

# VOICE



## Feeding Our Neighbors

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The VOICE is published by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. EMO brings together diverse communities of faith to learn, serve and advocate for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

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**ON THE COVER**

Jon Makler, Program Manager at EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program.  
Photo by Hannah Spaulding.

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Save the date for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's

Love in Action  
— Annual Gala —

Sept. 19, 2023 | Oregon Convention Center

Dear Readers,

This issue of the VOICE exemplifies Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) unique downstream (direct service) and upstream (advocacy and education) approach. As the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu once said, "There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in."

Downstream, our direct service programs assist refugees and immigrants with resettlement and legal services, individuals living with HIV/AIDS, survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, the food insecure, and unaccompanied houseless youth.

Upstream, our Public Policy team brings together diverse coalitions to advocate for an Oregon that works for everyone, particularly those we assist through our direct service programs. Our Creation Justice team promotes climate justice and resiliency for communities most impacted by climate change. Additionally, our Education and Dialogue efforts bring multi-faith communities together in dialogue and cooperation and shed light on issues such as the dangerous rise of antisemitism.

This approach of our downstream and upstream efforts working together is illustrated by Savina Zuniga's story on page 8 about her journey from houseless youth entering EMO's Second Home program, to advocating for legislation to support youth who now find themselves in that same difficult situation.

To further address our upstream efforts to combat youth houselessness, EMO's Public Policy team partnered with lawmakers early in the 2023 Legislative Session to expand funding for Oregon youth experiencing houselessness. Through House Bills 2001 and 5019, a record investment of \$25 million has been dedicated for houseless youth services—everything from emergency funding to families in danger of losing their homes to housing for courageous youth like Savina.

Thank you for reading,



Michelle Bush  
Acting Director of Communications



Kim Wagner (right), EMO/JVC Public Policy Advocate, witnessed Oregon Governor Tina Kotek sign HB 2001 and 5019 into law on March 29.

# NEFP Feeding Our Neighbors

Meet Northeast Emergency Food Program's (NEFP) Manager, Jon Makler, who joined the team last October.

For 40 years, NEFP has met the urgent food needs of our Portland metro area neighbors.



When the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020, NEFP shifted to distributing food boxes outdoors. Last fall, one of the first tasks new Program Manager Jon Makler (above) tackled was moving food distribution back to an indoor shopping experience—no small feat!

## Tell us about your background.

Professionally, I spent more than 20 years working as an urban planner with a mission to reduce the social and environmental damage associated with transportation systems. I grew up outside of Philadelphia and am a practicing Quaker, which is much more exotic in Oregon than in Pennsylvania!

## Why did you choose to work for EMO?

I decided to leave infrastructure policy work to seek something with an explicitly humanitarian mission with an employer that would value and reward my heart-first leadership approach. It was pretty terrifying to change sectors and start networking in an unfamiliar landscape.

## What is your vision for the program?

We are trying to address food insecurity by providing our clients with dignity through choice: offering foods that they value according to their culture and customs. My vision is to increase the quantity of food, the number of people we serve, and the dignity we provide our clients, while accomplishing this work in a culturally competent way.

## What do you find most rewarding about your work?

NEFP's staff is incredible and our volunteers are extraordinary. But the true reward is in the gratitude that our clients express during and after their shopping experience. We serve many immigrants and lately we have seen

many recent arrivals from Ukraine. These are families dealing with significant trauma, and I'm proud to help lift some of the burden off with the food and service NEFP provides.

A recent example comes to mind. Our team had just closed the door after three hours of food distribution when there was a knock. I opened the door to see two parents with their two children. They spoke very little English but said, "Food please." As I walked them through the food pantry, after each section—dry goods, bread, produce, meat, eggs and milk—they thought they were done, but I kept leading them through the entire distribution line.

As the family was leaving NEFP with a cart full of food, the father said to me, "We are new refugees from Ukraine," while the mother cried tears of joy, and the son squealed with excitement over his new comic books.

## What can volunteers do to assist your program?

To distribute more food to more people, NEFP needs to diversify its methods,

such as mobile food pantries. This will meet the needs of clients who cannot come to NEFP during our normal business hours. To accomplish this, we'll need teams of volunteers to load food in our truck and "set up shop" offsite.

It would also be great to have volunteers who speak the languages of our clients: Spanish, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Russian and Chinese. You can see what it means to a shopper when they are greeted and guided through the pantry in their own language.

## Anything else you'd like to add?

NEFP is turning 40 this year! Over these many years, there have been institutions that have sustained this service (like Luther Memorial Church, where we are housed) and individuals like former Program Manager John Elizalde, who still volunteers here every week. I'm honored to lead the program into its fifth decade. ■



Northeast Emergency Food Program offers a unique shopping experience where individuals can select the food they want. Shoppers leave with a three- to five-day supply of nutritious groceries, including fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, bread and meat.

## More about NEFP

On Jan. 2, 1983, EMO introduced Northeast Emergency Food Program as a temporary six-month program in partnership with the Albina Ministerial Alliance and the Urban League of Portland. It quickly evolved into a permanent program, providing food on an emergency basis to thousands of people in northeast Portland.

Forty years later, NEFP is still going strong. Last year, we distributed more than 1.3 million pounds of food to 121,766 individuals!

### We primarily serve:

- Families with children—over 40 percent of our recipients are children
- The unemployed and the underemployed
- People with special needs, including the disabled and the elderly
- A high percentage of immigrants and refugees
- People experiencing crisis

### Ways you can get involved:

- Volunteer
- Donate food
- Make a financial gift

To learn more about NEFP, visit [emo-nefp.org](http://emo-nefp.org) or contact us at [nefp@emoregon.org](mailto:nefp@emoregon.org) or (503) 284-5470.

# ANTISEMITISM

## Lest We Forget History, We Shall Be Bound to Repeat It

*A reflection on combating antisemitism  
from my recent visit to Poland* **BY FRANK SO**

**Frank’s Mom (in Portland, Ore.):**  
*Frank, how was your visit today at Auschwitz?*

**Frank (in Krakow, Poland):**  
*It is hard to explain this feeling because the visit went well, but walking on the grounds where so many were murdered and listening to Holocaust survivors talk about the pain and trauma was emotionally taxing.*

**Frank’s Mom (in Portland, Ore.):**  
*Going there is important, listening to how people allow evil to take control is real and why we must confront evil wherever and whenever we see it.*

**I**n January, I accompanied the Second Gentleman of the United States, Mr. Doug Emhoff, to Poland for the 78<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the Liberation of Auschwitz Camp. As one of only a handful of non-Jews in the entourage, I felt very privileged to accompany him as we learned about efforts to combat antisemitism in Poland and throughout Europe.

In the Jesuit tradition of self-reflection, each day I considered the hardships of what over a million Jews suffered in Auschwitz, and I realized I could barely scratch the surface of what that must have been like.

I had the opportunity to speak with many of my Jewish brothers and sisters and could see how traumatic and difficult it was to take in all they saw and felt. It seems unfathomable »

to imagine any plan that would consider mass murder; in this case, it was Hitler’s planned genocide of 11 million Jews, of which more than six million were ultimately murdered.

Walking through the exhibits of Auschwitz victims’ belongings and the elaborate books kept of all the Jews murdered sits so heavy in one’s heart. Seeing my Jewish colleagues look at those books to find relatives who had perished at Auschwitz filled me with sorrow and anger. How could such evil exist? Each person has a name. Each soul shall not be forgotten. There certainly was more for all of us to unpack throughout the trip and upon returning home to the United States.

Today’s resurgence of antisemitism is a resurgence of evil and hate. Antisemitism has many forms, from hate speech to acts of violence. In our own country, we have heard hateful words and false accusations from celebrities and politicians, spreading intolerance and prejudice. In Portland, we have seen acts of vandalism and

violence on Jewish synagogues and businesses.

I am thankful to Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s former Presidents/Executive Directors, Jan Elfers and The Rev. Dr. Rodney Page, who have joined me in a statement condemning antisemitism and supporting our faith community and partners.

You can read the statement at [emoregon.org/press-releases](http://emoregon.org/press-releases).

We must continue to unite and not divide. EMO stands committed to inclusion and mutual support. Together with our members and partners, we are making a positive impact for the greater good of all. ■

**36 PERCENT**  
increase in antisemitic incidents in the United States in 2022

**111 PEOPLE**  
physically assaulted last year, an increase of 26 percent

**51 PERCENT**  
increase in vandalism, up from 853 to 1,288

2022 annual statistics released by the Anti-Defamation League, March 2023



Photo: Frank So (right) walking with Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff to a memorial in Gorlice, Poland.

# My Journey

— from houseless youth  
to legislative advocate

BY SAVINA ZUNIGA



# H O M E

**M**y name is Savina Zuniga, and I am Paiute, Cherokee and Shoshone. I am 23 years old, and I experienced homelessness when I was 16.

In 2016, I found myself in a position where I considered dropping out of high school to support my family and myself and to have a place to live. Before I could do that, though, my counselor at Beaverton High School found me crying in the hallway and pulled me to her office. I told her of the adversities I was facing. She connected me with Jenny Pratt Hale at EMO's Second Home program and Lisa Mentasana with the Beaverton School District. With their help, I got new clothing, food, gift cards and a connection to a potential host home provider.

Later that week, I decided to move in with the home provider, Michele Mott, where I stayed for a year and a half. I graduated high school a year early in 2017.

For years, I have volunteered to share my story for Second Home. And in 2019, I started contracting with EMO to advocate for bills with Britt Conroy, EMO's Director of Public Policy, which would benefit unaccompanied houseless youth.

During the 2022 Oregon Legislative Session, the bill that we advocated for was HB4013, which came from my original idea and I co-authored. The bill expands eligibility for existing foster care youth benefits—such as tuition and fee waivers and transitional living programs—to unaccompanied houseless youth and youth who have experienced homelessness.

Since then, I've worked with the Oregon Department of Human Services to implement this new law.

I am currently contracted with EMO to help youth and service providers learn about and access this resource for eligible students. I am also utilizing the college tuition and fee waiver portion myself. I've been a part of every process of this effort: hatching the idea, advocating, implementation and utilization.

My goal is to continue my efforts to improve the lives of houseless youth and struggling families in Oregon, hopefully on an even larger scale. I will earn a degree in a major that will help me move up in the field and be able to play a larger part of this effort.

Although I have lived through many struggles in addition to housing insecurity, I am aware that it could have been a lot worse. I also know that I am in a unique position with a valuable network. It is my privilege to do the work on this scale. This is why I am passionate about what I have accomplished, and what I will accomplish in the future.

I know many of us who work at EMO have faced adverse life challenges—and I thank you all for being a part of the change we wish to see in the world. Thank you for letting me share my story and for being present. ■

## SECOND HOME

Second Home connects volunteer host homes with unaccompanied high school students experiencing homelessness. By ensuring that the students have stable housing and ongoing support, Second Home allows them to focus on completing their secondary education and realize their full potential.

Our program is a ground-breaking example of how a community can respond to the issue of youth homelessness.

Second Home was launched by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon in 2010 to assist students in the Beaverton School District. Since then, the program has expanded to serve students in Washington County, Clackamas County, East Multnomah County and Lincoln County school districts.

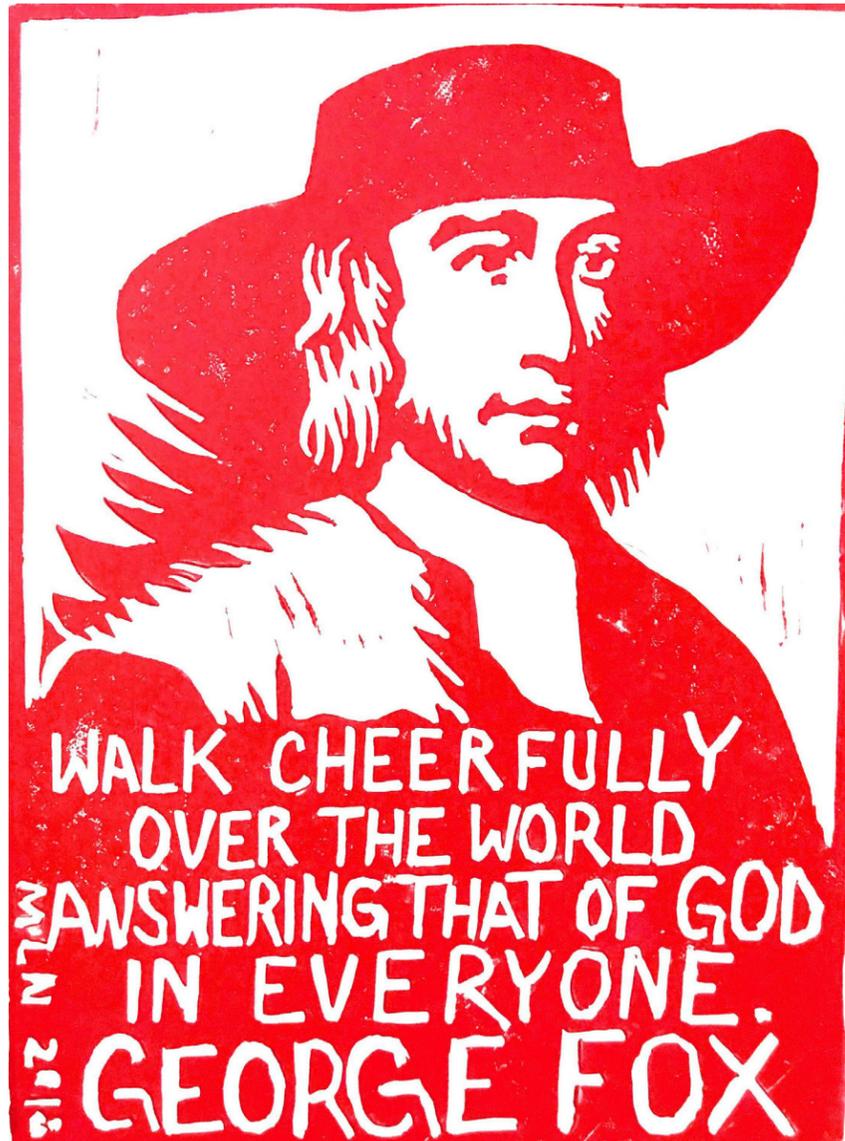
Learn more about Second Home at [emo-secondhome.org](http://emo-secondhome.org).



In 2022, Savina Zuniga (to the right of Governor Kate Brown) witnessed the signing of HB4013. Joining her were EMO's Public Policy team members Britt Conroy and Olivia Asato (standing behind Savina). The bill passed unanimously in the House and 25-2 in the Senate.

# UNDERSTANDING QUAKERS

By Jane Snyder



**Jane Snyder** and her husband, Joe, are members of Multnomah Monthly Meeting. Jane has been Clerk of Multnomah Meeting, North Pacific Yearly Meeting (Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana), Friends World Committee for Consultation, and Section of the Americas (Friends in North, Central and South America).

**R**eligion was very much in the public eye and in daily discourse in 17<sup>th</sup> century England. The 1611 publication of the King James Version of the Bible provided readers of the English language a chance to read, study and understand the Bible for themselves. Many Protestant sects were formed at that time.

George Fox was a seeker of truth. He had a strong calling to follow Jesus' teachings and despaired that most churches of the time were not doing so. Fox's epiphany came to him, "When all my hopes in them [priests] and all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could tell what to do, then, O then, I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition' and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy ... My desires after the Lord grew stronger, and zeal in the pure knowledge of God and of Christ alone, without the help of any man, book or writing." (1652)

From this, Quakers have testimonies. Because there is that of God in every person, all people are equal. Because there is that of God in every person, war is contrary to the will of God, as is racism and sexism. Quakers do not take oaths, because the truth should be told all of the time. Quakers also have testimonies on Simplicity, Community and Stewardship of Earth.

Quakers are also called Friends, as in John 15:14, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." The nickname Quakers was given by a judge when a Friend advised the judge that he should quake and tremble before the Lord. »

The understanding that there is that of God in every person led 19<sup>th</sup> century United States Friends to help slaves escape to freedom, to avoid the use of products produced by slave labor and to work to abolish slavery itself.

The way the testimonies guide Quakers is the practice of asking queries and encouraging Friends to reflect on the queries in a spirit of worship. One of the most challenging queries is, "Do you center your awareness on the Living Presence of God so that all other things take their rightful places?"

Unprogrammed Quaker worship is gathering in expectant silence and being ready to share what messages might come from divine revelation. When a Friend is so guided, they may

speak in Meeting. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the United States, some Quaker groups developed the tradition of having pastors and sermons. Today across the world, some Quakers have pastors and sermons while others have unprogrammed worship.

One activity that is the same in all varieties of Friends' faith and practice is how corporate decisions are reached. In a Meeting for Worship for Business, the decision is made when all Friends present are in unity, guided by the Divine. Friends are engaged in peace, justice and equality activism. There are three regional groups of Friends in Oregon: Northwest Yearly Meeting, North Pacific Yearly Meeting and Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting. ■



*Lucretia Mott.*

American Quaker Lucretia Mott was an abolitionist and women's rights activist

## THE QUIET REVOLUTIONARIES

The Religious Society of Friends played an outsized role in the women's suffrage movement. The small Christian denomination provided an equal role for women since its founding in 16<sup>th</sup> century England. That principle put Quakers in the forefront of the push for women's suffrage, both during the early years of the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 and in the years leading up to the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, granting women the right to vote in 1920.

Four of the convention's five organizers, including Lucretia Coffin Mott, were Quakers who had also been closely involved in the abolition of slavery. These women drafted the convention's Declaration of Sentiments, which pronounced, "All men and women are created equal." Twenty-three Quakers signed the document, more than any other religion. Seventy-two years later, it was the actions of another Quaker woman—Alice Paul—that led to the passing of a Women's Suffrage Bill by the U.S. Congress.

Quaker women also played a pivotal role in the movement to abolish slavery. This brought many of them in contact with another remarkable woman of the era—Harriet Tubman. Mott's sister-in-law, Abigail, was active in the Underground Railroad—the network for fugitive slaves escaping to the free territories. Tubman and her associates are credited with helping free some 300 slaves between 1850 and 1860. Mott's sister, Martha Coffin Wright, turned her home into a "station" for the Underground Railroad, and fugitive slaves ferried by Tubman would sleep in Wright's kitchen.

# CLIMATE JUSTICE

## Investing IN A RENEWABLE FUTURE

BY JULIA WEINAND

**Julia Weinand** is completing a year of service with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest as a Climate & Environmental Justice Policy Advocate at EMO.

**D**espite Oregon's goal to completely decarbonize by 2040, the Oregon State Treasury continues to invest in fossil fuel companies that are harming our environment and destroying our future. At Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO), I have been working alongside organizations that are trying to change

this reality through efforts such as the Treasury Investment & Climate Protection Act (House Bill 2601).

After graduating from the University of Portland last spring, I began a year of service with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest and was placed at EMO. As a faith-based organization, we are focused on furthering social justice initiatives within the state. In addition to direct service programs that provide »

aid for vulnerable communities—such as Northeast Emergency Food Program and SOAR Immigration Legal Services—EMO also has a Public Policy Advocacy team, where I serve as the Climate & Environmental Justice Policy Advocate.

In my position at EMO, I promote measures and bills that will forward our state's response to the climate crisis and support the communities who are most impacted by it. We work in partnership with Divest Oregon, the leading coalition of the Treasury Investment & Climate Protection Act. As an environmental science major, self-proclaimed tree hugger, and proud Pacific Northwesterner, it shocked me to learn that the Oregon State Treasury still invests in, and thus supports, large fossil fuel companies.

It is not just our climate that I am considering when I say our Treasury must phase out fossil fuel investments—it is also the financially responsible thing to do. Divest Oregon's "Risky Business" report shows that the Treasury could have saved \$4 to \$10 billion dollars if they had invested in fossil-free indexes over the past decade. The Treasury should not be caught up in a sector that does not have a future.

If you are a public employee in Oregon, it is highly likely that legislation to invest in fossil-free indexes

could positively impact your future retirement fund. Without it, we risk the retirement funds of our teachers, first responders and all those who keep Oregon running through their dedication to public service.

Unfortunately, the Treasury Investment & Climate Protection Act did not move forward during the 2023 Legislative Session. If it had passed, it would have required the Oregon State Treasury to stop investing in fossil fuel companies by 2035, joining many other states and countries already shifting money toward clean energy and away from fossil fuel companies' risky business.

It is imperative that Oregon invest in a renewable future. Legislation such as the Treasury Investment & Climate Protection Act is a necessary tool to guide our state towards a fiscally responsible fossil-free future.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon remains committed to helping end the Oregon Treasury's investments that damage our climate and put at risk the retirement funds of hard-working Oregonians. We have already begun working with our partners on the next step of this campaign—a campaign that is built on your power and our shared values, and that is growing stronger every legislative session. ■

**“It is imperative that Oregon invest in a renewable future.”**

### GOING ELECTRIC!

**Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon received a \$431,425 grant from PGE's Drive Change Fund.**

The funds allow for the installation of three electric vehicle chargers at the Interchurch Center and the purchase of two electric subcompact SUVs and one electric passenger van.

The electric vehicles will be used to transport, serve and expand services available to our clients.

One subcompact SUV will be used primarily by HIV Services to deliver meals to homebound Daily Bread Express clients, while the other car will be used by our other programs to transport clients, pick up food donations, visit the capital and more!

The passenger van will be available across the organization for purposes such as picking up arriving refugees at the airport, helping clients move into a new home and transporting clients for activities.

The PGE Drive Change Fund is funded via the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's Clean Fuels Program.



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**1,217** donors gave **\$1,426,839** in 2022  
**78** grants received, totaling **\$4,706,264**  
**211** monthly donors

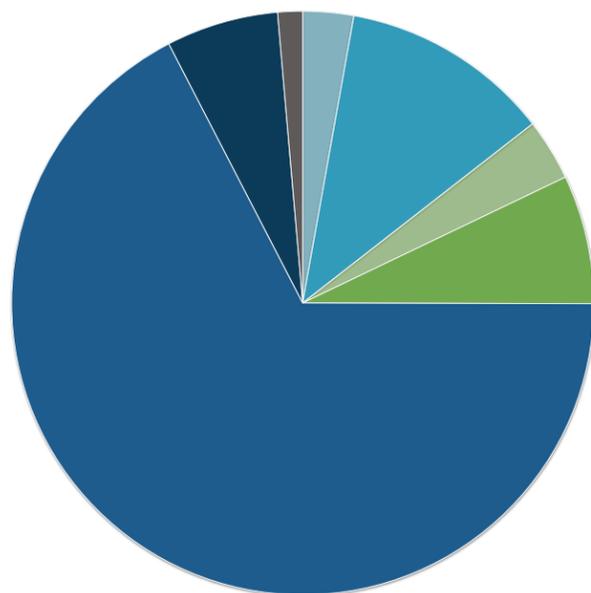
View a list of our donors at [emoregon.org/annual-reports](http://emoregon.org/annual-reports)

**133,886** People served  
**1,398** Volunteers  
**96** Faith Partners  
**28** Interns

**71** EMO staff  
**34%** of our staff are refugees/immigrants  
**27** languages spoken by our staff

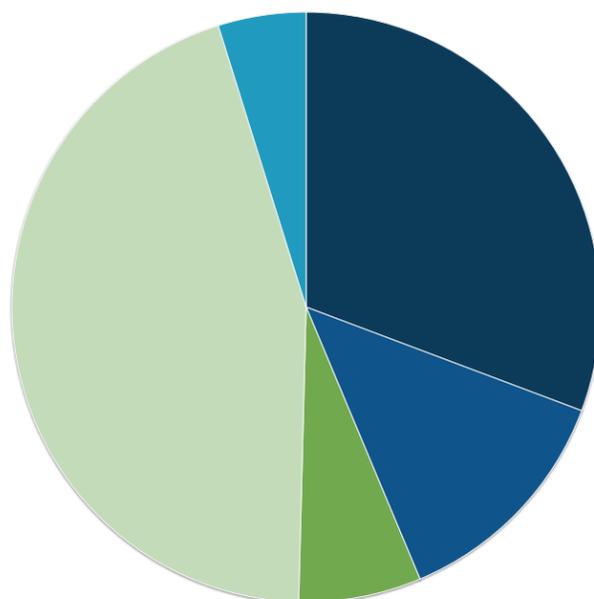
## REVENUES: \$5,774,807

- Faith Organizations
- Foundations
- Businesses
- Individuals
- Government
- Service Fees
- Events/Merch/Interest



## EXPENSES: \$5,935,484

- Basic Human Needs
- Core Mission
- Development
- Refugees & Immigration
- Public Policy, Common Table, Creation Justice



*Thank you so much!*

Your generosity has allowed our upstream & downstream efforts to flourish in 2022!

### PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY

**6,350** copies distributed of our "Guide to Oregon Ballot Measures"

**60** legislative visits scheduled in the 2022 short session;  
 Youth Homelessness bill (HB4013) signed into law

### CREATION JUSTICE

**84** members on the Creation Justice Advocacy Team

**117** Green Circle members worked on faith-based climate justice in Oregon

### BASIC NEEDS

**13.3 million** pounds of food distributed last year by Northeast Emergency Food Program to **121,766** people

**30,312** meals provided in 2022 by the HIV Day Center and Daily Bread Express for individuals living with HIV/AIDS

### REFUGEES & IMMIGRANTS

**121** refugees—from Afghanistan, Burma/Myanmar, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Guatemala, Iraq, Somalia, the former Soviet Union, Syria, Venezuela and Vietnam—were resettled in 2022 by Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR)

**202** U.S. citizenship applications processed at SOAR Immigration Legal Services last year

**293** Afghans received legal assistance by our legal team

### HOUSING

**42** Second Home volunteers provided **3,402** nights of housing last year for **38** unaccompanied high school students

**63** victims of domestic violence received housing relocation assistance in 2022 through Slavic Oregon Social Services



# ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES

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## 2023 INTERFAITH ADVOCACY DAY



Wednesday, May 10  
St. Mark Lutheran, Salem, Ore.

Register at  
[emoregon.org/event/advocacy2023](http://emoregon.org/event/advocacy2023)



## WE DINE OUT TO END HIV.

YOU CAN TOO DURING  
JUNE 20-22, 2023

 DINING OUT FOR LIFE  
**PORTLAND** [diningoutforlife.com](http://diningoutforlife.com)