ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES of Oregon

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ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES of Oregon
Interchurch Center Suite B 8245 SW Bancroft Street Portland, Oregon 97239

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EMO celebrates faith leadership throughout Oregon

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner has become the premier ecumenical event of the year in Oregon, bringing together diverse communities of faith and community partners in celebration of ecumenism and the spirit of hope across Oregon. The theme for 2012’s Annual Celebration is “Serving together in faith,” and will be held on May 8 at the Portland Hilton.

Over 400 representatives of congregations, denominations, faith communities, tribes, unions, and government, business and nonprofit organizations will join together in celebrating the ecumenical movement in Oregon and honoring those who are guided by their faith to serve Oregonians in need.

Community leaders honored
The “Ecumenist of the Year” award will be presented to Mary Jo Tully, the chancellor of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon and former director of religious education for the Archdiocese of Chicago. The first laywoman to fill the chancellor position, Tully is the author of a major Catholic religious education textbook series and a weekly column for the Catholic Sentinel. She continues to write and lecture on the subject of catechetics.

The EMO Board of Directors is honoring Tully for her many years of ecumenical commitments and dedicated service both within the Christian community and with Jewish, Muslim and other faiths. She has been one of the outstanding promoters of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, growing out of the Roman Catholic commitment to ecumenism. Her outreach has fostered deep understanding and respect among faiths in Portland and throughout the region.

On the same night, the “Two Pauls Award”—in recognition of outstanding promotion of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, service and relations—will be presented to Corvallis faith leaders Rabbi Benjamin Barnett of Beit Am Mid-Willamette Valley Jewish Community, Emir Mohamed Siala of the Salman Alfarisi Islamic Center, and the Rev. Elizabeth Oettinger of First Congregational UCC Church. The award acknowledges their ongoing work of interfaith reconciliation in Corvallis and Portland after the 2010 Pioneer Square bomb plot and subsequent bombing of the Corvallis Islamic Center. The “Louise Hunderup Religious Education Award” will be presented to Oregonian religion writer Nancy Haught for her body of work fostering deeper understanding of diverse faiths and faith issues in Oregon. The 2012 “Vollum Ecumenical Humanitarian Award,” will be presented to

Report on the Oregon Legislature’s 2012 Session
Faith leaders, community organizations join forces to protect funding for refugee resettlement, TANF, and food and shelter programs

The 2012 Session of the Oregon Legislature lasted 34 days, one day shy of the constitutional deadline for even-year “short” sessions. Despite having barely more than one month to work, the Legislature successfully rebalanced the 2011-13 state budget (required due to a $205 million revenue shortfall), and passed several major policy measures, including health reform and education reform measures backed by Governor Kitzhaber and originally set in motion by the 2011 Legislative Session. Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) worked actively with key allies to both defend critical safety-net programs from cuts and to pass key policy measures.

Safety-net budget issues—
alliances make a difference
The EMO Public Policy Advocacy program focused significant effort this session in resisting a proposed cut to funding for refugee resettlement programs in Oregon. Just shortly after the start of the session, the co-chairs of the Legislature’s Joint Ways and Means Committee proposed a $450,000 cut in funding for nonprofit agencies providing case management, job training and English-language skills to recently resettled refugees in the Portland metro area. This cut would have drastically reduced funding for services provided by Catholic Charities, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), and EMO’s Sponsor Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR). These agencies mobilized a quick response, and with support from key community organizations such as the Urban League of Portland and Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), the proposed cut was reduced by $350,000.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon also worked with the Oregon Hunger Task Force, Oregon Housing Alliance, Oregon Food Bank, Oregon TANF Alliance and other advocacy organizations to promote funding for safety net programs that help Oregon families remain fed, housed and healthy—despite continued high levels of unemployment and poverty in Oregon. Together, we were able to maintain funding for the general fund food program (emergency food), and maintain funding levels for school breakfast and lunch programs, and summer meals for kids.

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Robert Morris Smith: His spirit lives on

By David Leslie, EMO executive director

Robert Morris Smith, an important ecumenical leader in this region, died this week (I am writing this on March 15). When I think about Robert, there is one word that immediately comes to mind: Character.

As to character, I remember my initial impression of Robert when I met him some 15 years ago at Hopewell House at a reception for Wayne Bryant, the outgoing EMO interim director, and me, the new executive director. Robert introduced himself as an EMO Board member representing the Multnomah Meeting and Willamette Quarterly Meeting, Society of Friends (Quaker). I could immediately tell that I was meeting quite a character who had a zest for life—reinforced by his dashing, semi-formal attire (I later learned, to Robert’s great pleasure, that I believe he was the first Quaker pirate I had ever met.) Robert—as-character was further reinforced by his driving a big white Cadillac in the land of sporty and earth-friendly cars, complete with bumper stickers touting a number of left-of-center causes, and his wearing of outdated political pins that made certain we knew the causes that were important to him, even if they were from a bygone era.

In addition to being a character, Robert had character, as exhibited by his unwavering social justice convictions developed through his life experiences and his strong Christian faith. He was a leader in the Quaker community and served on the EMO Board of Directors and the EMO Public Policy Committee. He was a faithful member of the Oregon Bishops and Executives Forum and was quite pleased that, as a layperson from a relatively small Christian tradition that did not have bishops or ordained clergy, he was welcomed into the group as friend and equal.

Robert cared deeply about his faith journey and was very interested in the faith experiences of others. He was always eager to share his faith and listened respectfully to others—the hallmarks of ecumenism.

April 15
Lecture by Dr. Tariq Ramadan, “Quest for Meaning: Where East and Islam in the West,” 2 p.m. reception, 3 p.m. lecture at First Unitarian Church, Eliot Center, 1034 SW 13th Ave, Portland. Ramadan is professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University. Tickets: $5 student, $10 general, $20 with reception; purchase at the door or www.worldoregon.org.

April 24 and 26
Congregations: Caring for Watersheds and Wildlife Workshops, 5:30 to 8 p.m. at Hillsdale United Church of Christ, 6498 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland (April 24) and Holy Redeemer Church, Clare Hall, 25 N. Rosa Parks Way, Portland (April 26). Join this hands-on workshop to learn how to improve the stewardship of congregation lands to benefit watersheds and wildlife, while reducing maintenance and creating spaces for spiritual renewal and education. The workshop will provide a framework for considering land stewardship options, available resources and funding, and tools for organizing people, sustaining projects for the long-term, and using land to enrich worship and education. Presented by EMO’s Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns. There is a suggested $5-$15 donation for the workshop. A simple meal is provided. Download a registration brochure at www.emoregon.org, or send an e-mail to awareen@emoregon.org or call (503) 221-1054.

April 29
Portland Area CROP Hunger Walk, 2 p.m., start and finish on SW Park Ave, and Market St., Portland. This is an interfaith event and all are welcome. Of the funds raised, 75 percent will go to Church World Service’s international relief and development programs, 15 percent to EMO’s Northeast Emergency Food Program, and 10 percent to Oregon Food Bank West. The course is 2.7 miles and will take walkers along the picturesque waterfront and park blocks. Please use public transportation or car pool to site because of limited parking. Other CROP Hunger Walks in Oregon include Baker City and McMinnville on May 6 and Milton Freewater on May 20. For more information, contact Ron Mackenzie, coordinator, at ron.w.mackenzie@gmail.com, or visit www.churchworldservice.org.

May 15
Workshops, “Save Your Congregation Energy and Money,” 2:30 to 5 p.m., and “Energy Stewardship,” 6 to 8:30 p.m., at First United Methodist Church, 1771 W. Harvard Ave., Roseburg. Geared to the needs of congregations, the afternoon workshop will cover key principles of energy stewardship for congregations, low-cost and no-cost measures to save energy expenses, and funding energy efficiency projects for religious facilities. The evening workshop will include topics on reducing energy costs for homes and businesses, affordable renewable energy options, and the ethics of energy stewardship. Presented by EMO’s Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (O IPL) and cosponsored by Energy Trust of Oregon. The main speaker at both workshops will be Kathleen Newman, PhD, O IPL energy consultant. Workshops are free but suggested donations of $5 to $25 are welcome. Refreshments and materials will be provided. Register by May 8 by calling (503) 221-1054 or emailing ksharinghouser@emoregon.org.

Robert was a great teacher who helped many of us learn more about the Society of Friends and the various movements that constitute the Quaker experience in this country. He cared deeply about his faith journey and was very interested in the faith experiences of others. He was always eager to share his faith and listened respectfully to others—the hallmarks of ecumenism.

Equally important was Robert’s commitment to social justice. He was a strong supporter of the abolition of the death penalty, nonviolence for Palestinians, marriage equality and human rights for all people. While strong in his convictions, Robert had the gifted ability to listen to those who held equally firm convictions that were different from his own. He never shied away from a difficult discussion and spoke with passion about what he believed was right. However, when he spoke, it was with kindness and empathy, and I never once saw him “pick up his marbles” and go home if decisions did not go the way he felt they should.

Robert was a community-builder in so many ways, and in recognition of his leadership and healing presence, he was honored by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon with the “Vollum Ecumenical Humanitarian Award” in 2006. With Robert’s death, we have lost a marvelous character, complete with character, who was a leader in both the church and larger society. I will miss our conversations and his readily available commentary and criticism on world events, which always ended on a note of hope and a suggestion or two about how to make the world a better place for those living on the margins of society. He truly embodied faith in action and inspired many others to cultivate a sense of ecumenical commitment and curiosity.

So in honor of Robert Morris Smith and his ecumenical spirit, we may use his passing from this world as an opportunity to strengthen our commitments to live fully into Christ’s prayer for unity and strengthen our collective resolve to come together for the well-being of God’s people and creation. For as Robert would have said, “This is our calling. Let us be seized by and live fully into it.”

Fr. Cary named bishop

Pope Benedict XVI has named 64-year-old Father Liam Stephen Cary, pastor of St. Mary Church in Eugene, Ore., as bishop of the Diocese of Baker, Ore.

The appointment was publicized in Washington on March 8 by Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, apostolic nuncio to the United States. Bishop-elect Cary succeeds Bishop Robert Vasa.

“From my experience I am confident that Bishop Cary will humbly and lovingly do his part,” Portland Archbishop John Vlazny said. “He understands that church leadership is a ministry of service.

Cary was born in Portland and raised in Prineville. He studied for the priesthood at North American College, Rome, and earned a bachelor’s degree and a licentiate in sacred theology from the Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained for the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon in 1992. Assignments after ordination included parochial vicar, St. Joseph Parish, Salem, 1992-1995; archdiocesan vocation director, 1995-1999; pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, 1999-2011; and pastor, St. Mary Church, Eugene, 2011-present.
NCC honors First Christian Church in Eugene as “interfaith engaged” leader

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Eugene, Ore., was one of five congregations honored as “model interfaith engaged congregations” by the National Council of Churches (NCC) through the Interfaith Relations Commission.

The NCC sought nominations from its member communions and other communities affiliated with the Council for congregations that “have something important to share about their interfaith engagement.” On Sunday, Jan. 29, David Leslie, EMO executive director, presented the award for First Christian Church to the congregation—a member congregation of EMO.

On receiving the award, the Rev. Dr. Dan Bryant, First Christian Church senior minister, said: “This award is really a recognition of the wonderful interfaith community we have in Eugene and the rich variety of activities, shared service and dialogue occurring in many places here. We just happen to have the privilege to host some of that.”

A monthly Interfaith Prayer Service held at First Christian Church is now in its eleventh year.

Gary Dorrien announced as 2012 Collins Lecturer


Presented by EMO, the Collins Lectures are designed to provide an opportunity for clergy and lay to explore issues related to religion and social ethics. The annual lecture has been part of EMO’s ministry for over 30 years and is funded by the Collins Foundation.

As it becomes available, more information about the 2012 Collins Lecture will be posted on EMO’s website at www.emoregon.org.

Annual Celebration

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to Mary Westerling. A leader in advancing democratic values in the rural communities of the Northwest for over two decades, Westerling is the founder of Rural Organizing Project, which channels action and gives voice to rural citizens. The Vollum Award is presented in recognition of her lifetime of leadership defending human dignity, social ethical theory, theories of myth and interpretation, Barthian neo-orthodoxy, and neoskeptic politics.

Dorrien is described by Princeton University philosopher Cornel West as “the preeminent social ethicist in North America today,” by Boston University philosophical theologian Robert Neville as “the most rigorous theological historian of our time, moving from analyses of social context and personal struggles through the most abstruse theological and metaphysical issues”; and by University of Georgia philosopher Frederick Ferré as “a superstar interpreter of modern religious thought.”

Economical & Interfaith Relations

Summer Seminar: Living Together

Presented by Trinity Episcopal Cathedral’s Center for Spiritual Development on June 11 to 13, this year’s Summer Seminar will bring together the intentional community, guided by the ancient question, “What do you seek?”

Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, a leading voice in the New Monastic movement, will be the keynote speaker and Abbott.

Two levels of involvement are offered. Seminar participants come together during the day in the spirit of monastic seekers engaging ancient practices of community life through study, work, common meals and prayer. An Evening Presentation on June 12 invites a wider community into the seminar for study and reflection (these evening events are free and open to the community).

The fee for Summer Seminar is $50, $25 for students and clergy. For more information and to register, visit www.center-for-spiritual-development.org.

EMO welcomes new members

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon welcomes new members: Ahmadiyya Muslim Community; Rizwan Mosque (Interfaith Partner); Nativity Lutheran Church (Congregation), Northwest Catholic Counseling Center (Interfaith Partner), Springfield/Eugene Habitat for Humanity (Ecumenical Organization), and Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem (Interfaith Partner).

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.

For information on how your congregation or faith organization can become a member of EMO, contact Jenny Pratt, director of Membership Relations, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or jpratt@emoregon.org, or download an application for membership at www.emoregon.org.
Mobilize the Earth: Engage your faith for Earth Day 2012

The ways in which we relate to the basics of life—food, energy, land and water—on a daily basis are embodiments of our respect for Creation. Wondering how your congregation can foster a faithful relationship with Creation? Kick off a campaign around April 22 (Earth Day) or June 5 (World Environment Day).

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns (INEC), Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) and Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (OIPL) programs encourage congregations to undertake an action campaign, rooted in worship, education, contemplation and prayer, in the spirit of Earth Day 2012’s theme of “Mobilize the Earth” (www.earthday.org). Congregations are invited to pick one of the following themes—Food, Energy, or Land and Water—to mobilize their congregations, not just for a day, but for a season.

Food
Educate and Inspire:
Screen *Nourish* as part of the Cool Harvest program of Interfaith Power & Light.

As farmer and poet Wendell Berry so accurately said, “How we eat determines to a large extent how the world is used.” *Nourish* compellingly illustrates the ethical issues of our daily bread with a diversity of voices, including youth.

**Act:**
• Hold a Cool Potluck at your screening to raise awareness of how different food choices can add to or decrease your “climate foodprint.” Examples of foods with a lower climate foodprint include local, organic food and whole foods. See www.coolharvest.org for guidelines and ideas.
• Start a Healthy and Sustainable Food Drive using resources from Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) found at www.faithandwellness.org.
• Cap your efforts and make a long-term impact by adopting a food purchasing or healthy eating policy for your congregation. IFFP has developed policy and guideline examples and can assist you.
• Engage youth in an IFFP Food Justice Plunge or presentation.

Contact: Sean McEvoy at (503) 221-1054, ext. 215, or smcevoy@emoregon.org about any of these opportunities or to borrow or purchase a *Nourish* DVD ($15).

Energy
Educate and Inspire:
*Preach and Teach on Energy and Climate Ethics.*

The pressure is on to extract and export more natural gas and coal in the United States, slowing the transition to a clean energy economy. The ethical issues are complex and many. The National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program (NCCEJP) is providing Earth Day Sunday worship materials on the theme of “Energy Ethics” and is holding webinars on different energy ethics topics throughout the year. Get resources at www.nccejusticenw.org/energy. For interfaith resources go to www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/resources.

**Act:**
• Lead by example. Complete an energy audit of your religious facility and start by implementing low-cost or no cost recommendations. A great online audit tool can be found at http://coolcongregations.com/calculator, which also includes waste, land stewardship and other practices that impact the climate.
• Study the “Statement of Our Nation’s Moral Obligation to Address Climate Change,” and sign on at www.climateethicscampaign.org.
• Start a Cool Congregations campaign, to help congregations members measure and reduce their energy use and carbon footprint. Celebrate members’ collective accomplishments.
• If you are in the Portland metro area, start a Weatherize for Good campaign in your congregation with OIPL, and get $100 for every member who completes a home energy remodel.
• Start by organizing a Weatherize for Good House Party. Call Jenny Holmes at (503) 221-1054, ext. 214, to schedule a presentation on Cool Congregations or Weatherize for Good and get materials.
• If you are a home-owner, renter and apartment dweller in Energy Trust of Oregon territory, get a free energy saving kit at http://oregon.energysavvy.com.
• Enter your sermon or faith message contest in OIPL’s Earth Words Contest. Find our more at www.emoregon.org/power_light.php.

Contact: OIPL for audits, presentations and DVDs, and faith-based study resources on energy efficiency and renewable energy at oipl@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054, ext. 214.

Land & Water
Educate and Inspire:
Explore the significance of land and water in your faith tradition and the ethics developed around them.

Use our new Congregations Caring for Watersheds and Wildlife handbook to find resources for education and worship to celebrate your local ecosystem, available at www.emoregon.org. If you are in the Portland metro area, join our April 24 or 26 “Congregations Caring for Watersheds and Wildlife” workshops. Learn about the relationship of indigenous tribes to the land by attending ceremonies open to the public. NCCEJP offers faith-based land, water and wilderness education and worship resources at www.nccejusticenw.org.

**Act:**
• Improve the stewardship of congregations’ land to benefit watersheds and wildlife, reduce maintenance, and create space for spiritual renewal and education in partnership with INEC and local water or wildlife conservation organizations.
• Host a presentation on naturescaping, stormwater management or organic gardening for residences at your congregation.
• Participate in a watershed workshop by your local watershed council.
• Hold an outdoor worship service with a care for Creation theme.
• Serve as or get matched with a mentor for your congregation’s land care project in the Portland metro area for 2012-2013 through INEC.

Contact: Alison Warren at awarren@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054, ext. 210.

Please send us your plans for Earth Day and any stories you would like to share to inspire others and for media outreach to awarren@emoregon.org.

Summer youth food justice mission experience

Have a youth group that is looking for a meaningful summer mission experience that goes beyond the usual, and dig into timely issues of food justice and sustainability? Want to expose your youth to ideas and resources that they can bring back and contribute to your congregation’s work around justice, environment or hunger?

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) is offering a two-to six-day long Youth Food Justice Mission service-learning experience to interested congregations. Our 2011 group worked on two local farms, an urban orchard, a community garden, an emergency food pantry and at a homeless meal program. The cost is $200 or more, depending on length of mission and IFFP staff involvement.

**What IFFP provides**
1. Sets up service and learning experiences with leading Portland metro area food justice groups, gardens and farms.
2. Orientation session and itinerary.
3. Leadership for many of the service experiences.

**What your congregation/organization provides**
1. Transportation: travel by TriMet (recommended), or by your own van or car.
2. Food (considering tapping Portland’s great food carts).
3. Adult leadership.
4. Lodging (if needed) with local congregations or PSU’s University Place in downtown Portland.

For more information, contact Sean McEvoy at smcevoy@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054, ext. 215.
Congregations putting prevention to work

For the past two years, EMO’s Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) team has been working with Multnomah County Health Department and congregations as part of a multi-sector initiative to address health inequities. EMO was one of 30 community partners working under the County’s Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to implement chronic disease and prevention strategies and policies on a countywide basis. IFFP’s focus has been on improving access to healthy, local food and promoting guidelines and policies for healthy eating and active living for congregations.

In December, Multnomah County Health Department announced that over 35 local faith leaders have committed to ensuring a healthier environment for their congregation and members and communities. Ten of these leaders held a press event to sign a pledge to promote healthy eating in their congregations. The leaders represented congregations of mainly people of color, who are disproportionately affected by health inequities. The pledge states that the congregation “is first and foremost a place of worship and holistic ministry for healthy body, soul and mind,” and as a policy toward holistic ministry, the congregation “promotes healthy eating, water consumption and lessened consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.” For the 35 participating faith leaders, the evidence of a poor diet and little exercise are exceedingly evident within their own congregations and communities, as affirmed by a rising prevalence of obesity and chronic diseases. Before signing the pledge, the Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes, Jr., pastor of Allen Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and EMO president-elect, stated in The Oregonian, “We see the effect of diet when we go to the hospital and emergency wards.”

Multnomah County Health Department encourages places of worship to adopt similar policies or guidelines outlined in the pledge, to ensure that congregation environments are part of the long-term solution. IFFP has created a compilation of policies, guidelines and resources that can be used by congregations to build a healthier environment (available at www.faithandwellness.org). For information on Multnomah County’s ongoing prevention efforts, go to www.multco-istanishere.org.

Steps to promoting health in a congregation

1. Assess your congregation’s environment and practices with the Congregational Health Index (CHI). The CHI guides your Congregational Wellness Team through developing and carrying out changes that make healthy eating and physical activity easy for everyone.
2. Educate members by using IFFP’s Healhtier Food Drive materials, or other resources at faithandwellness.org, to increase knowledge and motivation.
3. Create and implement a policy or guidelines to ensure that your health efforts become part of the life of the congregation over the long term. Use the Congregational Wellness Pledge at www.faithandwellness.org or use the policy quoted in this article.
4. Tell us what your congregation has done to create a healthier environment. Please email your stories, policies, comments and questions to foodandfaith@emoregon.org.

Farm Fresh Buying Club makes healthy food available to all

Volunteers and members are needed for the 2012 Farm Fresh Buying Club in north Portland! Our mission is to make local, organic produce and staples available and affordable to all to support health and sustain local, environmentally responsible farmers. Buying Club membership is on a sliding scale of $5 to $25; SNAP and WIC are accepted. You order only what you need and want. Classes on canning and cooking are available at a discount to members. Using a new online ordering system and with new farmers participating, our member-operated club will make getting your groceries a pleasure.

Volunteering is a great opportunity to learn about the local food system and gain new skills. Our most immediate need is four volunteers, (including a treasurer) to serve on a steering committee that meets for one hour monthly. Other volunteer jobs are placing orders with farmers, assembling member orders, and being a presence at the pick-up site at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, 25 N. Rosa Parks Way (near Peninsula Park), in Portland.

If you are interested in eating better than ever, meeting neighbors, supporting local farmers and making good food available to all, send an email to Sarah at smcevoy@emoregon.org or call (503) 221-1054, ext. 215.

Earth Care Summit: Congregations energized for environmental justice

A packed house of over 200 people gathered on Jan. 30 at Highland Christian United Church of Christ in northeast Portland to explore “Environmental Justice and Faith” at the third annual Earth Care Summit.

Participants represented over 50 congregations and religious groups from across Oregon and southwest Washington. The event was sponsored by EMO’s Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns and Oregon Interfaith Power & Light project. The event began with a delicious southern-style locally-grown vegetarian meal prepared by Po’ Shines Café and moved quickly into a powerful keynote by the Rev. Dr. Leroy Haynes—a well-known civil rights leader, pastor of Allen Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, and EMO president-elect. Haynes fired up participants to care about our “Mother Earth, who is dying,” but he added, “It is still not too late.” His presentation included both scientific and poetic insight about the continuing degradation of the earth for all its creatures, as well as the environmental injustices disproportionately suffered by people of color and the poor.

Participants sharpened their earth caring skills by choosing two of 18 roundtables and presentations offered on everything from making solar energy accessible to all to principles of environmental justice, from faith and the Farm Bill to environmental health.

Mike Branch from the Muslim Educational Trust closed with an inspirational blessing. The mutual inspiration among congregations was powerful. Surely, the renewed vision of those attending will enrich their leadership in their local congregations, enabling them to steward Creation and address environmental injustice in creative new ways.

By the Rev. Vern Groves, United Methodist Church, Retired

Help fund a summer environmental justice intern

Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns (INEC) is raising funds for a stipend or college scholarship for a young adult intern, who is a person of color, to assist the INEC staff with environmental justice issues this summer.

At the Earth Care Summit in January, INEC raised $740 for an intern; our goal is to raise $4,000. If you or your congregation would like to support environmental health and justice work, while also giving a student work experience, please consider donating.

Donations can be made securely online at www.emoregon.org; click on “Donate Now” and be sure to select “Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns” and write “intern” in the available comment space. You can also mail a check to EMC/INEC, 0245 SW Bancroft St., Suite B, Portland, OR 97239.
The Rev. Marvin D. Jones Memorial Scholarship has been established to help fund post-high school education, either at a college or trade school, for youth in the Mid-Columbia region, many of whom are homeless. Scholarship applicants must complete or be currently enrolled in a treatment/recovery program, maintain sobriety and improve their grades. The scholarship was created by the Mid-Columbia Fellowship of Churches to address the plight of youth in their community. The Rev. Marvin D. Jones, a former First United Methodist Church pastor, was a member of the Fellowship of Churches committee and was passionate about helping youth in trouble. Jones retired from First United Methodist Church in The Dalles before the first $500 scholarship was awarded. Efforts to pass important reforms that could help homeowners who have fallen behind in their payments and are facing the threat of foreclosure, while in addition, the bill prevents banks from moving in which they can be informed of all the right to a pre-foreclosure mediation session. The Scholarship program was merged into the Legislature on its last day. merged into the ERDC, remain capped at reduced client levels, despite long waiting lists of those needing assistance.

2012 Legislative Session

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advocates for those in need try to make the case that the TANF program actually needs to be expanded to serve more of Oregon’s poor families with children and provide increased monthly benefits to these families. Other programs designed to assist families in poverty, such as Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), remain capped at reduced client levels, despite long waiting lists of those needing assistance.

Foreclosure reform

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon supported successful efforts to pass important reforms that help homeowners who have fallen behind in their mortgage payments and are facing the threat of foreclosure. Two bills supported by EMO were merged into HB 1552 and finally passed by the Legislature on its last day.

SB 1552 gives homeowners facing foreclosure the right to a pre-foreclosure mediation session in which they can be informed of all the alternatives to foreclosure and, with the assistance of an independent mediator, seek to negotiate a foreclosure avoidance plan with their lender. In addition, the bill prevents banks from moving forward with foreclosure proceedings while in negotiation with borrowers—a practice known as a “dual-track process” that many have criticized as misleading if not outright deceptive.

Health care and other key policy issues

Several important health care bills passed. SB 1580 is the “health transformation” bill supported by Governor Kitzhaber. It authorizes the state to begin the process of setting up Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO’s) to deliver Medicaid services in a way that supporters hope will allow for better care at lower costs through increased integration of services and more emphasis on preventive care.

HB 4164A allows the state to move forward an Oregon Health Insurance Exchange that is a key part of both state and federal health reform efforts. HB 4027 expands immunity from liability for health care providers who provide services for charitable organizations without compensation. This bill is intended to encourage more health professionals to donate services to events like “Project Homeless Connect,” where there is consistently a high demand for health services. A landmark environmental bill, SB 1510, also passed, allowing the state to move forward with establishment of five marine reserves.

A bill to reduce the chance of gun violence on school campuses, SB 1594, was defeated. This bill (backed by Ceasefire Oregon) to keep schools gun-free by preventing individuals with concealed weapons permits from carrying their weapons onto school campuses was defeated on a 14-15 vote in the Senate.

Several bills designed to protect human or civil rights were enacted, including HB 4084 (elder abuse prevention and protection), SB 1555 (requires school employees to report acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and acts of cyber-bullying), and SB 1548 (prohibits the publication of a job advertisement that limits applicants to persons who are not currently unemployed).

Refugee Resettlement 101

Oregon nonprofits partner with state and federal government to help newly-arriving refugees settle in Oregon

Refugees are individuals or families who face grave danger in their country of origin due to warfare, religion, or famine and the inability or unwillingness of their home government to protect them. The U.S. government allows certain numbers and types of refugees to come to the United States every year, as part of cooperative international efforts among refugee families to respond to ongoing refugee crises worldwide.

Each year, several hundred new refugees settle in Oregon, almost all of whom initially settle in the Portland metro area. During the 10 years from 2000 to 2009, the number of new arrivals has ranged from a low of 811 (in 2008) to a high of 1,678 (in 2000).

From 1975 to 2009, there were 57,229 refugees who resettled in Oregon. Roughly 46 percent of these refugees were originally from Southeast Asia—primarily from Vietnam (16,946), Laos (5,799) or Cambodia (3,474). The other 54 percent of refugees arriving in Oregon have come from several continents and many nations. The largest sub-group of these is from Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union (19,003). There have been another 3,941 refugees from Bosnia, Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Kosovo and Poland. During this period, some 2,502 refugees originated in Somalia, Ethiopia, the Sudan or other African nations; 2,560 are from Cuba or Haiti; and another group of 1,485 have come to Oregon from Afghanistan, Iraq or Iran.

The admission of refugees to the United States, and their resettlement into host communities throughout the nation, is authorized by the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) as amended by the Refugee Act of 1980. In addition to establishing admission procedures for refugees, the INA authorizes resettlement assistance programs, largely overseen nationally by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). These programs provide refugees who have arrived recently in the United States with employment training and placement services, as well as training in English language skills needed for employment.

Oregon has a long history of providing cost-effective services to refugee families. In 2004, ORR awarded a partnership between government (state and federal) and several faith-based and secular nonprofit agencies in the greater Portland metro area. These agencies also provide such essential services asinkle top refuge st schools, which help people from a place to live and helping to furnish their home with basic necessities.

More information can be found on the Oregon DHS website at www.oregon.gov/DHS/Assistance/refugee/index.shtml.
New City Kitchen: Cooking up success in the workforce

A job means so much more than a paycheck. A significant part of the happiness and well-being people experience comes from the work that they do. People go to work not only to earn money but also to become self-sufficient, and also because of the satisfaction they receive from doing their job well, the contribution they make to the community, and the relationships and bonds they form with their coworkers. For a person who has experienced homelessness, lack of employment doesn’t just mean not having money to pay the rent; it also heightens the sense of isolation and loneliness that are part of the experience of homelessness, and reinforces a negative self-concept that tells them they have nothing meaningful or worthwhile to offer for the good of the community. For all these reasons, employment is an essential ingredient in ending the cycle of homelessness.

New City Kitchen

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is committed to investing in programs that address the problem of homelessness from a variety of angles. The New City Kitchen is an exciting new partnership to create employment opportunities for people who are transitioning out of homelessness. The project is a joint venture of EMO, JOIN (a local nonprofit organization supporting people’s efforts to end their homelessness), and an unexpected partner, Paul Industries (specializing in creating employment opportunity for people with disabilities, www.depaulindustries.com), and the New City Initiative (a startup nonprofit that engages faith communities in ending homelessness). This project is made possible through the generous support from the Butler Family Foundation, Wal-Mart State Giving Program and Dussin Family Trust, as well as other donors and sponsors.

The purpose of the New City Kitchen project is to provide “smart second chances” for people who have demonstrated that they want to work and have what it takes to overcome their challenges. Qualified participants receive 100 hours of training working at EMO’s Patron Home kitchen, helping to prepare meals for Patron Home residents, HIV Day Center and Daily Bread Express clients, and other contracts.

Upon completion of their training, participants receive the opportunity for an interview and placement in a 90-day “workplace internship” with one of our partners in the food service industry, including the Old Spaghetti Factory and Gustav’s-Rheinlander Restaurants. During their workplace internship, trainees’ wages are subsidized at 50 percent. Those who successfully complete their 90-day internships have the opportunity to go on to regular employment.

How you can help: Socially responsible catering

Don’t just throw a party, create a job! The New City Kitchen chefs can cater your next event. Through EMO’s Delicioso Catering, you can give work to people who are looking for a second chance, while also providing delicious food and an unforgettable experience for your guests.

For more information, contact Russ Miller, EMO’s Food Services manager, at (503) 335-1116 or russm@emoregon.org.

The New City Kitchen project grew out of the success of the CUSINA program, which for the past five years has provided cooking classes and life-skills training to people transitioning out of homelessness. From the start, it was apparent that many of those who participated in the program had terrific skills, not only working in the kitchen, but also in leadership and working with people. During 2010-2011, the New City Initiative launched a pilot project in which graduates of the CUSINA program were placed in internships through the Old Spaghetti Factory.

Success story

One of our great success stories from this early pilot project was Les. Les was homeless for an extended period, and even after JOIN assisted him in getting into housing, he struggled without success to find work. He was looking for someone to give him a second chance and was ready for that chance when he joined the New City Kitchen project and executive director of the New City Initiative, a startup nonprofit with a mission to engage faith communities in ending the cycle of homelessness.

April 26: Dine out, fight AIDS

Join EMO’s HIV Services on Thursday, April 26, 2012, for Portland’s fourth annual Dining Out for Life. Dining Out for Life is an annual international dining fundraising event, raising money for AIDS service organizations. The fundraiser is held in over 55 cities throughout the United States and Canada. In the Portland metro area, Dining Out for Life benefits EMO’s HIV Services and OHSU’s Partnership Project.

Last year, nearly 30 Dining Out for Life participating restaurants in the Portland metro area donated 20 to 30 percent of their proceeds to both local programs. Diners also had the opportunity to give personal donations that night, raising a total of $12,500 for both organizations.

Great restaurants in the Portland metro area are lined up again this year, including (but not limited to) Lincoln Restaurant, Irving Street Kitchen, Red Star Tavern, Lauro Kitchen and Jam On Hawthorne—and more restaurants are signing on daily. Dine out at one of these participating restaurants on April 26, and be sure to mention that you’re there for “Dining Out.”

For more information and a full list of participating restaurants, visit www.diningoutforlife.com/portland, or call Lindsay Ruo-Hunt, HIV Services program manager, at (503) 460-3822.
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 last issue of the Voice.

Donor (Fund)      Program
Ainsworth United Church of Christ       NE Emergency Food Program
Avon Foundation                        Russian Oregon Social Services
Black United Fund of Oregon            NE Emergency Food Program
Central Northeast Neighbors            NE Emergency Food Program
The Collins Foundation                 Annual Fund, Theological Education & Dialogue
East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District   Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Holly Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral NE Emergency Food Program
Irwin Foundation                       NE Emergency Food Program
JOHN                                   Food Services
Joseph E. Weston Public Foundation     Annual Fund, Shared Housing
Juan Young Trust                       Shared Housing
MAC AIDS Fund                          HIV Services
Mary's Passport Grant Fund             HIV Services
Moreland Presbyterian Church           Russian Oregon Social Services
Oregon Community Foundation            NE Emergency Food Program
Oregon Food Bank                       NE Emergency Food Program
Oregon Jewish Community Foundation    NE Emergency Food Program
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)           Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
Ride Connection                        Oregon Community Health Power & Light
Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust        HIV Services
Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer           Russian Oregon Social Services
The Swiggert Foundation                NE Emergency Food Program
US Charitable Gift Trust               NE Emergency Food Program
Valley Community Presbyterian Church   Shared Housing
Western Pacific College                 HIV Services

Help EMO reach the goal of raising $70,000 for the Collins Foundation 2012 challenge grant. Double your gift today!

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Please make tax deductible checks to EMO or pay by:
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• Amount: □ $2,500 □ $1,000 □ $500 □ $250 □ $100 □ $50 □ Other________

Please send your gift to:
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, 825 SW Bancroft St., Suite B, Portland, OR 97239. You may also make a secure online donation at www.emoregon.org, or a credit card donation over the phone by calling EMO at (503) 221-1054.

Honor & memorial gifts

Gifts in Honor
In honor of Eric A. Jordan
Dimitri Ashling • In honor of Kristin E. Bauck, Eric & Gaile Bauck • In honor of Gaile Bauck, Kristin Bauck & Patricia Eby • In honor of Rita Benfield, Shereda Benfield • In honor of Lyndee Duff, Dan Blair • In honor of Richard Royce, Eleanor & Oto Blahmughen, Eleanor Blahmughen • In honor of Jose G. Scott, Dan & Trudy Bradley • In honor of Rodney Page, Linda Buegler • In honor of Maria Camacho, Michelle Bush & Miguel Camacho • In honor of Mark E. Cotter, John Corton & Shawn Looney • In honor of Nikki & Chris Dawson, Sharon J. Dawson • In honor of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Antonio DeWeit • In honor of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Patricia Dickerson, Marian Gilmore, Lesley Unthank • In honor of Mara Steen, John Elizalde in honor of Lane Johnson, Maria Grumm • In honor of James & Lois Maas, Maria Hein & Lela Lawrence • In honor of Bill Faust, Dana G. Kane • In honor of Andrew & Joanne Knox, Linda R. Knox • In honor of John Elizalde, Sophia Kremdou in honor of Howard Kuyven, John Lake & Linda Young • In honor of Lea Meis, Lela J. Lawrence • In honor of Ron J. Miller, Dana A. Miller • In honor of Ron Dykstra, Richard Olson • In honor of Jim & Deb Peters, Julia Peters • In honor of Wayne Battick, Jane Beach, Eleanor Bluhmagen, Larry Bluhmagen, Gayle Harris, Maxine Kaye, Bob Morris, Diane Nelson, Darren Parson, Electa Royse, Ron Royse, & Marian Whitman, Richard Royse • In honor of Rocky Bluhmagen • In honor of L. & B. Seltzer & The Lee Stiles Family, Barry Seltzer • In honor of James D. Francis, Donald B. Shields • In honor of Carla Starren-Bigg, Matthew Starren-Bigg • In honor of Portland Homeless Family Solutions, Brandy Tuck • In honor of Strength for the Journey Camp, Billie Tye • In honor of Megan Taylor, Roberta Walsh • In honor of Michael J. Weedall, Susan Weedall • In honor of Students of Chief Joseph Elementary School, Elliott Witherspoon • In honor of Jim Green, Retriever Development Counsel

Gifts in Memory
In memory of Ted Davispoon & Larry Zettl, Jack & Shirley Abdie • In memory of John Cates, Raymond L. Barnes • In memory of Bob Barrett, Donald J. Barrett • In memory of Don Beam, Ruth M. Beam; In memory of Virginia W. Cain, Leonard Cain • In memory of Jorge DeLeon, Jerry Deas • In memory of David Dougerty, Martha W. Dougerty • In memory of Dale Baber & Richard Burton, Reed C. Fowler • In memory of Louise Frimoth, Elmer Frimoth • In memory of Russell Dodd, David Girard • In memory of Marjorie S. Abramowitz, Marshall C. Goldberg • In memory of Paul M. Jensen, The Greene • In memory of Lois Grumm, Maria Grumm • In memory of Daniel W. Mervi, Kathleen E. King • In memory of Gary Shaich, Daniel Kram • In memory of Jim Barton, Lisa M. Mitchell • In memory of Bill Caldwell, Dayna Morrison • In memory of Bill Buey, Fred N. Neal • In memory of Kinokwe MaxColl, Madeleine B. Nelson • In memory of Lois Honer, Barbara A. Olson • In memory of Don Combo & Patrick Loomis, Michael Prendergast • In memory of Christel Kilpatrick & Willie Tripplett, Lela F. Roberts • In memory of Mary K. Anderson, Tony M. Raplinger • In memory of Delia Sperring, Phillip Sperring • In memory of K. Lynn Jackson, Jane R. Tarreau • In memory of Robert Cole, Toni Tortoni • In memory of Wendy Swanson, Jack Raiton • In memory of Kathy & Rudy Wylffel, Robert C. Wylffel • In memory of Dan, T Wilson Enterprises

We are deeply grateful to the Collins Foundation for leading the way in Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s (EMO) 2012 Annual Fund drive with a $70,000 challenge grant. Your donation to EMO will be matched at 100 percent by the Collins Foundation.

As a supporter of EMO’s Annual Fund, you serve as a faithful partner with EMO in bringing together Oregon’s faith community for interface dialogue, peace work, direct service to those who need it most, and advocacy against the root causes of poverty and environmental degradation.

To double your gift to EMO, please use the form below, or you can make a secure online donation on our website at www.emoregon.org, or a credit card donation over the phone by calling EMO at (503) 221-1054.