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Redeeming the Soul of America

2016 *Collins Lecture* to feature Otis Moss III on race, justice & reconciliation

The spirit of God is love and justice. Invisible racism disregards the meaning of God's love. As people of faith, we must be concerned about the least of these in America. ... We must unseat invisible racism because, as long as it remains, human rights and individual dignity will forever be under threat.

—The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III
(*The Huffington Post*, 2012)

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO), in collaboration with the Albina Ministerial Alliance, has invited The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, senior pastor of Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ, to lay out his hope and vision for

transforming America at the 2016 *Collins Lecture*. "Redeeming the Soul of America: Race, Justice and Reconciliation" will be held on Thursday, Nov. 3, at 7 p.m. at Concordia University in Portland.

Dr. Moss's evening lecture will be complemented by an afternoon seminar. The opening plenary will address issues of privilege and power, the difference between whiteness and being white, and the roots of black rage. Representatives of Oregon's Black, Latino, Asian and Native American communities will discuss racism as they experience it in Oregon today.

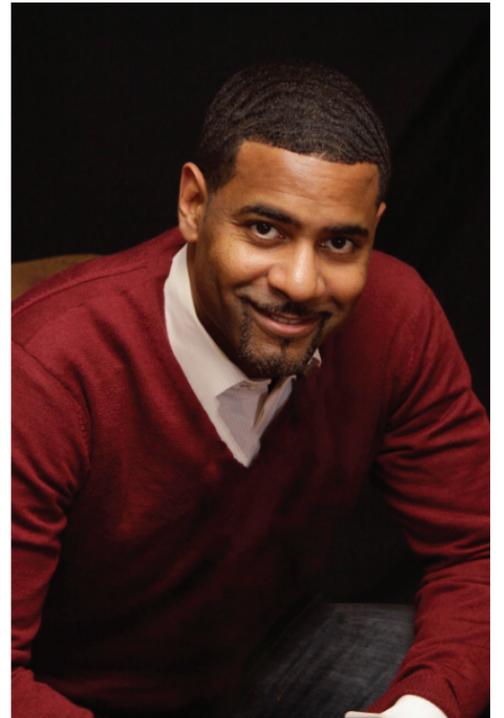
Workshop topics will

include Racism in the 21st Century, Community Policing, the Prophetic Voice in the Public Square, Mass Incarceration, and Building the Beloved Community, among others.

Response to a nationwide crisis

"In response to the growing polarization, fear and divisiveness in our state and nation, we as people of faith

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The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III will lay out his hope and vision for transforming America at the *Collins Lecture*, "Redeeming the Soul of America."

Affordable Housing: EMO takes a multifaceted approach to a statewide crisis

"I just couldn't believe it was happening. We had to help out," says Alina Lupusoro. She and her husband, Razvan, were moved by the staggering number of homeless teens in their community to take action. Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) shares their concern and their readiness to come to the aid of those who need a home.

In the Lupusoros' case, that meant welcoming Kemoni, a student without a guardian or stable housing, into their Beaverton home until she graduated from high school and found a job. "Alina and Razvan, they kept me going,"

says Kemoni. "And I never gave up because of them."

Oregon's housing crisis

Across Oregon, the dearth of affordable housing has reached a crisis point. Apartment rents and home prices are rising faster than incomes. Oregon's rental vacancy rate is the nation's lowest—just 3.6 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau—a figure driven by population growth, a property investment boom and skyrocketing rents. Meanwhile, new home construction in Oregon is at a historic low, according to a recent study by

Harvard University.

In Portland, a dramatic increase in the need for shelter led Mayor Charlie Hales to declare a housing state of emergency. In Bend, home prices are up 58 percent since 2011, and in Redmond, 78 percent. The Rogue Valley rental vacancy rate, at 1.5 percent, is worse than New York City's.

The need for stable, safe and healthy living conditions for many Oregonians is urgent.

Our action plan

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon has a long history

of taking an innovative, multifaceted, collaborative approach to heeding the biblical injunction to "bring the homeless poor into the house" (Isaiah 58:7). Our diverse programs ensure that people and families with differing situations and incomes can live in places that fit their needs and budgets.

Kemoni and other homeless teens in the Beaverton, Gresham-Barlow and Lincoln County School Districts are served by EMO's **Second Home** program.

Under its auspices, EMO brings together caring and

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Persevere and never lose infinite hope

“I prayed for 20 years, but I received no answers until I prayed with my legs.”

—Frederick Douglass

Action and contemplation, work and prayer. These are two sides of the same coin. Prayer grounds action in compassion, humility and courage. Both are essential to bring about God’s vision of justice and peace in this world, here and now.



Jan Musgrove Elfers
Executive Director

Photo credit: Georkis Ramos Quintana

I had the privilege recently of hearing The Rev. Dr. Traci Blackmon, executive of the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, address the Women in Ministry at the African Methodist Episcopal Convention in Portland. Her moving speech started with a reading of Luke 18:1-8. This is the parable of the “persistent widow” who relentlessly pleaded with a judge to grant her justice. The text notes that the judge “neither feared God nor cared what people thought.” In the end, the judge did not change. It was because the widow did not give up that the judge was finally “worn out” and granted her justice. Jesus ends the parable by stating, “And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night?”

How easy it is to get discouraged when human nature seems to resist change! Often the transformation we want to see in the world appears impossible to achieve. But by faithfully taking action and remembering to take the long view of human history, we can remake our world. Those people who seek to “move mountains” do so not because the desired results come quickly, but from a deep sense that it is their life’s purpose, however long it takes.

Someone who succeeded in moving mountains is Martin Luther King Jr., who lived to see the passage of landmark legislation—the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. As vital as these laws have been, the work for racial equality is not yet finished. Today, movements like Black Lives Matter challenge us to keep pushing forward towards equal rights for all. As Dr. King said, “Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle.”

To carry on the struggle for positive change, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is sponsoring several events in the coming months that offer opportunities for both action and reflection.

On Nov. 3, our *Collins Lecture*, “Redeeming the Soul of America: Race, Justice and Reconciliation,” will feature The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago. Dr. Moss will bring his considerable skills as both preacher and prophet to inspire us to raise our voices and act together to confront racism, bring justice to our streets, and reconcile one to another. Presented in collaboration with the Albina Ministerial Alliance, the 2016 *Collins Lecture* will be just the starting point for a multiyear, statewide effort to bring discussion of racism and related topics into places of worship. We invite you to join us for Dr. Moss’s lecture and for ensuing pulpit exchanges, shared meals, intercongregational dialogue and partnership projects.

Voting is another powerful action to enact change in our world. In this issue of the *Voice*, you will find our *2016 Guide to the Oregon Ballot Measures*. This is one tool we offer to help our constituents become informed about election issues. EMO representatives will also give presentations at Ballot Measure Forums at congregations across the state this fall. After the November election, the Oregon Legislature will be gearing up for the 2017 Legislative Session.

Interfaith Advocacy Day, on Feb. 7 in Salem, will provide yet another chance for people of faith to come together to speak out for justice for all Oregonians.

And this fall, the Oregon interfaith community will unite to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of 9/11 in a series of three services that will reflect on the past, honor and encourage the development of the Beloved Community, and envision our mission together in years to come. Each service will end with food and fellowship—and a call to action! The first service was held on Sept. 11, and the remaining services will be held on Oct. 30 and Nov. 20. More details are available at emoregon.org.

Lasting change usually does not happen quickly. Sometimes it seems as if it will never happen at all. We must remember that in addition to prayer, it is essential that we persevere in taking action—for the benefit of our neighbors now and for generations to come. Dr. Blackmon ended her speech with an admonition to “speak out, shout out, and wear them out.” These are words EMO takes to heart. With our members, and on behalf of our communities, we are at work in the world.

Northwest denominational annual gatherings

Oct. 7-9: Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon, La Grande

Oct. 14-16: American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast, Orozi, Calif.

Nov. 4-5: Episcopal Diocese of Oregon, Eugene



2016 Collins Lecture

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are called to address issues of racism, injustice, inequality and discrimination,” says The Rev. Dr. Leroy Haynes Jr., EMO board member and Albina Ministerial Alliance representative. “We are taking the initiative to foster conversations and build bridges between racial and ethnic groups. Our goal is to create healthy working relationships and partnerships that will lead to Beloved Communities of justice and equality.”

The *Collins Lecture* steering committee plans to engage participants in reflection, dialogue and ongoing action toward a just and inclusive future for all Oregonians. The committee emphasizes that the Nov. 3 *Collins Lecture* will be the just beginning of a statewide, multi-year action plan including pulpit exchanges, interracial relationship building, advocacy efforts and community partnerships.

The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III

The son of an associate of Martin Luther King Jr. in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III continues to build on his father’s civil rights

legacy. Dr. Moss is part of a new generation of ministers committed to community advancement and social justice advocacy. He practices and preaches a Black theology that calls attention to the problems of mass incarceration, environmental justice and economic inequality.

Dr. Moss’s creative Bible-based messages entwining love and justice have inspired audiences worldwide. He is the author most recently of *Blue Note Preaching in a Post-Soul World: Finding Hope in an Age of Despair*, and he contributed to *Race in a Post-Obama America: The Church Responds*.

Structural racism in our community

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s dedication to compassion and justice calls us to break down the barriers that prevent people from experiencing the fullness of life we all desire. Invisible, structural racism is one of those barriers.

The African-American Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile (2014), a report by Portland State University and the Coalition of Communities of Color, states:

Institutional structures perpetuate racial

injustice, poverty and disparities in opportunity for our communities. ... Oregon has been slow to dismantle overtly racist policies, such as mortgage lenders’ redlining practices that continued into the 1990s, long after they were prohibited by the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968. These local practices deepened the well-recognized discrimination faced by African-Americans when they were denied access to both low-interest mortgages and free tuition after World War II.

African-Americans in Multnomah County continue to live with the effects of racialized policies, practices and decision-making. The stress of racism has a profound impact on health and wellness, as do other social determinants of health, such as ongoing discrimination in housing, school discipline, and racial profiling by police. Multiple systems of inequity and institutional racism result in over-representation in punitive systems, like juvenile justice and child welfare, and underrepresentation in systems that advance opportunities, like higher education and civil services employment.

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Healthy retail creates a healthy Oregon

The health of our communities is a fundamental concern of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO). In the case of the Rockwood neighborhood in Gresham, Ore., EMO's Healthy Retail initiative takes a practical, block-by-block approach to addressing what has become an epidemic of obesity and related chronic diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular ailments, attributable in large part to dietary factors.

Rockwood is a racially and ethnically diverse, densely populated neighborhood. Its residents have one of the highest poverty levels in Portland's four-county metropolitan region. Many must rely on public transportation, which makes it difficult to access affordable groceries; others rely on small convenience stores to meet their daily food needs. This has in the past been a recipe for poor health.

Since 2014, EMO's Healthy Retail initiative has promoted good health in Rockwood by making fresh produce and nutritious staples available to residents right in their own neighborhood convenience stores



El Porvenir Mini Market in Rockwood, a participant in EMO's Healthy Retail initiative, now offers fresh produce for neighborhood residents.

—at affordable prices.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon works directly with convenience store owners, encouraging them to dedicate space to vending fresh fruits and vegetables and culturally relevant staples. With the partnership of Multnomah County's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) and the City of Gresham, and funded by a grant from the Center for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC), Healthy Retail subsidizes their purchases of refrigeration equipment, display cases and signage. We also offer free marketing and promotion of healthy food items, incentives for store improvements and assistance in business planning.

Studies have shown that communities with ready access to healthy food options have better health outcomes. Block by block, EMO is at work to make good nutrition a possibility for all, regardless of income or geographic location.

Other services EMO provides to residents in the Rockwood neighborhood include housing unaccompanied, homeless high school students through the Second Home program, refugee resettlement through Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees, and access to affordable, fresh produce at the Rockwood Farmers Market (*see story below*).

For more information about EMO's Healthy Retail initiative, call the EMO office at (503) 221-1054.

Rockwood Farmers Market opens for its second full season

The Rockwood Farmers Market opened in June for its second full market season in the culturally diverse Rockwood neighborhood of Gresham. Every Sunday throughout the summer and early fall, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., the market offers fruits and vegetables from local farms, delicious prepared foods, community booths that engage visitors and offer children's activities, performances by local musicians, a free Summer Meal site for children, and health information. The season will end on Sunday, Oct. 16.

The Rockwood Farmers Market is a project of EMO's Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership. It is a community-based market that seeks to create a vibrant, safe space for the community to gather around food, health, wellness and education and to celebrate its rich cultural diversity.

As part of a statewide initiative, the market accepts EBT and WIC and Seniors Farmers

Market Coupons and provides a \$10 Double Up Food Bucks match for SNAP (food stamps) customers. It is the only Double Up market within a six-mile radius.

Open to the public, the market is held in the parking lot just north of the Plaza del Sol in Rockwood at SE 187th and Stark St., within one block of the Rockwood/E. 188th Ave. MAX station.

We are committed to the success of local farmers, growers and makers by supporting small businesses. Market vendors include Schedeens, Mill Meadow Farm, Paitong Thai Cuisine, Amoula's Moroccan Cuisine, Alle Amin (Somali food), and more. Market sponsors are Metro, Whole Foods and Albina Community Bank. The market was started with major support from the NW Health Foundation and grants from the Presbyterian Hunger Fund, Catholic Campaign for Human Development and the Jackson Foundation.



Amoula (above) operates a Moroccan cuisine stand at the Rockwood Farmers Market.

Learn more about the Rockwood Farmers Market at rockwoodfarmersmarket.weebly.com.

Goals of this year's Collins Lecture

It is EMO's belief that this history can be overcome, that the disparities faced by communities of color are neither inherent nor inevitable, and that together we can work towards a better future.

Because Oregon is not very diverse, many white people may not even begin to think about, let alone understand, the inequalities in our society.

This year's *Collins Lecture* will create an awareness of and faithful response to the embedded racism in our communities and culture. Together we will tackle the hidden histories, unaddressed discomforts, and divisions between people and communities. We will undertake difficult but necessary and potentially life-giving conversations. Grounded in scripture, truth-telling, confession and collaboration, we

will move toward interracial solidarity.

And when this conference ends, our response to systemic racism will begin. "America is in need of antiracism activists," says Dr. Moss. "America desires voices with a moral center that dare to speak truth to power and walk humbly with our God."

About the event

The afternoon seminar will be from 1 to 5:30 p.m., and the *Collins Lecture* will begin at 7 p.m. Both will be held at Concordia University in northeast Portland. The registration fee to attend the full event (afternoon seminar and evening *Collins Lecture* with Dr. Moss) is \$40, with a dinner option for an additional \$12. Admission to the evening lecture only is \$25. Students with ID are half price. More information and online registration

are available at emoregon.org or call (503) 221-1054.

The annual *Collins Lectures* have been a signature event of EMO for over 40 years. Underwritten by the Collins Foundation, the series presents emerging and inclusive theological and social perspectives on contemporary issues.

This year's event is cosponsored by Celebration Tabernacle, the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ, Community of Christ, Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) in Oregon and Southwest Idaho, Oregon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Oregon-Idaho Conference of the United Methodist Church, with additional support from Po'Shines Café de la Soul and the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

Taking the long journey on the path to U.S. Citizenship

April 8, 1989. Francisca Gaitán still remembers the day she left her home in a small town in El Salvador, about 80 miles southeast of San Salvador, the capital city. At 19 years old, she got on a bus and crossed Guatemala and Mexico to Agua Prieta, just south of the Arizona border. In Spanish, she describes the feeling of joy upon reaching American soil, “It’s something so great ... it’s like,” and then she switches to English, “Oh, my God.”

Francisca’s journey wasn’t over yet. She still had to walk two days to Phoenix, where she boarded a plane—back when no photo I.D. was needed—to Los Angeles to look for work. “It didn’t matter what I would do,” she says. What mattered was that she was safe, far from El Salvador’s brutal civil war, where, between 1980 and 1992, an estimated 70,000 people were killed by government forces, guerrilla groups and paramilitary death squads. Francisca was not alone in her choice to flee to the United States. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that one-quarter of El Salvador’s population fled the war.

Francisca’s path to citizenship began in 1994, when she married her husband, Manuel. Together they had four children, all U.S. citizens, and the family eventually settled in Portland. As a lawful permanent resident (a.k.a. “green card holder”), Manuel could petition for Francisca, and she finally received her green card in 2004. Once Francisca became eligible for citizenship in 2007, Manuel encouraged her to apply, telling her, “Everyone in this house

is a U.S. citizen now, except you, and you are the only one who can make it happen. *¡Estudia, Fran, estudia! Study!*”

Finally, in 2015, Francisca made the leap. With help from EMO’s SOAR Immigration Legal Services’ New Americans Initiative, she received free legal services to represent her in applying, as well as free classes to prepare for the citizenship test. With 100 questions about U.S. civics and history as well as a test of basic English literacy, the test is challenging for anyone.

Then tragedy struck. About a month before her citizenship test, Francisca’s husband Manuel passed away. When it came time for the literacy test, she was asked to spell the colors of the flag. “I couldn’t write the word *white*. My mind went blank, and I felt like I was going to faint,” she said. “I was so affected by my husband’s passing. I was so full of pain.” Her application was denied.

“I felt so sad that I had failed myself,” Francisca said, but “with patience and love,” she was determined to get her citizenship. Last October, Francisca resubmitted her application. In addition to attending SOAR’s citizenship classes twice a week for several months, she worked with a volunteer writing tutor to boost her confidence.

When she returned for her citizenship interview, Francisca let out a sigh of relief when she was asked to spell a sentence she had practiced many times: *Columbus Day is in October*. “When the immigration officer said to



Photo credit: Jaynee Martin

Francisca Gaitán completed free classes at SOAR Immigration Legal Services to prepare for the citizenship test. She passed the test and is now a U.S. Citizen!

me in Spanish, ‘Francisca, you passed,’ I knew my life had changed.”

Her children, now adults—one of whom is slated to graduate from George Fox University next year—joined her to celebrate at her oath ceremony. Afterwards, they gathered at Manuel’s gravesite. “My life changed so drastically in two ways this past year: one bad, one good,” she reflects. “We have to overcome the obstacles that arise in life. With patience and dedication, we have to keep fighting. No matter what.”

Francisca, like so many of SOAR Legal’s clients, will have the opportunity to vote as a U.S. citizen for the first time this November. With the upcoming election, we have been busier than usual assisting as many people as possible with applying for U.S. citizenship, so that they too can become civically engaged.

If you are interested in assisting low-income immigrants with becoming U.S. citizens, please contact Caroline van der Harten at cvan derharten@emoregon.org or (503) 384-2482.

New Americans Initiative

SOAR Legal began the “New Americans Initiative” in 2010, with the initial receipt of a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Citizenship grant, and has offered comprehensive citizenship services ever since. The City of Portland (through the East Portland Action Plan) and the Multnomah Bar Foundation have provided additional funding to include bilingual, bicultural citizenship classes in Russian and Spanish, as well as a Voter Education Project for our newly naturalized U.S. citizens.

In addition to staff providing services, this project is supported by volunteers who help out as citizenship class instructors, tutors, pro bono attorneys and legal assistants.

Since the program began, SOAR Legal has provided free citizenship education and legal services to more than 1,500 low income lawful permanent residents (“green card holders”).

Give!Guide campaign for Northeast Emergency Food Program kicks off soon

We are very excited to have EMO’s Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP) featured in the *Willamette Week* Give!Guide for the fifth year in a row! We are asking 1,500 friends to give at least \$15 each in 2016. We are also seeking your help in attracting an additional 200 first-time donors to support the work of NEFP by donating to us in this year’s Give!Guide.

The Give!Guide encourages charitable giving from Portlanders of all ages but especially from younger generations. This year, the Give!Guide is hoping to achieve a record 10,000 unique donors who will give to any of the more than 140 amazing nonprofit organizations featured in the Give!Guide. NEFP hopes to surpass our previous records as well, which is why, with your support, we want to reach 200 new donors this year.

A great way to get new people to support NEFP through the Give!Guide is by leading through example and encouraging friends, family, fellow congregants, coworkers and neighbors to join you in supporting the work of NEFP. We are especially eager to find support among those age 35 and under, as the Give!Guide rewards a cash prize to the organizations with the most donors in that age bracket.

If all our current supporters of NEFP get just one friend to donate alongside them to NEFP, then we will achieve our goal of 200 new donors by several magnitudes. No donation is too small, and no donation is too big!

Giving will be live on the Give!Guide website starting Nov. 2 and running until Dec. 31. Go to giveguide.org/#northeastemergencyfoodprogram to donate. And invite your friends to join you!

Voice

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

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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

Put your faith into action for *Interfaith Advocacy Day*

The 2017 *Interfaith Advocacy Day* will bring together hundreds of people from many religious traditions throughout Oregon for a day of worship, dialogue and advocacy. The much-anticipated biennial event will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2017, at St. Mark Lutheran Church and the State Capitol Building in Salem.

On *Interfaith Advocacy Day*, people of faith answer the call to be a voice for the voiceless. We will speak out for an end to poverty and in support of programs to eliminate hunger and homelessness. We will address issues such as climate change and violence and inequity in society.

Interfaith Advocacy Day will feature presentations from faith leaders on the religious roots of concern for the poor, training in advocacy skills, issue briefings, a procession to the Capitol Building, and afternoon meetings with elected representatives and senators.

Individuals and groups from congregations and community organizations are encouraged to participate. Online registration will be available by Dec. 1, 2016, at emoregon.org.

Sponsors to date include Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Interfaith Council of Greater Portland, Jewish Federation of Portland, Muslim Educational Trust, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, and the Peace and Justice Committee of the Archdiocese of Portland. If your congregation or organization is interested in being an event cosponsor or endorser, please download a form at emoregon.org. The deadline for cosponsoring or endorsing is Nov. 28.

For more information about *Interfaith Advocacy Day*, including sponsorship, contact Britt Conroy, EMO director of Public Policy Advocacy, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 207, or bconroy@emoregon.org.



Interfaith Advocacy Day has been integral to EMO's public policy advocacy efforts since 1999.

Affordable housing

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competent community members—volunteer home providers along with school district and city staff—to give unaccompanied students not only places to live, but also the mentorship and tools they need to thrive. Together, we give students life-changing opportunities to pursue their studies, explore their gifts and passions, and graduate from high school.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon serves an older demographic with its historic red-brick **Patton Home** in north Portland's tree-lined Albina neighborhood. More than 63 individuals in recovery from substance abuse, transitioning from homelessness or striving to maintain their personal independence find an affordable home in this single room occupancy (SRO) facility. They also receive nutritious home-cooked meals and companionship in a communal setting. Two waiting lists at Patton Home testify to the need for SRO housing. The list for non-subsidized units has a 12-month wait with just under 60 applicants. The subsidized list has a three-year waiting period with over 90 applicants.

Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR) began providing resettlement services for refugees and immigrants in 1979. Each year, SOAR resettles up to 600 people fleeing violence and persecution. SOAR links sponsors—congregations, friends or community organizations—with refugees before they arrive in the United States, and helps sponsors welcome and assist refugees in their adjustment to new lives in the Portland metro area.

Russian speakers are one of the largest immigrant groups in Oregon, some 100,000 strong. Many tend to remain isolated in their own tight-knit communities. The language barrier and isolation make it difficult for Russian speaking women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence to access help when they need it. EMO's team at **Russian Oregon Social Services** (ROSS) helps these Russian speakers find safe housing and the living-wage employment to afford it.

Home sharing

For over 30 years, EMO's **Shared Housing** successfully provided a matching and referral

service that brought together those who needed affordable housing with people who had homes and wanted help with rent, household chores or personal care. This exchange benefited home-seekers as well as many elderly, disabled and low-to-moderate income homeowners who could not have otherwise remained in their homes.

The program was discontinued in 2013 due to City of Portland budget cuts, but late in 2015, representatives of Elders in Action and the Multnomah County Aging, Disability and Veterans Services Division contacted EMO in the hope of reviving a shared housing program. Together with the African-American Alliance of Homeowners and Multnomah County's and City of Beaverton's dispute resolution centers, EMO is actively pursuing this possibility. We are in the process of seeking sustainable funding from private foundations and government sources to create a new entity called **Metro HomeShare** to replicate our previous, widely popular program.

The new Metro HomeShare will be an enhanced version of EMO's previous Shared Housing, incorporating lessons learned from the past, new best practices developed by Second Home, and other strategies and technical resources now implemented across the nation. The program is anticipated to launch in early 2017. With an initial focus on building a substantial base of home providers and training staff, our goal is to provide assistance to 500 home providers and home seekers per year.

How you can help

- **Volunteer to be a home provider for a homeless, unaccompanied high school student.** Contact Rick Stoller, home provider coordinator for Second Home, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 277, or rstoller@emoregon.org.
- **Become a monthly sustaining partner for Second Home.** You may set up your secure online donations at emoregon.org, or call (503) 221-1054 to speak to an EMO development associate.
- **Sponsor meals for a resident at the Patton Home.** Go to emoregon.org and select "Patton Home" on our Donate Now page.
- **Donate to the Refugee Rapid Response Fund.** Learn more at emoregon.org.

- **Volunteer to help settle a refugee family in their new home in the Portland metro area.** Contact Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees at soar@emoregon.org or (503) 284-3002.
- **Volunteer to help families facing homelessness due to domestic and sexual violence.** Contact Russian Oregon Social Services at (503) 777-3437.
- **Join us for *Interfaith Advocacy Day* on Feb. 7, 2017,** to advocate for affordable housing solutions in Oregon. For further details and to register, visit emoregon.org. See box below for actions the Oregon Legislature could make to address housing needs.

In sum, Oregon doesn't have a single housing crisis—it has many different housing crises affecting many different populations. EMO's innovative and collaborative approaches cast a wide net to help our neighbors in all their diversity find the homes they need to weather a common, and difficult, economic storm.

Advocacy works!

The following are investments the Legislature could make to address housing needs in Oregon.

Prevent and end homelessness: Each \$5 million investment will provide rent assistance or other flexible, short-term supports to at least 3,000 families experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless.

Create and preserve affordable rental housing: A \$40 million investment of bonds is expected to create an estimated 1,000 rental homes. Additional funding will help build new and preserve existing affordable apartments in communities around the state.

Home repair/rehabilitation: \$10 million will accomplish at least 400 critical home repairs—enabling homeowners of modest means, including seniors, to stay in their homes and live in health and safety.

6 Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations

EMO Member Spotlight: Maybelle Center for Community Nurturing the body, mind and spirit of the forgotten poor in Old Town-downtown Portland by building connections and community

Imagine discovering a slow motion, invisible crisis unfolding in your city. That's exactly what Fr. Richard Berg, C.S.C., found 25 years ago in Portland's Old Town neighborhood—hundreds and hundreds of people living in shabby single room occupancy hotel rooms, completely isolated from the rest of the community by poverty, mental illness and addiction. To the world around them, they were invisible. To Fr. Berg they were a call to action.

What today is the Maybelle Center for Community began with a group of dedicated volunteers organized by Fr. Berg, determined to make a difference in the lives of these isolated people by reaching out to them, one by one. It worked.

The Maybelle Center (formally Macdonald Center) is named in honor of the late Maybelle Clark Macdonald, a lifelong philanthropist and a dedicated supporter of marginalized individuals.

The vision of the Maybelle Center is to build a healthier community and world. They believe that unconditional caring has a



Volunteers with Maybelle's visitation program visit and build relationships with residents in Old Town.

profound and lasting positive impact on the health of individuals and communities. Their model is simple yet powerful. It begins with a visit from a caring volunteer to a lonely person isolated by poverty, mental illness, addiction or all three. Over time, and with patience, they build larger, interlocking circles of connection, community, health and love—all radiating outward into the world from those first visits.

Get involved

Maybelle Center is always looking for groups or individuals who wish to volunteer in their Spiritual Support program. From providing a pancake breakfast, to assisting with support groups, the Center welcomes those who wish to serve.

Another way to get involved is through Maybelle's Visitation program, which builds community and lessens social isolation. They do this by inviting people to volunteer to visit and build relationships with residents in the Old Town-downtown neighborhood. Every week, pairs of volunteers visit residents, all of whom live in single room occupancy hotels or low-income apartments.

If you are interested in helping improve the health of our community and combat social isolation, contact Jess Heman at jheman@maybellecenter.org or (971) 202-7451. You can also learn more at maybellecenter.org.

Parliament of the World's Religions

"A Taste of the Parliament: Listening to Other Voices" will be held on Oct. 16 at 1 p.m. at the Community of Christ Church, 4837 NE Couch St., Portland.

Join this interfaith gathering for a Northwest response and discussion to several of the declarations expressed by the Parliament of the World's Religions. The event will include speakers, panelists, cultural expressions, food, music related to climate change, Indigenous wisdom, and a challenge to hate speech and violence. Registration is \$30 and closes on Oct. 10.

To learn more and register, go to portlandparliament.eventbrite.com.

Lutherans approve document recognizing agreement with Catholic Church

Nearly 500 years after Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the Castle Church door, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has approved a declaration recognizing "there are no longer church-dividing issues" on many points with the Roman Catholic Church.

The "Declaration on the Way" was approved 931-9 by the 2016 ELCA Church-wide Assembly, held in August in New Orleans.

"Though we have not yet arrived, we have claimed that we are, in fact, on the way to unity," stated Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton. "This 'Declaration on the Way' helps us to realize more fully our unity in Christ with our Catholic partners, but it also serves to embolden our commitment to unity with all Christians."

Most notably, the "Declaration on the Way" includes 32 Statements of Agreement where Lutherans and Catholics no longer have church-

dividing differences on issues of church, ministry or the Eucharist. Those statements previously had been affirmed by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. The declaration also lists remaining differences between the two churches and next steps to address them.

Last November, Pope Francis sparked controversy when he seemed to suggest a Lutheran could receive Communion in the Catholic Church, saying "life is greater than explanations and interpretations." The pontiff is scheduled to visit Sweden on Oct. 31 to preside at a joint service with Lutherans.

In 2013, the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation released a joint document titled "From Conflict to Communion," focusing on the progress made in Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in the past 50 years.

Allen Temple CME celebrates groundbreaking

Senior pastor The Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes Jr. and community members of Allen Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church hope to rebuild the fire-damaged church and make it stronger than ever before. Church leaders hosted a groundbreaking ceremony on Saturday, Aug. 13, outside the sanctuary at 4236 NE Eighth Ave., Portland. Architectural plans for the renovation were on hand for community members to see.

The historic 9,500 square-foot church building was damaged by a double fire on Feb. 7, 2015. Two electrical fires caused over \$300,000 of damage, including severe damage to the roof. Costs to rebuild the structure

will be covered by building insurance, but the building is also in need of accessibility upgrades that are not covered.

Proposed upgrades include higher standard ADA requirements such as an elevator chair, better lighting and signage in outside areas, energy-efficient insulation for exterior walls, and a child care center to be operated by a local business owner. The renovations also include an upgrade to a home next door to the church that is owned by Allen Temple membership. This home is currently unusable due to poor condition. The renovations would allow the space to provide more services to the community.



The Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes Jr. holds up a shovel at the groundbreaking ceremony for Allen Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Photo credit: Tracey Stadnir, Un-4-Gettable Photography

Focus on the Funder: The Reser Family Foundation

Funder invests fully in student's life and future

By Jane Turville, EMO grants manager

Since I began working at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO), I've noticed something quite special about the relationships between those who generously support EMO's many programs and the EMO board and staff. These are not remote relationships, with the funder's presence only felt in the form of a check. These are relationships born out of deep-felt, shared values in which the funder is as present and involved as anyone else on the team.

I recently had the pleasure of seeing firsthand how this culture of value-driven collaboration can blossom. I had been working on grants for Second Home—EMO's program to find long-term housing for homeless, unaccompanied teens who are in need of stability to graduate from high school. Second Home has successfully found housing for an increasing number of high-school youth every year, and 90 percent of participating students graduate from high school in the Beaverton School District alone. The Beaverton program was so successful that in 2015 the Gresham Barlow and Lincoln County School Districts asked EMO to expand into their regions.

One of our funding partners is the Reser Family Foundation. The Reser family has been part of the Oregon business community for over 60 years. After the passing of Al Reser, the family established a charitable foundation to make innovative, transformational and charitable contributions in the areas of the arts, education, environment and health. The foundation's goal is to strengthen Oregonians, particularly children.

Jenny Pratt, Second Home program manager, and I sat down with Reser Family Foundation Director Mari Jo Prlain and Foundation Trustee Laurie Reser to talk about the previous school year, its successes and some of its challenges.

One story we mentioned was the challenge of a homeless student who had a dog that she could not part with. While there were home

“Education is one way that we can give people, both adults and children, the opportunity to live a successful life.”

—Mari Jo Prlain, director
Reser Family Foundation

providers willing to house the student, no one could also accommodate a dog. Jenny and her team had been working tirelessly, but without luck, to find the right home. Mari Jo and Laurie immediately thought of a foundation employee, Ann*, who loves animals and working with teens.

Ann was immediately interested. She loved the idea of the program and had available space in her home. The only problem? In the time taken to connect with Ann, the student with the dog had disappeared—she stopped going to school two weeks before school let out, quit her job and could not be found by school counselors, the Second Home team or other service providers that had been working with her.

This sort of daily instability illustrates one of the toughest realities for students struggling with homelessness. It is also one of the greatest challenges the Second Home team faces—keeping track of those whose lives have no predictability.

Still, within a week, a new student seeking housing was matched with home provider Ann. After a month of living with Ann, this student said, “It's been a relief to finally have structure and a secure place to work on my future, rather than worrying about where I am going to be the next day or next week.” She now has graduated from high school, is looking for a job to save money, and plans to attend community college in the winter.

Reser Family Foundation's Mari Jo Prlain says, “Second Home meets three of the Reser Family Foundation's priority areas—education, health and environment—in a way that combines all three to help kids be



successful. And the program also gives us the opportunity for different tenets of giving—financial, volunteerism, social, etc. It's a win for everyone.”

While there are many heroes in this story, without Mari Jo and Laurie from Reser, this great connection and happy ending to one student's homelessness might have been quite different. A huge “thank you” to Mari Jo and Laurie and the Reser Family Foundation!

As the 2016-2017 school year starts, Second Home will launch a three-year capacity building campaign, designed to increase paid staff positions in the Beaverton, Gresham-Barlow and Lincoln County offices. Full-time program staff will significantly increase the number of students housed and on track for high school graduation and a successful future.

If you would like to learn more about how you can support this effort, please contact either Jenny Pratt at jpratt@emoregon.org or Jane Turville at jturville@emoregon.org, or call (503) 221-1054.

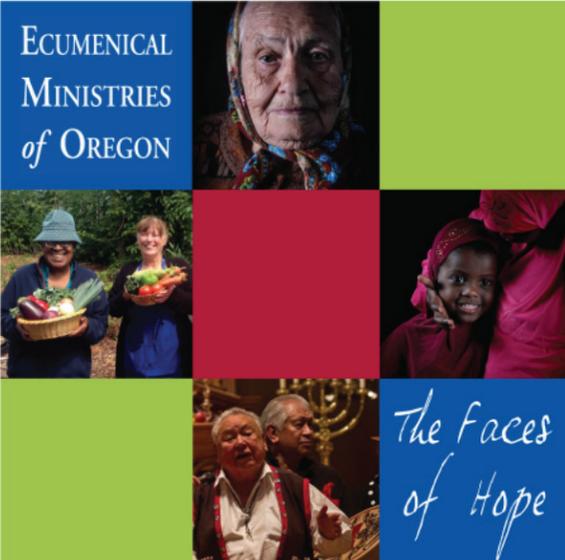
**The name of our home provider has been changed to protect their privacy.*

Join us for Second Home's Sixth Anniversary Celebration!

Wednesday, Jan. 25, 12 to 1 p.m. (lunch provided), at St. Andrew Lutheran Church, 12405 SW Butner Rd., Beaverton.

Join us as EMO's Second Home celebrates six years of providing housing for unaccompanied students in the Beaverton School District. We are eager to tell the story of how the Beaverton community has stepped up to support our youth during a crucial time in their lives, so they can graduate from high school and pursue their dreams and goals. Lunch will be served, and all are welcome! There is no cost to attend; a free will offering will be taken.

For more information about Second Home, contact Jenny Pratt at jpratt@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054, ext. 277. To RSVP for the celebration, contact Lisa Westarp at lwestarp@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054, ext. 208.

2015 Annual Report

0245 SW Bancroft Street, Suite B, Portland, Oregon 97239
(503) 221-1054 ■ www.emoregon.org ■ emo@emoregon.org

EMO's annual report is going paperless!

In an effort to cut back on printing expenses and paper waste, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's *2015 Annual Report: The Faces of Hope* is now available as an electronic document. You may download the report from the EMO website, emoregon.org, from either the home page or the About Us page. We also have a limited number of printed reports available. If you wish to have a copy mailed to you, please contact the EMO office at (503) 221-1054 or emo@emoregon.org.

Join us for World AIDS Day fundraiser luncheon to support our HIV Services!

Please join EMO's HIV Services on Wednesday, Nov. 30, from 12 to 1 p.m. at Concordia University in Portland in observance of World AIDS Day. This is an opportunity for us to honor and celebrate those in our communities who live daily with HIV/AIDS, and those who support the work we do at EMO's HIV Day Center and Daily Bread Express.

Many of the HIV Day Center's most compelling and meaningful moments happen over a shared meal, and we invite you to join us in a meal, sponsored by and held at our neighboring Concordia University.

Partners and supporters both new and old will have the chance to hear where this past year has taken HIV Services and where we are headed in 2017.

We welcome all to this opportunity to give vital financial support to a beloved community resource. There is no cost to attend; a free will offering will be taken.

For information about attending the World AIDS Day event or hosting a table for your friends, family or congregation, contact Jesse Herbach, HIV Services program manager, at jherbach@emoregon.org or (503) 460-3822.

EMO celebrates grants & gifts

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's board of directors and staff extend their appreciation to those who support 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
Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Black United Fund of Oregon CareOregon	NE Emergency Food Program Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
The Collins Foundation	Annual Fund
Herbert A. Templeton Foundation	Annual Fund
The Jackson Foundation	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Jouris Family Foundation	Second Home
McMenamins Pubs & Breweries	HIV Services
Metro	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
New Seasons Market	NE Emergency Food Program
Allcott/Hunt Share It Now Advised Fund	Annual Fund
Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
Reser's Fine Foods	Second Home
St. Luke Lutheran Church	Public Policy Advocacy
Spirit Mountain Community Fund	Russian Oregon Social Services
Susan G. Komen for the Cure	Russian Oregon Social Services
Tides Foundation	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership

Donation to Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Name(s) _____

Address _____

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Please make tax-deductible check payable to EMO or pay by:

Visa MasterCard American Express

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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 online donation at emoregon.org.

Honor & Memorial Gifts

March to August 2016

Gifts in Honor

In honor of Jan Elfers

Curtis Bell & Linda

McKim-Bell, Wayne Musgrove

In honor of Hardman-Maloney

Brotherhood—Susan Lindauer

In honor of Jenny Holmes

Vernon & Betty Groves

In honor of Howard Kenyon

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Brown, Gloria Cox, Luella

Dreyer, Miriam Griffith, Jesse

Herbach, Hannah Kenyon,

Stephen Kenyon, Wesley &

Rebecca Kenyon, Joe & Kay

Moreland, Matthew & Carla

Starrett-Bigg, James & Elaine

Volkening, Nina & Paul

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In honor of Tish Kremidas

Sophia Kremidas

In honor of David Leslie

William & Karin Wright

In honor of Ted Liljeholm

Edward Gilman

In honor of Gary Logsdon

Audre Bratcher

In honor of Jaymee Martin

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In honor of Muslim Educational

Trust—Rania Ayoub

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Betts-Stover, Jane Buchan, John

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Ministry, Robert & Barre Stoll,

Adriana Voss-Andreae

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Sisters of the Holy Names of

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In honor of Doug Wirt—Neil Allen

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Judith Eda, Linda & Larry Monk

In honor of Carley Berkey & Mark

Adams—Kay Ellis, Jennifer

Erickson, Linda & Pete Hogue,

Sara Kowalczyk, Shelley Searle

Gifts in Memory

In memory of Paul Bellavia

Stacy Bellavia

In memory of Trudy Bradley

Dan Bradley

In memory of Dale Brandt

Barbara Brandt

In memory of Allen & Marjorie

Broadwater

Dale & Joanna Brown

In memory of George Curran

Domenica Gonzales

In memory of Rodney Demoss

Jamie Christianson

In memory of Frank Drischell

Sophia Kremidas

In memory of Charles Easley

Mary Easley

In memory of Jeff Edwards

Ester Edwards

In memory of Gladys Flesher

Fraser and Lynn Rasmussen

In memory of Lois Grumm

Maria Grumm

In memory of Margaretta Dunn

Kruse—Suzanne Cerddeu

In memory of Henry & Dorothy

Lambert

Phyllis & Raymond Krueger

In memory of James Livers

Marian Livers

In memory of Kay Musgrove

Mark & Diane Musgrove

In memory of Robert Oga

Rosendo & Leslie Pont

In memory of Claude & Lola Roberts

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Richard & Margaret Brown