26, 2010, special election. This guide is brief because there are only two measures on the ballot in January, but this short ballot does not mean that this election is unimportant. On the contrary, this vote represents an important moral and economic crossroads with far-reaching implications for Oregon's future.

The background to this election is the state budget

crisis that confronted the 2009 Session of the Oregon Legislature. Due to the steep recession, income tax and lottery revenues had fallen steeply, and legislators faced a budget hole of more than \$4 billion. To balance the budget, the Legislature cut spending by roughly \$2 billion, utilized federal stimulus funds, and also drew down the "rainy day" fund and other reserves—but that still left a budget gap of nearly \$750 million.

Rather than make additional cuts to public schools, health and human

services, and public safety programs, the Legislature decided to fill the remaining budget hole by passing two bills to modestly increase taxes on corporations and high-income taxpayers beginning with the 2009 tax year. Both measures were passed and signed into law by Governor Kulongoski, but business organizations and anti-tax activists collected enough signatures to have both measures referred to voters for their approval or rejection at the special election in January.

By voting YES on Measures

66 and 67, Oregonians have an opportunity to affirm the importance of public education, health care and human services, public safety, and the need for targeted government investment to create jobs and revive our sluggish economy.

Conversely, a NO vote would force further cuts to the 2009-2011 state budget and would leave the state with a less robust funding base for future years as well.

This election, then, represents a moral, political and economic crossroads of

*Continued on page 6*

## NCC honors EMO's executive director with ecumenical award

On Nov. 11, 2009, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) and Church World Service (CWS) presented the "Eugene Carson Blake Award for Ecumenism" to EMO Executive Director David Leslie.

Given for the first time in 2008, on the centennial of Dr. Blake's birth, this award commemorates this leading ecumenist, who served as president of the National Council of Churches (1952), founder of the Consultation of Church Union (1960) and former general secretary of the World Council of Churches.

The award is given for demonstrating "welcoming outreach to those beyond the common bounds of ecumenism, a profound commitment to the



The Rev. Peg Chamberlin, NCC president, presented David Leslie with the Eugene Carson Blake Award for Ecumenism on Nov. 11.

Gospel's justice, and the establishment of ecumenical understandings, agencies or activities that deepen the kinship of Christians of every race and nation."

Leslie said it was an "honor to be able to serve" the ecumenical movement as a layperson and that the movement leads us to discover "passion and gifts we

didn't know we had."

Under Leslie's leadership, EMO has established itself as a respected source for theological dialogue, reliable provider of community-based services, and vigorous advocate for those in need.

Leslie is a member of the NCC Interfaith Relations Commission, National Religious Campaign Against Torture Board of Directors, Pacific Institute for Ethics and Social Policy at Pacific University, Northwest Workers' Justice Project Advisory Board and State of Oregon Ending Homelessness Advisory Council. He is currently the chair of the national Ecumenical Task Force on Immigration convened by the National Council of Churches and Church World Service.

## How much is enough?

“...to whom much has been given, much will be required.”

Luke 12:48

Lately, I have been thinking a lot about the question, “So, how much is enough?” as it relates to my share of responsibility for Oregon’s future. As such, I can’t help but put to test my feeling about the taxes we pay. So, as to taxes, just how much is enough?



David Leslie

In January, each of us will have an opportunity to give our personal answer to this question as we vote on two important tax measures—Measures 66 and 67. If passed, these two measures will adjust Oregon’s individual and corporate tax rates, preserving tax revenue approved by the Oregon Legislature in 2009. This revenue is important for Oregon’s public schools, public safety and human services programs. As detailed in this issue of *The Voice*, this revenue package was part of the larger state budget-balancing exercise, which included cutting more than \$2 billion out of the state budget. While not widely popular, these tax increases were “actions of last resort” to “stop the bleeding” without further risking of public services and programs that are essential to our collective well-being.

Predictably, as has happened time and time again when the Legislature passes tax packages, advocates quickly gathered

signatures and filed referral petitions (which blocked implementation of the tax legislation), and then launched a major advertising campaign in the hope that the public vote will result in the tax increases being overturned. There were many arguments given for overturning the tax measures including the statement, “A recession is no time to raise taxes,” which on first glance is a compelling argument. However, it is important to note that even during the “good times” when revenues were high, the same advocates were calling for “no new taxes,” even though public education, public safety and health care programs were often underfunded due to cuts made during the last recession.

Simply put, there are those who strongly believe taxes by their very nature are a drag on the economy and should be absolutely minimized, no matter the contribution our taxes make to ensure a stable economy, strong schools and compassionate safety net system.

Unfortunately, this perspective greatly limits the full range of deliberations required to fully address the question, “So how much is enough?” In thinking about one’s personal and corporate tax obligation, it is important that other critical issues and questions be considered.

Oregon schools, for example, now have one of the largest average class sizes and shortest school year in the country, and they rank 49<sup>th</sup> among states on student-teacher ratio. When only one state (Utah) has more students per teacher than

Oregon, it is time to ask, “How many children are enough in an Oregon classroom, and how much should we invest in the future of our public education system?”

Oregon ranks first among states in the percentage of the population experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the Oregon Department of Education recently announced that more than 18,000 homeless Oregon children attend our public schools. So, it is indeed time to ask, “How many homeless children are too many, and how important is it to develop a strong tax base to address the needs of Oregon’s most vulnerable populations?”

And as we think about the amount of taxes we are willing to pay, let us not forget to ask, “How many state troopers are enough to ensure statewide 24-hour per day coverage on Oregon highways? How many poor people should be on the waiting list for subsidized childcare? How many more Oregonians will join the unemployment roles if the measures fail?”

Today, we are at a crossroads in Oregon, where once again we are being asked to cast our vote on tax measures and, as such, Oregon’s future. Will we approve the tax measures before us, reducing the need for more drastic cuts to critical public services? Or will we vote down these measures, ensuring even more difficult economic times and more public rancor?

The decision is ours to make. As we deliberate, let us keep mindful this final question: “So exactly how much is our fair share in support of a democratic society, marked by the unwavering investment in the improvement of life for ‘the least among us’ and the building of strong foundations for future generations?”

Yes, indeed, just how much is enough?

## Episcopal Diocese elects Hanley as its tenth bishop



The Rev. Michael Hanley

The Rev. Michael Hanley, rector of St. Christopher’s in Roseville, Minn., has been elected as the tenth Bishop of the Oregon Episcopal Diocese. He will be officially consecrated on April 10, 2010, at the Hult Center in Eugene.

Hanley was born in 1954 and grew up in Oklahoma and New York City. He earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Oklahoma (1976) and a M.Div. from Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill. (1981). He also holds a D.Min. in Congregational Development from Seabury-Western (2005).

Hanley has served parishes in Oklahoma, Missouri and, for the past 19 years, Minnesota. In the Diocese of Minnesota, he served in a variety of elected and appointed leadership positions, most recently as a trustee at Seabury-Western.

Hanley is known as a supportive mentor to people of all ages and stages of life, with a deep spiritual center.

### Upcoming EMO events

#### February 1

##### *Earth Care Summit*

5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Ecotrust, Billy Frank Jr. Conference Center, 721 NW Ninth Ave., Portland. A celebration and gathering of congregations going green, this event will include dinner, keynote speaker and presentations from congregations about their efforts. Resource people from the community will be on hand to discuss a variety of green topics including community gardens, watershed stewardship, zero waste, green liturgy, energy efficiency and more. A silent auction featuring green products and services for home and congregation will be provided. Come network with others and be inspired! For more

information, contact Alison Warren at (503) 221-1054, ext. 210, or [awarren@emoregon.org](mailto:awarren@emoregon.org). Registration forms available at [www.emoregon.org/events.php](http://www.emoregon.org/events.php).



#### May 4

*Best Practices Seminar with Luis Lugo: “Radical Hospitality and the Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”*  
See page 7 for more details.

#### Save the Date: May 25

*EMO Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner*  
Reception and Silent Auction from 5:30 to 7 p.m.; Dinner and Awards Presentation from 7 to 9 p.m.; at the Portland Hilton, 921 SW Sixth Ave.

## voice

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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

## Coming together for food Summit urges rekindling of community & wellness

Over 70 people from all over Oregon convened in Corvallis on Oct. 3 for an all-day summit on food sovereignty, organized by EMO's Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP).

"As we go forward today, I am going to challenge you to rethink how we relate to ending hunger," said keynote speaker Sharon Thornberry, community food programs advocate for the Oregon Food Bank. "Knock down the stigma of poverty in your faith communities," said Thornberry. She also encouraged people to take a fresh look at the way congregations offer charity, asking, "Does it leave people with their dignity?"

*Food Sovereignty is defined as "the right of all people, communities and countries to define agricultural, food and land policies that are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally relevant."*

Participants gathered at Westside Community Church to learn about wellness policies, cooking and gardening programs, and creative partnerships between faith

communities and family farmers. The group visited the Corvallis Downtown Farmers' Market for a self-guided tour and opportunity to spend complementary \$3 "That's My Farmer!" vouchers, sold by local congregations.

Lunch, prepared by Sara Power and participants of IFFP cooking classes, was locally grown fare served in the community kitchen at Corvallis First United Methodist Church. During lunch, participants learned about cooking and micro-enterprise programs and "Jammin' for the Hungry," a volunteer effort to can jams and jellies for local food pantries.

Participants toured the Westside Community Garden in the afternoon and learned about what it takes to start a successful garden, especially in collaboration with low-income people. The Summit explored projects IFFP has spearheaded in recent years and emphasized ways of linking faith community resources to create healthy food access for low-income people and markets for local farmers. "I really enjoyed networking with experienced and inspired people," commented one participant. "Sharing ideas with other communities was really valuable."

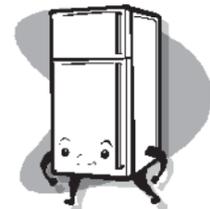
Attendees received a copy of IFFP's newly published handbook, "Food Sovereignty for All: Overhauling the Food System with Faith-Based Initiatives," available for download at [www.emoregon.org/food\\_farms.php](http://www.emoregon.org/food_farms.php).

## Portland area IFFP looks for new congregation partners

For its 2010 season, Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) is especially interested in working with congregations that want to make fresh, local produce available to people using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, WIC and Senior Farmers Market Coupons. With more people than ever needing to take advantage of these programs, we want to do our part to help make access to fresh produce as easy and affordable as possible.

*If you think your congregation would be positioned well to serve this population through a farm to congregation partnership and has a strong interest in making a commitment to local farmers, contact Alison Warren at (503) 221-1054, ext. 214, or [awarren@emoregon.org](mailto:awarren@emoregon.org).*

## Save \$\$\$ & reduce your congregation's carbon footprint!



Is your refrigerator more than ten years old? Today's refrigerators use about 60 percent less energy than models from 20 years ago.

Oregon Interfaith Power & Light is offering a fact sheet for congregations to help them think through replacing that "golden oldie" refrigerator, donated by a well-meaning member, at [www.emoregon.org/power\\_light.php](http://www.emoregon.org/power_light.php). The fact sheet lists examples of refrigerators that qualify for multiple incentives. ShopIPL will give ten percent off the price of an energy efficient refrigerator for your congregation or home after any other discount offers.

Go to [www.shopipl.org](http://www.shopipl.org) and click on "Goldie" or call Ted at (734) 624-1154.

## International 350 Campaign energizes congregations throughout the state

Oct. 24 was the largest ever global day of action on the climate crisis, thanks to 350.org's International Day of Climate Action, co-founded by author Bill McKibben. Over 5,200 events in 181 countries were held to call for action on the climate crisis, six weeks before the United Nations Climate Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. The focus of the campaign is on the number 350—as in parts per million, the level scientists have identified as the safe upper limit for CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (OIPL), a project of EMO, took the lead in organizing Portland's largest event—a rally at Pioneer Courthouse Square, attended by over 1,000 people. Participants—including those who also joined a 350 mile Oregon Coastal Climate Crisis walk (cosponsored by OIPL), 350 bike ride, march of local businesses and PSU students, and kayak group—streamed into the square.

Several local religious leaders spoke at the Portland rally, including Rabbi Michael Cahana of Temple Beth Israel, whose invocation compared the slow response to global warming



Over 1,000 people gathered for the Oregon 350 Climate Action Rally in Pioneer Courthouse Square in downtown Portland.

Photo credit: Kathleen Newman

to Noah's 120 years of warning people of the great flood.

Elsewhere in Oregon, communities of faith participated in community wide events from Newport to Bend, as they organized their own activities such as ringing church bells 350 times, putting up educational bulletin boards, mentioning the day during services or taking a 350 picture.

*To view the inspiring album of 350 actions, large and small, from around the world, go to [www.350.org](http://www.350.org). For activities and follow-up in Oregon, go to [www.oregon350.org](http://www.oregon350.org).*

## "Cool Congregations" come to Oregon!

In September, Oregon Interfaith Power & Light held two Cool Congregations workshops in Portland and Eugene, attended by over 50 people from 29 congregations. These interactive workshops equipped congregational teams to conduct a nationally tested program to help members of their congregations reduce their carbon footprint and save money.

The program was originally started by three mothers in Iowa, who were concerned about a proposed coal-fired plant and wanted to do something about it. Since the program started, more than 250 congregations have attended workshops nationwide.

If you would like to host a workshop or become a trainer for your denomination or region this year, please e-mail Alison Warren at [awarren@emoregon.org](mailto:awarren@emoregon.org).

## 4 Community Ministries

### EMO invests in the future with college interns

Are you aware of the extent to which Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is working to teach future professionals how to treat individuals with dignity and respect?

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's internship program was expanded last year through a grant from The Oregon Community Foundation. This grant allows EMO to expand access to students from colleges around the region. Jay Elbrecht, HIV Services social worker and intern coordinator, has increased awareness of EMO's ministries to Reed College, Oregon State University, Portland Community College, Concordia University, University of Portland, George Fox University and Portland State University (PSU). These relationships have brought students from all walks of life to consider EMO as part of their learning and education.

The first year of the internship program is coming to a close with many win-win experiences. Nurses are getting ready to graduate with a good understanding of the HIV population. Law student interns have completed their summer internships with the SOAR Immigration Legal Services program. Master's degree social workers have graduated this year and expressed their appreciation for the level of learning that they received at EMO programs, which has prepared them to enter their careers as confident professionals.

The cooperative relationships between EMO's ministries and local colleges has brought awareness and support from multiple school administrations. For example, Concordia University sponsored the HIV Day Center Fundraising Breakfast on Dec. 1, and Portland State University is currently coordinating a coat and hygiene supplies drive for HIV Day Center clients.



EMO intern Rachel Carlson

Photo credit: Michelle Bush

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's success last year with the college and university internship programs has brought us twice as many interns for the current school year. The program's work this year includes internship group meetings, tracking interns and their experiences across all EMO programs, supervising interns, and educating students about EMO's ministries and mission.

"I'm enjoying the unique and varied learning experiences at EMO," said Rachel Carlson, EMO Development intern. Earning her Masters of Social Work from PSU, Carlson is interested in nonprofit management and fundraising, particularly in the area of homelessness.

The Oregon Community Foundation grant was renewed this fall, which will allow EMO to continue the development and expansion of our internship program.

### New! Join EMO's "Circle of Faith" with monthly donations

As a Circle of Faith member, your faithful, monthly donation to Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon—as an unrestricted gift or program support—will provide a reliable stream of income, supporting our work throughout the year. No gift is too small. Even a modest monthly donation adds up!

- \$5 per day buys breakfast and lunch for an immigrant or refugee student at *Portland International Community School*.
- \$15 supplies an emergency food box for a struggling family through *Northeast Emergency Food Program at Luther Memorial*.
- \$25 gives a monthly bus pass for an *HIV Day Center* client searching for a job.
- \$50 provides a counseling session for a *Russian Oregon Social Services* client facing domestic violence.
- \$100 buys bedding for a newly relocated refugee family through *Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees*.
- \$250 covers *Shared Housing* matching services for one senior to stay in their own home.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon encourages automatic monthly gifts via our Web site. There are no checks to write and no payments to remember. We will acknowledge your generosity at the end of every year, helping us save paper and reducing unnecessary mail. It's easy! Go to our Web site at [www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org) and click "Donate Now." Then specify the frequency of your gift as "monthly." Questions? Call Elizabeth Shaklee at (503) 221-1054.

### Day Center raises \$10,000 on World AIDS Day

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon honored World AIDS Day, Dec. 1, with a breakfast at Concordia University. Over 160 people attended the event, which raised over \$10,000 for EMO's HIV Day Center.

In addition to moving testimonies by Day Center clients, guest speakers included Chip Shields, Oregon State Senator; Gary Withers, Concordia executive vice president; and Jennifer Bransfield, a former HIV Day Center volunteer and Concordia Nursing School graduate.

The HIV Day Center is a comprehensive drop-in center for low income people living with HIV/AIDS. The center provides hot breakfasts and lunches and take-home sack meals four days each week. A full time social worker/counselor is available for counseling, and information and referral. Day Center clients have access to phones, a mail drop, computers with internet access, wifi, a washer and dryer, clothing, a shower and hygiene supplies.



Photo credit: Jay Elbrecht

Over 160 people attended the HIV Day Center breakfast in honor of World AIDS Day, which raised over \$10,000 for the EMO's HIV Day Center.

### SOAR Immigration Legal Services expanding

The Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees "Cuban Haitian Assistance Program" (CHAP) grant has been renewed for three years. Funded by the Department of Human Services Refugee Program, the CHAP program will increase outreach and enrollment efforts and expand self-sufficiency support services.

The Cuban Haitian Assistance Program specifically assists Cubans and Haitians during their transition of acclimating to the U.S. work culture with employment support services. CHAP also offers citizenship and naturalization workshops, crime and victimization prevention services, and mental health services.

The program will be hiring additional staff in order to implement the expanded CHAP services. The SOAR Immigration Legal Services program continues to focus on serving the law-related needs of the broader refugee and immigrant communities.

For more information about CHAP, contact Olivia Horgan at (503) 284-3002.

## Shared Housing offers foreclosure prevention during financial crisis

If you are struggling in these difficult financial times, you are not alone. In the Portland metro area, nearly one in every 50 households is facing foreclosure. While you might not be able to solve the global financial crisis, there are things you can do to improve your financial situation and protect your home.

Renting out a spare room in your home is a great way to turn your extra space into income. Finding a good renter can be difficult—don't do it alone! The Shared Housing program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon matches people looking for housing with those who have a room for rent in their homes. Unlike online postings or flyers around the neighborhood, with Shared Housing you speak only with pre-screened potential renters who have had a criminal background check and meet the criteria that you provide.

Shared Housing offers a way to help one another through difficult times. Peggy, a homeowner, found her housemate Connie through Shared Housing. "I was helping Connie get on her feet, and the added rent that she paid helped me, so I felt it was a real two-way street," Peggy said of the arrangement. After two-and-half years, Connie moved out

and Peggy found another renter through Shared Housing—Jimmy, a former Marine with a great sense of humor.

Many seniors find that Shared Housing provides not only financial advantages, but also improves personal safety as well. Bill, a senior home owner, rented a room to a nice couple who had fallen on hard times due to a medical crisis. The rent the couple pays helps supplement Bill's social security, and he says, "As a senior, I feel safer knowing someone is nearby." Now Bill doesn't worry about his



Shared Housing matches people like Peggy who are looking for a renter with people who need affordable housing like Jimmy.

electric bill, or about needing help and not being able to get to the phone. For those who could use some help around the house or in the yard, it is possible to exchange mowing the lawn or vacuuming for a reduction in rent.

### Foreclosure prevention services

The Shared Housing program is working in partnership with other nonprofits and the City of Portland to prevent foreclosures and keep people in their homes. Shared Housing can refer people to our partner agencies for credit counseling, foreclosure counseling, financial planning, home-buyer classes, information about reverse mortgages and home repair help. Don't get caught by one of the predatory companies trying to profit from our hard times, make sure you talk with a respected agency that has your best interest at heart.

Since 1982, the Shared Housing program has helped arrange thousands of home-shares—each one is unique. Whatever your situation may be, we are happy to talk with you.

For more information, call Shared Housing at (503) 225-9924 or visit [www.emoregon.org/shared\\_housing.php](http://www.emoregon.org/shared_housing.php).

## Interfaith Summit will focus attention on dramatic increase in number of homeless children and families

On Sept. 18, 2009, State Superintendent of Schools, Susan Castillo, announced that the number of homeless students in Oregon public schools during the 2008-2009 school year had risen 14 percent from the previous year, and totaled 18,059 students who were homeless for some or all of the school year.

Responding to the rising number of homeless children and families in Oregon, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is launching a new project to focus public attention on the problem and generate new action by the religious community and by government to prevent and reduce childhood and family homelessness, as well as improve the education of homeless children and youth.

Initially, EMO is inviting religious organizations, clergy, congregations, and both faith-based and secular nonprofit agencies to join us in planning and cosponsoring an *Interfaith Summit and Informational Hearing on Childhood and Family Homelessness*. This summit and hearing would have three goals: 1) generate media attention and increase public awareness of the problem, 2) increase the involvement of the religious community in responding to this problem, and 3) generate recommendations for funding and legislation that might be needed in time for the 2011 Session of the Oregon Legislature.

The increase of homeless children and youth is symptomatic of broader trends with

*In the January 2009 one-night count, 17,122 people were identified as homeless. This was up 37 percent from the previous year, and 43 percent of those identified as homeless were in families with children.*

regards to homelessness itself. Recent figures present a bleak picture of the impacts of the economic crisis on levels of homelessness in Oregon. Oregon is now ranked number one among states in the percentage of its population experiencing homelessness. In the January 2009 one-night count, 17,122 people were identified as homeless. This was up 37 percent from the previous year, and 43 percent of those identified as homeless were in families with children. More than 25 percent of those counted were children or youth less than 18 years of age.

Planning for the *Interfaith Summit and Informational Hearing* is in the initial stages, but it is expected to be held in the early spring of 2010 (check EMO's Web site for updates).

If you or your organization would like to get more information on this project or would like to join planning sessions or cosponsor this summit, please contact Kevin Finney, director of EMO's Public Policy Advocacy, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 204, or [kfinney@emoregon.org](mailto:kfinney@emoregon.org).

## EMO Ministries by the numbers

(July - September 2009)

**Northeast Emergency Food Program at Luther Memorial ...** Received 29,649 pounds of donated food and supplied three- to five-days worth of groceries to 1,746 families. St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church makes two trips a week to pick up donated food from Trader Joe's Hollywood.

**Portland International Community School ...** Began the school year in September with 30 students enrolled.

**Russian Oregon Social Services ...** Provided 203 Russian-speaking clients with direct services, including assistance to 75 domestic violence/sexual assault clients; 10 women received mental health counseling and 21 received a free mammogram; 5 clients received rental assistance, 14 dental care, 12 legal assistance and 27 attended ESL classes.

**Shared Housing ...** Arranged 144 housing matches, providing 309 individual months of housing.

**Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees ...** Received 62 refugees and asylees from Burma, China, Congo, Cuba, Eritrea, Iraq, Somalia, the former Soviet Union, Tibet and Uganda; 4 children were enrolled in the Multnomah County School Impact Project.

# 6 Public Policy Advocacy

## Vote YES on Measures 66 & 67

Continued from page 1

great importance. It deals not merely with the abstract issue of balancing the budget, but with the more significant question of what kind of state and what kind of community we wish to be.

*Of all taxpayers, 97.5 percent will see no tax increase at all from either Measure 66 or Measure 67. These measures only impact corporations and very high-income taxpayers—those most able to absorb this modest increase during hard times. And most small businesses will see no increase in taxes, or only a modest increase in their minimum tax from \$10 to \$150 once each year.*

— The Rev. Lynne Smouse López,  
EMO president-elect

### How EMO makes its recommendations

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's ballot measure recommendations reflect a vote of its board of directors based on the recommendations of its Public Policy Advocacy Committee, taken after careful consideration of opposing perspectives on each measure. As we consider each measure, we keep in mind our "Statement of Social Principles," and the religious traditions that guide all our work. We ask that you prayerfully consider the wisdom of your own tradition and your core values as you exercise your civic duty.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland and the Greek Orthodox Church abstained from EMO's deliberations regarding the January ballot measures. The Roman Catholic

## Ecumenical Advocacy Days A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees and Displaced Peoples

*And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Luke 9:58*

Jesus had no place to lay his head. Neither do tens of millions of migrants, refugees and displaced persons. Be a part of an action weekend addressing this global injustice. Join hundreds of faith-based advocates in taking action on U.S. legislation that will welcome immigrants, protect refugees and prevent displacement of millions.

Worship, study and dialogue with hundreds of people of faith at the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days. Go to Capitol Hill to advocate for members of Congress to remedy these global injustices. The 2010 conference will be held March 19 to 22 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Crystal City, Va., just outside Washington, D.C. The conference fee is \$160, and \$175 after Feb. 13.

Groups from churches, denominations and regional councils of churches are encouraged to bring large groups to this important faith-in-action event. For more information about Ecumenical Advocacy Days, visit [www.advocacydays.org](http://www.advocacydays.org).

Archdiocese releases all public policy statements through the Oregon Catholic Conference.

### Measure 66 Analysis

Measure 66 would increase general fund revenues for the state between \$217 and \$242 million per year for fiscal years 2010, 2011 and 2012, and by approximately \$180 million per year thereafter. It does so by raising the tax on household income above \$250,000 (and above \$125,000 for individual filers). It also reduces income taxes on unemployment benefits in 2009.

Taxpayers filing jointly would pay a higher rate only if they have taxable incomes over \$250,000, and the tax rate would increase only on that portion of their income above \$250,000. Taxpayers filing as individuals would pay a higher rate only if they have income above \$125,000, and the higher rate would only apply to that portion above \$125,000.

For taxpayers filing jointly, the rate on income between \$250,000 and \$500,000 would increase from 9 to 10.8 percent. For income above \$500,000, it would increase from 9 to 11 percent. For individuals, the rate would increase from 9 to 10.8 percent on income between \$125,000 and \$250,000, and income above \$250,000 would be taxed at an 11 percent rate.

These tax rates would be in effect only until the end of 2011; after that, the increase is reduced by about 50 percent—the 10.8 percent tax rate, for example, would drop to 9.9 percent.

### Measure 67 Analysis

This measure raises the \$10 corporate minimum tax, corporate profits tax and certain business filing fees. Measure 67 provides funds currently budgeted for education, health care, public safety and other services. It increases revenues for the state between \$118 and \$138 million per year for fiscal years 2010, 2011 and 2012, and by approximately \$123 million per year thereafter, depending on growth in corporate profits and sales.

In Oregon, corporations that do not report a profit are required to pay a corporate minimum tax. This tax is based on the theory that corporations, even those not reporting a profit, take advantage of and benefit from a number of services provided by government and should contribute in some way to sustain those services.

Measure 67 raises the corporate minimum tax for the first time since 1931. The minimum tax is currently only \$10 each year, and it would be increased to a flat annual fee of \$150 for most businesses. However, corporations registered as "C" corporations that have over \$500,000 in Oregon revenues will pay a minimum tax set at 0.1 percent of total sales or revenue.

Corporations never pay both the minimum tax and income or profits tax, but in some cases (when they are sufficiently profitable), they may have to pay the corporate income tax instead of the minimum tax. This bill retains this current structure, but increases the tax rate on profits above \$250,000 from 6.6 to 7.9 percent for tax years 2009 and 2010. For 2011 and 2012, the rate drops to 7.6 percent on income above \$250,000. From tax year 2013 on, the 7.6 percent tax rate only applies to taxable income above \$10 million.

### Why is EMO recommending a YES vote on both Measures 66 and 67?

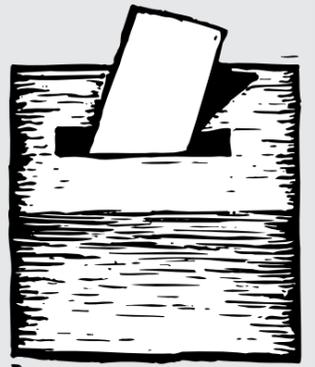
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is convinced that Measures 66 and 67 are vitally

## Voting in Oregon

The Jan. 26, 2010, election is a statewide special election and will be conducted using Oregon's vote-by-mail system. The official Voters' Pamphlet will be mailed to each household by Jan. 1. Ballots will be mailed to local residences on Jan. 8.

Ballots must be returned in person or received by mail at your county's elections office by 8 p.m. on Election Day. Alternatively, in most counties, additional 24-hour and/or public library ballot drop-sites are available, where ballots can be dropped off anytime prior to Election Day without paying for postage. Check with your county elections office for more information on ballot drop sites.

Any Oregon resident who is at least 18 years old on Election Day is eligible to vote, but voter registration is required. Anyone registering for the first time in Oregon must register no later than Jan. 5. A registered voter who has moved, changed address or changed name must re-register. This information may be updated through Election Day at your county election office.



needed to maintain good public schools and fund adequate health care and human service programs for those who are disabled, elderly or simply struggling to make ends meet in a time of economic recession. We also believe that the tax increases are modest, fair and properly targeted on those most able to afford these increases. These measures certainly enable job retention and should support future job growth.

Opponents argue that these measures will hurt small businesses and lead to job cuts and/or businesses moving out of state. We think these claims are greatly exaggerated. The fact is that Oregon will continue to have the lowest corporate taxes on the West Coast, even after Measure 67 passes. According to the Legislative Revenue Office, Oregon will have the fifth lowest corporate taxes of any state in the nation and will still have lower corporate taxes than any other West Coast state.

The defeat of Measures 66 and 67 would reduce revenues available to fund the 2009-2011 state budget by approximately \$727 million and would likely lead to reductions in funding for public schools, health care and human services, and public safety programs. Defeat would also reduce revenue levels in future years. Defeat could also lead to loss of additional federal funds and could have a negative impact on the state's credit rating.

By casting a YES vote on Measures 66 and 67, Oregon voters have an opportunity to affirm the importance of public education and the value of providing health care and other human services for the needy, disabled and seniors. By voting YES, we can also provide funding needed for continued government investment in job creation, environmental protection and public safety.

## Save the date: May 4, *Radical Hospitality* seminar with Luis Lugo

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon will present Luis E. Lugo, director of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, at a seminar on *Radical Hospitality and the Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* on May 4, 2010.

Lugo has been the director of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life since 2004. The Forum seeks to promote a deeper understanding of issues at the intersection of religion and public affairs. The Forum pursues its mission by delivering timely, impartial information to national opinion leaders, including government officials and journalists. The Forum's 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 earned a 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 Polity* and *Sovereignty at the Crossroads? Morality and International Politics*



Luis E. Lugo, director of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life

*in the Post-Cold War Era*. A native of Cuba, he is listed in *Who's Who Among Hispanic Americans*.

*More details about the seminar, including registration, will be made available early in 2010 on EMO's Web site at [www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org). For more information, contact Jan Elfers at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or [jelfers@emoregon.org](mailto:jelfers@emoregon.org).*

## Conference to explore U.S. peace role in Israel and Palestine

On Feb. 19 and 20, Sabeel-Puget Sound will host *The United States, Israel and Palestine: What Does Justice Require of US?* at St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 Tenth Ave. East, Seattle. This conference will explore the situation in Israel and Palestine today, the experience of occupation, the role of U.S. policy and nonviolent strategies for peace.

The keynote address will be delivered on Feb. 19 by the founder and leader of Sabeel, the Rev. Naim Ateek, who has written many books and articles including *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation* and *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation*.

Additional speakers include Neve Gordon, senior lecturer on Politics and Government at Ben Gurion University; Jeff Halper, coordinator of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions; Steve Niva, professor of International Politics and Middle East Studies at Washington's Evergreen State College; and Tom Nelson, cofounder of Americans United for Palestinian Human Rights.

*Space for the event is limited. Reservations may be made by calling Brown Paper Tickets at 1-800-838-3006 or through [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com). For more information, visit [www.FOSNA.org](http://www.FOSNA.org).*

## EMO's Jan Elfers recognized by Muslim Educational Trust



Jan Elfers (back row, fourth from left) received a "Friends of MET Award" at the organization's annual event.

On Nov. 14, the Muslim Educational Trust (MET) celebrated its annual award, appreciation and auction night by recognizing dedicated volunteers for their positive contribution to MET and the community at large. One of those recognized was EMO's membership relations director, Jan Elfers, who received a *Friends of MET Award*.

"I share this [award] with my colleagues and the board members at EMO, who also value deeply their relationship with the Muslim community and MET," said Elfers during her acceptance of the award. "EMO knows very well that the work we engage in would be impossible without important partners like the Muslim Educational Trust."

With a Masters Degree in Theology at Marylhurst University, Elfers directed EMO's

peace programs before becoming director of member relations. She serves on the Board of Directors of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture Action Fund and the Commission to End Racism at the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon.

Elfers is the cofounder of Between Women: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Conversation Group; a friend of the Institute of Christian Muslim Understanding and Muslim Educational Trust; and an active member of the Interfaith Council of Greater Portland and the Episcopal Church.

The Muslim Educational Trust's mission is to enrich the public's understanding of Islam and dispel common myths and stereotypes, while serving the Muslim community's educational, social and spiritual needs.

## Celebrate ecumenism during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2010* will take place during January 18 to 25. The chosen theme for 2010 is "You Are Witnesses of These Things," Luke 24:48.

The Church Unity Octave, a forerunner of the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*, was developed by Father Paul Wattson, SA, at Graymoor in Garrison, N.Y., and was first observed from Jan. 18 to 25, 1908. Today, the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* invites the whole Christian community throughout the world to pray in communion with the prayer of Jesus "that they all may be one" (John 17:21).

Materials for the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2010*—including daily scripture and prayer guide, ecumenical celebration of the word of God, prayer card, poster and worship bulletin—can be ordered from Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute at [www.geii.org](http://www.geii.org).



## Marjorie Sue Abramovitz Memorial Fund established

A memorial fund for Marjorie Sue Abramovitz has been established by her husband Marshal Goldberg at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. Donations to the Marjorie Sue Abramovitz Memorial Fund will be acknowledged to the family and will support EMO activities where the need is greatest.

Marjorie was born and raised in Baltimore, Md., in a secular Jewish family. She moved to Portland with her husband and two children in 1973, after sojourns in Boston, Atlanta, the San Francisco Bay Area, Vancouver, B.C. and Madison, Wis.

Marjorie's involvement with peace and justice work began in the early 1960s with the Congress on Racial Equality and the Baltimore Committee to End the War in Vietnam. She continued this work in Portland on the social action committee of her congregation and with a Jewish anti-nuclear weapons group.

Marjorie's spiritual journey led her to St. Clare Catholic Church and the Queen of Angels Monastery (the Benedictine Sisters of Mt. Angel) as an oblate. Marjorie's humanist, feminist and progressive commitments carried through her life. She was a much-beloved wife, devoted mother and grandmother and steadfast friend. Marjorie's intention as an oblate in the last year of her life was: "To be mindful of God's presence in all things."

To donate to the Marjorie Sue Abramovitz memorial fund, simply write the fund's name on your check or mark "in memory of MSA" on your donation envelope or online donation.



Marjorie Sue Abramovitz

### Save the date: May 25 for EMO's Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner

The event will be held at the Portland Hilton, with a reception and silent auction before the awards and dinner program. If you would like to nominate an individual or organization for an award, contact Carla Starrett-Bigg at (503) 221-1054. As more information becomes available, it will be posted on EMO's Web site at [www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org).

## 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 fall issue of the *Voice*.

Donor (Fund)	Program
American Baptist Church, National Ministries	SOAR Legal Services
American Cancer Society	Russian Oregon Social Services
Cascade AIDS Project, Inc.	HIV Services
The Equity Foundation	HIV Services
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral	2009 Annual Fund
Portland Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence	HIV Services
Providence Hospital, Medford	HIV Services
Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust	Portland International Community School
United Methodist Church, Board of Global Ministries	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
US Bancorp	Portland International Community School
USI Northwest	2009 Annual Fund
Wright Land Company	2009 Annual Fund

## Honor & memorial gifts

### Gifts in Honor August through October

*In honor of 350 International Day of Climate Action*  
Barbara Willer, Cathy Zheutlin

*In honor of Kristin E. Baack*  
Joanne K. Deazley

*In honor of the Rev. Alcena Boozer*  
Roberta L. Recken

*In honor of the ordination of the Rev. Trudy Bradley*  
Anonymous, Sally-Jo Armstrong, Barbara Bloom, Gay L. Enyeart, Michael L. Hellums, Alan Koch, David A. Leslie, Lois Watson

*In honor of Bridge City Friends Meeting*  
Tom Head

*In honor of the Rev. Dr. Lowell Greathouse*  
Tom W. Foster

*In honor of the Rev. Mark Knutson*  
Roger N. Olson

*In honor of Native Americans*  
Anonymous

*In honor of Planet Earth*  
Jenny E. Holmes

*In honor of Jane R. Tatreau*  
Norine R. Reres

### Gifts in Memory August through October

*In memory of Marjorie Sue Abramovitz*  
Marshall C. Goldberg

*In memory of their daughter, Mary Boos*  
Richard & Carol Boos

*In memory of Brian E. Bounous*  
Brenda Mediola

*In memory of Virginia W. Cain*  
Leonard Cain & Roberta Badger-Cain

*In memory of Kerry Charbonneau*  
Patricia Gebhardt

*In memory of Evelyn DeWitt*  
Ansel & Susan Johnson

*In memory of LaVerne Goman*  
Nancy H. Wolfe

*In memory of Donald & Lillian Herzog*  
Stephen & Ann Schneider

*In memory of Rabbi Aryeh Hirschfield*  
Anonymous, Adam Haas, Ravid Raphael

*In memory of Freeman Holmer*  
William L. Reagan

*In memory of Alfred & Ethel Johnson*  
Ansel & Susan Johnson

*In memory of Margaret McKanna*  
Elizabeth McKanna

*In memory of Jamie Robbins*  
The Rev. Kent D. Harrop

*In memory of Elias Stephanopoulos*  
Stefanos Vertopoulos

*In memory of Andy Thompson*  
Barbara J. Thompson, Westminster Presbyterian Church

*In memory of Olivia, Janet, Bill & Betty White*  
Norman White

## 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 in 2009. 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:** Arabic Christian Church, Cedar Hills United Church of Christ, Central Lutheran Church, First Baptist Church in Portland, Hillview United Methodist Church, Hood River Valley Christian Church, Morningside United Methodist Church, Riverside Community United Church of Christ, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Smyrna United Church of Christ

**Ecumenical Organizations:** Institute for Progressive Spirituality, Portland Homeless Family Solutions, Union Gospel Mission

**Interfaith Partners:** Geshar—A Bridge Home, Interfaith Network of Central Oregon, Islamic Society of Greater Portland, Muslim Educational Trust, Temple Beth Shalom, Wy'east Unitarian Universalist

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