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EMO celebrates ecumenism and leadership in Oregon

As the premier statewide ecumenical event of the year, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's annual *Community Awards & Celebration Dinner* will bring together over 400 members of our diverse communities of faith and community partners. We will look to the future of the ecumenical movement and honor those who are guided by their faith to serve Oregonians in need. The event will be held on Thursday, May 7, at the Portland Hilton Hotel.

Community leaders honored

The "Ecumenist of the Year" award will be presented to the Rev. Dr. T. Allen Bethel, senior pastor of Maranatha Church for over 15 years, for his outstanding work in ecumenical dialogue, community ministry and public policy advocacy.

Dr. Bethel is also president

of the Albina Ministerial Alliance (AMA), the largest ecumenical organization of churches and ministers in north and northeast Portland. AMA's Coalition for Justice and Police Reform works to assure oversight to the Portland Police Bureau. In 2005, the Coalition called for and helped to obtain a U.S. Department of Justice investigation into the patterns and policies of the Portland Police Department regarding lethal force. The Coalition continues to meet, hold vigils, and call for more open investigations of deadly force shootings by the Portland Police Department.

Dr. Bethel serves on the faculty of North Portland Bible College and Warner Pacific College, and he has led mission teams to Haiti and St. Kitts.

The "Vollum Ecumenical Humanitarian Award" will

be presented to U.S. Senator **Ron Wyden** in recognition of his leadership in enhancing the quality of life in Oregon.

Wyden has served Oregon in the U.S. Congress for more than 30 years. He is the ranking member of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee and serves on the Budget and Energy and Natural Resources Committees as well as the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. He was instrumental in the release of the Senate Torture Report, which details the CIA's use of so-called "enhanced interrogations," which clearly violate the ethical and moral values we hold as a nation.

Two "Ecumenical Service Awards" will be presented to **New City Initiative** and **Jericho Road**, organizations dedicated to ending the cycle of homelessness.

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The Rev. Dr. T. Allen Bethel, senior pastor of Maranatha Church, will be honored as "Ecumenist of the Year."



U.S. Senator Ron Wyden will receive the "Vollum Ecumenical Humanitarian Award."

David Leslie, EMO executive director, accepts interfaith leadership position in Texas

After nearly 18 years as executive director of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO)—one of the nation's largest ecumenical organizations—David Leslie will be leaving the statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners.

Leslie has accepted an offer to serve as the next executive director of the Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas. The

Rothko Chapel is a unique interfaith organization that brings together art, spirituality and human rights to carry out its mission of promoting peace, freedom and social justice. The Chapel features paintings by Russian-born American painter Mark Rothko (1903-1970) and is an international rallying place for human rights that welcomes over 80,000 visitors each year from all parts of the world.

A national leader in ecumenical and interfaith relations, Leslie has been active in the National Council of Churches and Church World Service, which honored him with the "Eugene Carson Blake Award for Ecumenism" in 2009. He serves on the board of the National Religious Council Against Torture. In Oregon, he serves on the board of the Nonprofit Association of Oregon and on the advisory

board of Northwest Workers' Justice Project. His previous public service includes the Oregon Department of Human Services Faith and Community-based Advisory Group, Oregon Senate Interim Committee on Farmworker Issues, and State of Oregon Ending Homelessness Advisory Council.

"During the last seventeen and a half years at EMO, I have had the privilege of

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For everything there is a season

As I prepare to wrap up my almost 18 years of service as Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's executive director, "thank you" are the words that aptly express my feelings for the privilege of serving in this capacity.



David Leslie

The gratitude that I feel is directly related to the reception that my family and I experienced when we arrived in Oregon in the summer of 1997. Whether at congregational settings, tribal gatherings, neighborhood cookouts, community festivals or EMO events, we were welcomed and introduced as new Oregonians, even though we had just gotten off the western migration trail from Texas.



David Leslie in 1997, shortly after beginning his role as executive director of EMO.

And while it took a bit to get our feet wet—it didn't start raining until November and finally stopped on July 4, 1998—I discovered that Oregon had a robust ecumenical scene, characterized by a hands-on approach that directly addressed and engaged the critical issues of the day.

Now, I must confess that carrying out the EMO mission has not always been easy or without controversy. But then again, when dealing with or being impacted by issues such as peacemaking in the Middle East, minimum wage, taxes, marriage equality, tribal fishing rights, climate change, prison reform, ordination of gays and lesbians ... who would expect a tumultuous-free experience?

Amongst these challenges, I have been most proud of EMO's willingness to hold the difficult conversations, while keeping central the question, "What is God calling us to do and be at this time?" As such, we have been able to model theologically-enriched and civil dialogues that stand in contrast to the shrill monologues that do little to build community,

understanding and joint action. This is not to say that we got everything right or were always as bold as we should have been, but we never shut down the conversation and efforts to build healthy relationships.

I am also grateful for all the people I have met who work so hard to improve the environment on which we depend and the lives of those living on the societal margins. Meals served at community dinners, homes built with volunteer labor, transportation provided for refugees arriving at PDX at midnight, testimony delivered in support of home care workers, and community prayer vigils after the attacks on 9/11—all give testament to the importance of our connections to and responsibilities for one another.

As I think about leaving Oregon, I am reminded of the summer of 1969, when my father served as a summer exchange pastor at the Church of Scotland parish in the town of Rothesay on the Isle of Bute. At the end of the summer when we boarded the ferry for the last time to head back to the states, the members of the congregation who had gathered that morning on the pier began singing a traditional Scottish song of farewell with the words, *Will ye no come back again, Will ye no come back again, Better lo'ed ye canna be, Will ye no come back again*. There was no "good-bye" or "we will never see you again." Rather, it was a deep heartfelt invitation to return, to come back.

I know I will always be part of this amazing organization and the movement from which it emanates.

In this spirit, I may be leaving as a staff member of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and leaving Oregon to return to Texas, but I won't be saying "good-bye." No, Oregon is now our "other home," and my wife and I look forward to visiting and staying connected to friends and family alike. And as I have said many times to EMO staff and volunteers who leave EMO for other opportunities, "I will not say good-bye, but we will see you in another EMO-iteration!" While I am not sure exactly what mine will be in the days ahead, I do know I will always be part of this amazing organization and the movement from which it emanates.

So, I will end where I began with a deep and heartfelt "thank you." Thanks for all

the support; the opportunity to learn, serve and grow; privilege of doing work that really matters; sharing meals, laughs and tears; and for faithfully living into the ancient vision of a society characterized by unity, peace and justice. I really couldn't ask for much more.

Yes, there will be changes in the days ahead, and I know with God's help and the staff and leadership team in place, EMO, as it has been for over 40 years, is in good hands.

So with that, I wish you God's blessing and until we meet again, peace.

Save the date for the 2015 Collins Lecture

Nov. 19 and 20 at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland

The topic of the 2015 *Collins Lecture* will be "A Lasting Legacy: The impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on tribes, church and state," with particular emphasis on the Pacific Northwest. Confirmed speakers include Prof. Robert J. Miller and the Rev. Dr. George (Tink) Tinker.

Miller is a professor at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University, where he teaches various Indian law classes and Civil Procedure. From 1999-2013, he was a full time professor at Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland.

Tinker is a prominent Native American theologian, scholar, and author of many articles and books. He is currently the Clifford Baldrige Professor of American Indian Cultures and Religious Traditions at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colo.

More details will follow on EMO's website at www.emoregon.org.

Northwest denominational annual gatherings

April 17-18, Presbytery of Eastern Oregon, Baker City

April 24-26, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Oregon Synod, Sunriver

June 11-13, United Methodist Church, Salem

July 15-19, North Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Spokane, Wash.

July 18-23, Christian Church, location TBD

Sept 24-27, United Church of Christ, Pendleton

Sept 27-29, Church of the Brethren, Pacific Northwest Region, location TBD

Oct 16-18, Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon, The Dalles

Nov 12-14, Episcopal Diocese of Oregon, location TBD



Voice

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MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

African Methodist Episcopal Church
American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oregon and SW Idaho
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
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

Farmers market to open in Rockwood this May with focus on food justice

When EMO's Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) conducted a Community Food Assessment of the Rockwood neighborhood in 2012, a farmers market was the number one new food resource desired by community members. In response to this demonstrated interest and the need for economic opportunity, IFFP has been planning a grassroots, community-based market for over a year.

After a successful pilot market last October, the Rockwood Farmers Market is opening for its first full season on May 15 and will continue every Friday, from 3 to 7 p.m., until Oct. 30. Located at Plaza del Sol at SE 187th and Stark in Gresham, the market will be a mix of farmers, food producers and artisans. Most of the farmers will be able to accept WIC coupons and the market accepts SNAP (food stamps).

In Rockwood, healthy food resources can be scarce. Grocery stores are few, and the ones in the neighborhood often stock poor quality, overpriced produce. The Rockwood Farmers Market will bring fresh, local, fair-priced produce directly to the people of Rockwood once a week, creating both a healthy food source and a vibrant community space

where neighbors can meet, mingle, and build connections over food and health.

Rockwood is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the entire state of Oregon, full of people from all over the world who speak over 70 different languages. Many residents of Rockwood come from countries with vibrant market cultures that form the food and social hub of a city, town or village. The farmers market aims to honor the cultural roots of Rockwood residents, while providing a place for interaction in their new community.

The Rockwood Farmers Market has many current and future needs. To serve low-income customers, we are raising \$5,000 from individuals, businesses and congregations to match the first \$10 of SNAP benefits funds that a customer uses at the market. Volunteers are also greatly needed. Congregation groups are welcome to volunteer short-term or long-term.

If you are interested in donating, volunteering or getting more involved with the Rockwood Farmers Market, contact Anna Burnham at rockwoodfarmersmarket@gmail.com or call (503) 221-1054, ext. 215.



EMO staff, volunteers and vendors participated in a successful pilot farmers market last October.

Improving health for African Americans

EMO's Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership is honored to be a part of Multnomah County's Racial Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH), funded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The project focuses on addressing health inequities faced by African Americans in Multnomah County, where more African Americans die of preventable diseases like diabetes, lung cancer and heart disease, and as babies, they're born earlier and smaller. EMO's work includes bringing healthier food to corner stores and working with congregations to improve community health.

INEC awards pollinator sanctuary project mini-grants

Last fall, EMO's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns (INEC) awarded five congregations mini-grants for pollinator projects. The congregations were St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Christ Community Church, Kairos Milwaukie United Church of Christ, Tigard United Methodist Church, and Multnomah Monthly Meeting. Congratulations to the awardees! A celebration was held on Nov. 9 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, which included a presentation on how native plants can be used to provide year-round habitat for native pollinators.

The grants were awarded to engage congregations in the Portland metro area to establish pollinator gardens. Congregation grounds offer a great place to provide much needed habitat for pollinator species,



Congregation grounds offer a great place to provide much needed habitat for pollinator species.

while providing the opportunity to educate congregation members and neighbors on the importance of pollinators in our ecosystems and the steps that can be taken to protect them. Pollinator gardens can also be a source of beauty and spiritual inspiration.

Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns is

Join us on May 9 for an "Active Hope Retreat"

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at First Christian Church, 1314 SW Park Ave., Portland. Registration is \$40, includes a vegetarian lunch; \$30 if you bring your own lunch. Learn more and register at www.emoregon.org.

offering more pollinator sanctuary mini-grants this year. The grants, funded by the Gilhousen Family Foundation, will range from \$50-\$500. The deadline for the second round of grant applications is April 30, 2015. We invite congregations to submit their application, which can be downloaded at www.emoregon.org/earth_concerns.php or call (503) 221-1054.

Executive director transition

Continued from page 1

being part of efforts to foster ecumenical and interfaith relations throughout the state and engage in numerous initiatives to enhance our collective mission to improve the lives of people living on the margins of society," said Leslie. "I am especially proud to be part of an ecumenical community organization that is committed to a public theology believing that the church and broader faith community's commitments to peace and justice really do matter and must be made known in the commons."

Leslie will continue in his current position with EMO through the end of May. The EMO

Board of Directors has appointed Jan Elfers, EMO director of Public Policy Advocacy, interim executive director, effective June 1, 2015.

"As the board of directors for EMO, we share a vital responsibility to carry on a great mission," stated the Rev. Dr. Doug Wirt, EMO president. "Just as we give thanks for David's leadership, we also need to make clear that the mission of EMO continues. The need for EMO's services in our communities, the need for inspired witness and action on behalf of justice and compassion, and the importance of strong ecumenical and interfaith relationships in Oregon will all continue in 2015 and beyond."

Elfers first joined EMO in 2003. In addition to her current position, she has also held the positions of director of Peace Programs and director of Membership Relations. She is currently a board member of the Institute for Christian/Muslim Understanding and received the "Friends of the Muslim Educational Trust" award in 2009. Elfers is a member of the Episcopal Church and served on the Commission to End Racism at the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon. A native Oregonian, she earned an undergraduate degree at Lewis & Clark College and completed her master's degree in theology at Marylhurst University.

Second Home receives Beaverton Human Rights Award

Second Home, a program for homeless high school students, received the “2014 Beaverton Human Rights Award” on Jan. 13, 2015, during a meeting of the Beaverton City Council. Mayor Denny Doyle presented the award to Second Home staff Beverly Woolf and Jenny Pratt, thanking them for their service and commending Second Home for facilitating a community response to the difficult problem of providing housing for unaccompanied, homeless youth while they attend Beaverton high schools.

“Second Home is pleased and humbled to be the recipient of this award for 2014,” said Pratt, “and thankful to the many community

partners who make this program successful.”

Second Home, a program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, works together with the homeless liaisons of Beaverton School District’s Family Service Center, the Beaverton Dispute Resolution Center of the Mayor’s Office, and volunteer home-providers to find stable housing for young people who want to finish their high school education. During the 2013-14 school year, the program provided 70 months of housing and over 6,000 meals for Beaverton students. It is a ground-breaking example of how a community can respond to the issue of youth homelessness and support students who want to finish their high school education.



Second Home staff, students and home providers attended the reception and presentation of the “2014 Beaverton Human Rights Award.”

Second Home students and home providers attended the awards reception and presentation and spoke of their experiences in the program. Partners from the Beaverton School District and the Beaverton Dispute Resolution Center were also present for the celebration.

The mayor and the City Council, upon the recommendation of the Beaverton Human Rights Advisory Commission, established the Annual Human Rights Award in 2003 in order to recognize individuals and organizations promoting appreciation for diversity, human rights, and cultural understanding in the city of Beaverton and the local community.

Who is the typical home provider for Second Home?

That is one of the most frequently asked questions when someone is considering opening their home to an unaccompanied homeless student in the program.

The truth of the matter is there is no typical home provider. There are empty-nesters, families with small children, same sex couples and singles. They live in Beaverton, Portland, Tigard and Hillsboro. Some are financially very well off and some have to stretch to add another mouth to feed. But they all have one thing in common—they realize that a stable living situation for a young person can be the difference between lifelong success and struggle.

Second Home needs home providers right now. We have students waiting for a secure place to live. If you or someone you know might be a good home provider, please contact Beverly Woolf at bwoolf@emoregon.org.

We Will Speak Out: People of faith speak out on intimate violence

By Rhonda Case and Randy Ellison, co-coordinators for We Will Speak Out in Oregon

We are building a movement! Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and IMA World Health share a hope and a vision that Oregon will become a model—perhaps even the flagship state—in the U.S. campaign of We Will Speak Out, as our faith communities enter fully into the growing movement to end domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault and all forms of intimate violence.

One in three women worldwide, one in five girls and one in six boys under the age of 18 are victims of sexual and gender-based violence. These crimes take lives, crush spirits, and can destroy the hope and well-being of an individual for her/his entire life.

To remain silent is to condone this violence. We consider it our duty as people of faith to step intentionally into the work of prevention and to walk humbly with survivors on their healing journey. To do so, we must begin to normalize talking about abuse in our places of worship. Only in this way can we create a safe community for our children to thrive and open the door so that survivors may ask for help and regain their hope. In their 2014 poll of pastors, Sojourners and IMA World Health learned that 80 percent of clergy said they would do more if given the necessary tools and training. (Download their report *Broken Silence* at wewillspeakout.org.)

On Nov. 23, 2014, faith leaders from a wide variety of denominations in cities all over Oregon and around the United States courageously addressed their congregations from the pulpit or started discussions in adult education classes on the subject of sexual and gender-based violence.

Some of the sermons preached that day,



along with music, prayers and liturgical tools used, will be made available later this year in a collection entitled *Oregon Speaks Out: Resources for Faith Communities to Speak Out About Intimate Violence*. A few of these voices are profiled below. We hope that these stories and actions will inspire you to take steps with us to make a “Speak Out Sunday” or “Speak Out Sabbath” event part of your congregation’s calendar and ministry in 2015.

Chris Sohl, working with the Ashland Youth Collective, showed the trailer for the documentary *Miss Representation* to a group that included United Methodist, Episcopal, Presbyterian and United Church of Christ youth. The participants reflected on the influence of media’s portrayals of women and contrasted these images with the respect Jesus showed women throughout his ministry.

Joan Winchester, pastoral associate at St. Charles Borromeo Parish, introduced her sermon with these words: “‘Speak out Sunday’ is a step in standing with the least among us. All of us are well equipped to offer support to the victims of domestic abuse and to help prevent further acts of violence. Our greatest resource is Love.”

In Canby, the minister at Smyrna United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Deborah Patterson, invited a trained domestic violence advocate,

a staff member from Clackamas Women’s Resource Center, to speak to the congregation. As the former head of Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries, Patterson is keenly aware that intimate violence is both a peace and justice issue for people of faith and a costly public health epidemic.

In Tillamook, Rev. Carol Brown (United Methodist Church) serves on the Board of Trustees for the Women’s Resource Center. She preached a “Speak Out Sunday” sermon at St. Peter Lutheran Church for a United Methodist-Evangelical Lutheran service about how domestic violence affects the community and has touched her own life.

Plan ahead for Sunday, Oct. 11, 2015 (or any Sabbath or Sunday this year), as your community’s “Speak Out Sunday.” April is also a perfect time to schedule an activity, class or sermon to begin addressing intimate violence, as it is both Child Abuse Prevention Month and Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Co-coordinators for We Will Speak Out in Oregon, Rhonda Case (rhondaleecase103@gmail.com) and Randy Ellison (randy@boysdonttell.com), will gladly act as resources if you want ideas or help getting started.

The U.S. Catholic Bishops have spoken out in this way: “As pastors of the Catholic Church in the United States we state as clearly and strongly as we can that violence against women inside or outside the home is never justified. Violence in any form—physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal—is sinful; often, it is a crime as well. We have called for a moral revolution to replace a culture of violence.”

The invitation has been sent. How will you respond?

Creating safer communities, one person at a time

“We are all worth more than the worst thing we have ever done in our life.”

Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ

Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) is EMO’s newest program, which advances the vision of EMO to help create a more peaceful, just, sustainable and compassionate world, through ministry in the criminal justice system. CoSA follows a restorative justice model, with the goal of healing both individuals and a community after violent crime. We work with adult offenders coming home to Multnomah County from Oregon prisons, matching an offender with a team of volunteers to support him through his first year coming out of prison. The team is called a Circle of Support and Accountability, and it is composed of one offender and four to six community volunteers.

Circles of Support and Accountability

continues to take root in the Portland area, helping create safer communities one person at a time. Two Circles have started meeting, one last fall and one this winter, with ten dedicated volunteers trained and serving two men releasing from Oregon prisons. Each Circle meets once a week as a group, with regular calls and check-ins to the Core Member throughout the week. Through the simple ministry of compassionate presence, volunteers help an offender develop pro-social relationship and leisure skills, which keep him working toward healthy, positive goals.

We are delighted to keep spreading the word about the way Circles can help work toward the goal of no more victims in our neighborhoods, congregations and families. We have found great excitement for CoSA among criminal justice advocates and professionals who treat sexual abuse, who are grateful that EMO is taking the

initiative to bring to our city one of the most effective ways to reduce sexual violence.

Our Circles depend on volunteers to run, and we welcome individuals or couples to volunteer. Circles are balanced with people from diverse backgrounds, faith affiliations and genders. While our clients are located in Multnomah County, we welcome volunteers from the wider metro area.

Join us on April 10 from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. for a Community Information Session to learn the basics of CoSA and how you can get involved. A full Volunteer Training will be offered in May (dates to be determined). Both will be held at the Interchurch Center in southwest Portland. To RSVP or for more information about CoSA Oregon, contact Audrey deCoursey, CoSA coordinator, at (503) 988-8580 or cosa@emoregon.org and visit www.CoSAOregon.org.



Thursday, April 30: Dine out, fight AIDS

Join EMO’s HIV Services on Thursday, April 30, for Portland’s seventh annual “Dining Out for Life.”

Dining Out for Life is an annual international dining fundraising event, raising money for AIDS service organizations. Dine out at one of the participating restaurants and a substantial percentage of your bill will go directly to programs serving people with HIV/AIDS locally. The fundraiser is held in over 60 cities throughout North America. In the Portland metro area, Dining Out for Life benefits EMO’s HIV Services and OHSU’s Partnership Project.

Last year, more than 30 restaurants participated in the Portland metro area, donating 20 to 30 percent of their proceeds to both local programs. Diners also had the opportunity to give personal donations that night, raising over \$20,000 for the two organizations.

Great restaurants are lined up again this year, including Bazi Bierbrasserie, Gracie’s, Las Primas, Lincoln, The Original, Red Star Tavern, The Bad Habit Room, 15 McMenamins locations, and many more. Dine out at one of these restaurants on April 30, and be sure to mention that you’re there for “Dining Out for Life.”

For more information and a list of restaurants, visit www.diningoutforlife.com/portland.

FolkTime: Shattering the stigma of mental health challenges

This spring, join communities of faith throughout the Portland metro area for a powerful one-day conference to help shatter the isolating stigma of mental health challenges. The conference, entitled “Shattering Stigma,” takes place on Saturday, May 16, from 2 to 8 p.m. at Montavilla United Methodist Church, located at 232 SE 80th Ave., Portland. The conference is hosted by FolkTime and Montavilla United Methodist Church and sponsored by CareOregon and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

Hear and share personal stories and be reminded of how faith calls us to a deeper appreciation of the uniqueness of every human. Learn and understand the diverse experiences of those with mental health challenges, while remembering the importance of God’s love for us all. Get equipped with tangible tools and resources to help you and your loved ones explore many pathways to health and wellness, while experiencing the joy of discovery. Consumers, psychiatric survivors, family members and mental health service providers are welcome. The \$25 registration fee includes coffee, snacks and dinner.

For more information about FolkTime or to register for the conference, contact Kris Moore at kmoore@folktime.org or visit folktime.org. Scholarships are available upon request.



EMO launched FolkTime in 1986, in response to concern for adults with mental illness who were socially isolated. The program became an independent nonprofit in 1996.



History of FolkTime

In 1985, members of Portland metro area churches were surveyed to determine what social needs Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon might offer that were not currently being addressed. The survey identified a concern for adults with mental illness who were socially isolated.

In response to the survey, the EMO Society Committee decided to pursue the idea of a center for adults with mental illness. They sent postcards to their mailing list of churches inquiring about interest in hosting such a program. Only one church responded in the affirmative, Community of Christ in northeast Portland. Joann Seeger, member of the committee, took the project on and wrote grants to fund an administrative position. After receiving a \$4,000 grant from the Presbyterian Women’s Association, EMO hired the first FolkTime program manager, Jenny Stewart.

The program opened in the fall of 1986. Stewart suggested the name FolkTime, after seeing how well people interacted in social activities and arts and crafts. About 75 people attended the grand opening ceremony, and Deborah Kafoury, now Multnomah County Chair, cut the ribbon.

In 1996, FolkTime spun off as an independent nonprofit organization. The program continues to fulfill its mission to connect people who share the experience of living with mental illnesses through peer support and community-based activities.

Interfaith community kicks off advocacy efforts for the 2015 Oregon Legislative Session

Interfaith Advocacy Day

On an unseasonably warm and sunny day in February, a record number of people gathered at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Salem for *Interfaith Advocacy Day*. Since 1999, the biannual event has brought together people from across the state to stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable in our society in order to advocate for a hopeful future for all Oregonians.

This year, 308 people registered for “Raising Diverse Voices of Faith to Strengthen Oregon Communities.” People of faith from various parts of the state—including Roseburg, Hermiston, Newport, Bend, The Dalles, Eugene and Portland metro area—came to Salem to give public witness to our shared values. Over 40 students from Warner Pacific College, the University of Portland, and the Oregon Islamic Academy attended.

The day opened with an interfaith panel designed to give a foundation for how our various faith traditions articulate social justice in scripture and in their moral and ethical practices. The panelists included Rabbi Eve Posen of Congregation Neveh Shalom, the Rev. David Knapp of St. Luke Lutheran Church, and Gulzar Ahmed of the Islamic Society of Greater Portland.



Photo credit: Jenny Pratt

The event opened with an interfaith panel including (from left) moderator David Leslie of EMO, Rabbi Eve Posen of Congregation Neveh Shalom, Gulzar Ahmed of the Islamic Society of Greater Portland, and the Rev. David Knapp of St. Luke Lutheran Church.

After the interfaith panel and an “Advocacy 101” training session, participants attended workshops in which experts gave more in-depth information about an issue of concern. The workshops included: *Confronting Poverty*, led by Susannah Morgan of the Oregon Food Bank and Janet Byrd of Neighborhood Partnerships; *Expanding Health Care*, led by Dale Penn of CFM Strategic Communications and Linda Sarai Roman of the Oregon Latino Health Care

Coalition; *Promoting Economic Equality*, led by Violeta Rubiani of the Wage Theft Coalition/ Northwest Workers Justice Project and Chuck Sheketoff of the Oregon Center for Public Policy; and *Preventing Gun Violence*, led by Jake Weigler of the Oregon Alliance to Prevent Gun Violence. The lunch time keynote address was given by Nichole June Maher, the executive director of the Northwest Health Foundation.

Monsignor Richard Huneger of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Salem offered a blessing for the group as they prepared to march from the church to the Capitol. With students holding the banner and leading the way, the large group marched to the Capitol, where they had an opportunity to meet with their legislators. Eighty meetings were scheduled and constituents spoke personally with their elected representatives, in order to present the talking points from the morning sessions and add their personal stories.

2015 Oregon Legislative Session

Now that *Interfaith Advocacy Day* is behind us, the 2015 Oregon Legislative Session is in full gear. **Two high priority items in this session are ending wage theft and increasing the minimum wage.**

According to Jan Elfers, EMO director of Public Policy Advocacy, “These legislative efforts establish social and economic systems that encourage, enable, and empower all people to develop and use their capabilities to meet their needs and to contribute to the social welfare.” Wage theft is the withholding of wages or the denial of benefits that are rightfully owed to an employee through various means such as failure to pay overtime, minimum wage violations, employee misclassification, illegal deductions in pay, working off the clock, or not being paid at all.

Another high priority is to halt the growth of state prisons. With the strong support of a coalition of organizations including EMO, a comprehensive public safety reform bill (HB 3194) passed in the 2013 Legislative Session. During the 2015 Session, advocates are working to redirect the savings from HB 3194 to increase community-based crime prevention programs, efforts to reduce recidivism, mental health services, and addiction prevention and treatment programs.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is also supporting legislation for common sense gun

those who are homeless in the Redmond, Ore., area, including meals, transitional housing and mentoring to homeless families.

Sponsors

Major sponsors (to date) include gold sponsor Providence Health & Services, silver sponsor Legacy Health, and bronze sponsors Archdiocese of Portland, Augustana Lutheran Church, Beneficial State Bank, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Community of Christ, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, John Dennis, First United Methodist Church of Portland, Linfield College, Neil Kelly Co., Rodney Page and



Photo credit: Jenny Pratt

A record number of over 300 people attended the 2015 *Interfaith Advocacy Day* including over 40 students.

reforms, including universal background checks for private gun sales and child access prevention.

Other legislation of note that EMO supports:

- Providing adequate funds for targeted, evidence-based programs and graduated slopes for families using TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and ERDC (Employment Related Day Care), so that they retain more of their earnings and are more stable, thus less likely to return to assistance in the future.
- Increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) percentage, including increasing the EITC for childless wage earners.
- Expanding funding for stable housing through the Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and State Housing Assistance Program (SHAP).
- Fully funding WIC and Senior farm direct programs so families can access more fruits and vegetables and small farmers can stay in business.
- Using state funds for the reduced-price lunch co-pay so more students have access to the nutrition they need to do well in school.

A complete list of EMO’s 2015-16 legislative priorities can be found at on our website (www.emoregon.org/legislative_priorities.php).

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon invites our constituents to be engaged during the 2015 Legislative Session. There are many ways to do this: write letters and emails, call or visit your legislator in Salem, or attend a town hall meeting in your community. However you decide to get involved, your participation is important and it will make a positive difference in the lives of Oregonians.

For more information, contact Jan Elfers, EMO director of Public Policy Advocacy, at (503) 221-1054 or jelfers@emoregon.org.

EMO annual celebration

Continued from page 1

The aim of New City Initiative is to engage faith communities in the Portland metro area in this effort. New City Initiative has launched “Covenant of Hope”—a project whereby congregations sponsor homeless families living in the emergency warming shelter, providing rent and utility assistance and community support to these families—and “New City Kitchen”—an innovative social enterprise program offering employment training and placement in the food service industry.

Jericho Road provides tangible support to

Ron Means, USI and Wright Land Co. To learn more about becoming a sponsor, please contact Carla Starrett-Bigg or Christopher Siems at (503) 221-1054.

Join us!

The Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner will be held on May 7 at the Hilton Hotel, 921 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland. Check-in, silent auction and reception begin at 5 p.m. with dinner to follow at 6:30 p.m. The cost of the event is \$100 per person. All sponsorships include a table of ten. Reservations may be made securely online at www.emoregon.org, or you may call (503) 221-1054.

Multidenominational trend modeled by Central Oregon congregation

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon member congregation Sunriver Christian Fellowship (SCF) is a multidenominational church with over 300 members, located in the community of Sunriver in Central Oregon. SCF has been in the forefront of a trend toward churches that include members from several denominations.

It all began some 20 years ago with a small group of Episcopalians and Lutherans who joined for worship at the Sunriver Nature Center and Observatory. The group outgrew the available space and accepted an invitation from the Catholic Church to remodel and share an abandoned prep school building.

Sunriver Christian Fellowship pastor, Rev. Nancy Green, says that when the congregation was formed, it had the support and encouragement of the Episcopal, Lutheran and Catholic bishops, whom she describes as, “Three wonderful men who were very, very open to having the Spirit move outside of what was kind of the standard rubric.”

Sunriver Christian Fellowship attracted people from many denominations, and the congregation came to include several retired pastors who were invited to preach. American Baptist minister Jack Kiekel says this was inspirational. “Allowing us retired clergy to be who we are and express our faith walk in the way that we know how, was remarkable. We started out with nearly 100 percent Episcopalians and Lutherans and now it’s about 40 percent Episcopalians and Lutherans and 60 percent from other denominations, and it



Music is an important element of worship at multidenominational Sunriver Christian Fellowship.

doesn’t faze anybody.” Green says the diverse denominational backgrounds present at SCF do not create division because of the congregation’s willingness to see differences as learning opportunities rather than stumbling blocks.

The journey at SCF includes reaching out to the community. The largest expenditure of discretionary funds goes for what is labeled “Outreach.” Outreach at SCF has national, international and local components. Locally, help is administered by a ministry entitled “UPCAP.” The 2015 SCF budget says, “UPCAP is the Up Close and Personal delivery of financial, emotional, social and personal support to our neighbors in Southern Deschutes County. This year SCF’s UPCAP

team provided direct support and assistance to over 500 families in our own community, including Sunriver, Three Rivers and LaPine.”

Regardless of who is in the pulpit at SCF on Sunday, bread and wine are always blessed and Holy Eucharist is offered to all who attend. Also unchanged since the beginning is the mission statement, which declares: “Led by the Holy Spirit, SCF is committed to being a viable presence of Christian love and unity, growing in faith in our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, and witnessing this faith through service to the needs of the community and the world.”

Learn more about Sunriver Christian Fellowship at www.sunriverchristianfellowship.org.

Allen Temple CME committed to rebuilding after damaging fire

On Feb. 7, 2015, Allen Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, one of Portland’s centenarian churches, experienced major damage from a fire that ran through the basement to parts of the sanctuary and severely damaged the roof. The investigation of cause of the fire is underway and preliminary cost estimates to rebuild is approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000. Insurance will cover most of that cost, but that the church expects to have to fundraise about \$100,000 on their own.

The church was built in 1912 in northeast Portland by German Evangelical Lutherans and was purchased in 1961 by Allen Temple CME—the first Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in the Northwest. While the church handles its displacement, they will hold services at Maranatha Church.

Allen Temple CME is under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes, Jr. and is noted for its outstanding community outreach ministries including the Resurrection Drug Abuse Program, Emergency Food Center, Allen Temple HIV/AIDS Education Project, Allen Temple Homeless Ministry, One Church-One School Mentor Program and Social Justice Ministry.

The church plans to restore the building and



The senior pastor of Allen Temple, the Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes, Jr., stands in front of the fire damaged historic church.

continue its dynamic ministries. Restoration is expected to take approximately five to six months. “We want to stay here, and we will do anything it takes to stay in this location,” Haynes says about the rebuilding effort.

The congregation of 400 mostly African-American community members knows that this will be a challenge and is brainstorming on how they can rally the community behind restoring the historical building, including fundraising events and crowdsourcing.

For information on these efforts, visit the *Allen Temple Facebook page at [facebook.com/meetmeatthetemple](https://www.facebook.com/meetmeatthetemple) or call (503) 287-0261.*

State of the Church

Saturday, June 20, 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., at Seattle University, Campion Ballroom, Seattle

Presented by Seattle University’s School of Theology and Ministry, the annual *State of the Church* is a growing gathering of thought leaders and practitioners, ranging from Historic Protestant to Progressive Evangelical partners in faith. The 2015 theme is “One in the Spirit.”

The day will include presentations from distinguished leaders in the church including the Rev. Wes Granberg-Michaelson, a leader in the Reformed Church in America and author of *Leadership from Inside Out: Spirituality and Organizational Change*, and the Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, a leader in rethinking religious education and author of *Listen to the Children: Conversations with Immigrant Families*. The event will also include time for worship, networking with colleagues in ministry, and breakout sessions relevant to the church today and the future church.

Tickets are \$25; \$15 for groups of three or more. For more information or to reserve tickets, go www.seattleu.edu/stm/news-events/state-of-the-church.

EMO celebrates 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 |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| American Immigration Lawyers Association | SOAR Immigration Legal Services |
| Autzen Foundation | Second Home |
| Black United Fund of Oregon | NE Emergency Food Program |
| Boeing Employees Community Fund | NE Emergency Food Program |
| Catholic Charities | Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees |
| Central Drug Company | HIV Services |
| The Collins Foundation | Annual Fund |
| Doris H. & Michael F. Garcia Fund | SOAR Immigration Legal Services |
| Holzman Foundation, Inc. | Second Home |
| Irwin Foundation | NE Emergency Food Program |
| Joseph E. Weston Public Foundation | Annual Fund |
| Juan Young Trust | Second Home |
| Kinney Living Trust | NE Emergency Food Program |
| M.A.C. AIDS Fund | HIV Services |
| Moreland Presbyterian Church | Russian Oregon Social Services |
| Northwest Health Foundation | Annual Fund |
| Northwest Industrial and Foundry Supply Co. Inc. | NE Emergency Food Program |
| Order of Benevolent Bliss | HIV Services |
| Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) | Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns |
| Providence Health & Services | NE Emergency Food Program |
| The Regeneration Project | Oregon Interfaith Power & Light |
| Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust | HIV Services |
| Susan G. Komen for the Cure | Russian Oregon Social Services |
| Valley Community Presbyterian Church | Second Home |
| Verizon Wireless | Russian Oregon Social Services |
| Wheeler Foundation | NE Emergency Food Program |
| Whole Foods Market | NE Emergency Food Program |

The Collins Match: A challenge worth taking

We are deeply grateful to the Collins Foundation for leading the way again in Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s (EMO) 2015 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 interfaith dialogue, peace work, direct service to those who need it most, and advocacy against the root causes of poverty and against environmental degradation.

To double your gift to EMO, please use the form below, or you can make a secure online donation at www.emoregon.org. For more information, call (503) 221-1054.

Help EMO reach the goal of raising \$70,000 for the Collins Foundation 2015 challenge grant. Double your gift today!

Name(s) _____
Address _____
City/State/ZIP _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Please make tax deductible checks to EMO or pay by:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Am. Express

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Amount: ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ Other _____

Please send your gift to:

EMO, 0245 SW Bancroft St., Suite B, Portland, OR 97239.

You may also make a secure on-line donation at www.emoregon.org.

Honor & Memorial Gifts

August 2014 through January 2015

Gifts in Honor

In honor of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Marian Gilmore, Lesley Unthank, Alcena Boozer

In honor of Gaile Baack
Patricia Jane Eby

In honor of Kristin Baack
Gaile Baack

In honor of Alcena Boozer
Madeline Moore

In honor of Betty Campbell
Mark Foat

In honor of Andrew Dennis
Helen Dennis

In honor of Jacquelyn Dvorak
Thomas & Trisha Hassler, Nancy Watson

In honor of Jan Elfers
JoAnn & Shannon Leach

In honor of Harry Flesher
Kristin LeMon

In honor of Maria Grumm
Maile Grumm

In honor of Bee Hall
Winifred Thomas

In honor of Susan Hanset
Mark Foat

In honor of Jenny Holmes
Vernon & Betty Groves

In honor of Dennis Karas
Judith Eda

In honor of Howard Kenyon
Susan & Lewis Van Winkle

In honor of David Leslie
Elizabeth Fosterman

In honor of Robert Montgomery
James McLeod

In honor of Rodney Page
Elizabeth Eklund

In honor of Richard Rumble
Kathy Rumble

In honor of Kennon Scott
Bill Scott

In honor of Sharon & Richard Surratt
Mark Foat



Gifts in Memory

In memory of William An Donald & Elizabeth Rea

In memory of John L. Anderson
Margaret Anderson

In memory of Ray & Carol Appelquist
Tom & Mary Van Denend

In memory of Russell Bayly
Diana Baird

In memory of David Bruce Belcher
Robert & Allison Logan Belcher

In memory of Eric Bishop
Deborah Hedges

In memory of Virginia Cain
Leonard Cain

In memory of John Casas
Raymond Barnes

In memory of John Combs
Rose Christopherson

In memory of Bill Connor
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In memory of Russell Dodd
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In memory of Robert Heins
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In memory of William Jamison
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In memory of John Kent
George Adkins, Kathryn Schmerber, Russ & Carolyn Tamblyn

In memory of Dorothy Lambert
Phyllis & Raymond Krueger

In memory of Doug Lane
Kimberly S. Brown

In memory of Philip U. Martin
Robina Elaine Ingram-Rich & Timothy R. Rich

In memory of John B. Muir
Mary Lyman Cammann

In memory of John Patterson
Deborah Patterson

In memory of Michael Rudy
Rose Christopherson

In memory of J. V. Shepard
Jane Shepard

In memory of Nancy Smith
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In memory of Daniel Wessler
Jenelyn Wessler

In memory of Teresa Whipple
Lloyd & Genevieve Johnson