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Fr. Richard Rohr to speak on *Restoring Sacred Balance* The 2011 *Collins Lecture* will explore convergence of contemplative traditions and social action

In times of so much uncertainty and anxiety about the future, one question becomes increasingly important: "How does one sustain one's soul while working faithfully and effectively for social justice and peace?"

This year's *Collins Lecture*, presented by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO), will create the space to pursue this question in a spiritually enriched context. "Restoring Sacred Balance: The Convergence of Contemplative Traditions and Social Action," featuring the renowned Fr. Richard Rohr, will also provide an opportunity to celebrate and honor people and communities engaged in the holy work of peaceful change in the world.

The *Collins Lecture* will be held on the evening of Wednesday, Oct. 26, and an all-day workshop with Fr. Rohr will be held the following day, Oct. 27.

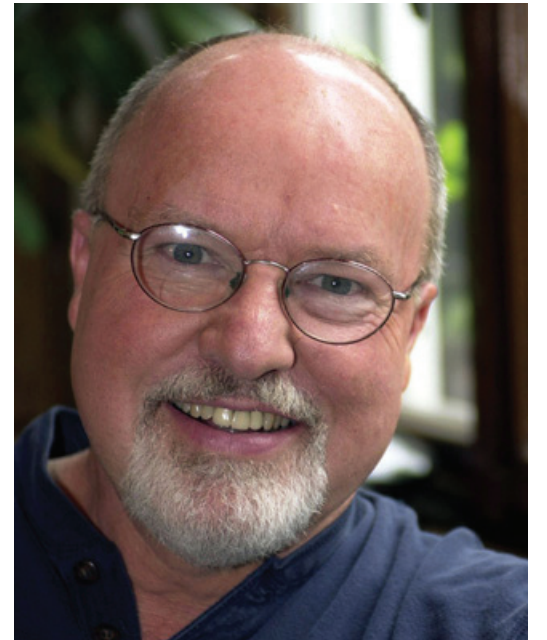
During the workshop, Fr. Rohr will lead an inspired dialogue and facilitate a spiritual practice with prayers and meditation. The workshop will also explore music, chant, Taize and guided meditative practices and engagement.

Both the lecture and workshop will be held at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral; they are open to all and will be especially helpful to pastors, laity, worship leaders, and congregational teams committed to social justice and peacemaking, both within the religious community and broader society.

Fr. Richard Rohr

Fr. Rohr is a Franciscan of the New Mexico Province. Since 1986, he has served as founding director at the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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The 2011 Collins Lecturer will be Fr. Richard Rohr—Franciscan brother, best-selling author, and founding director at the Center for Action and Contemplation.

Faith organizations creating *Circle of Protection* for the poor As state and federal governments struggle with fiscal crisis, EMO, Bread for the World, and others will sponsor September conference on "Hunger and the Budget Crisis"

A "Circle of Protection" is one of many faith-based efforts to protect federal anti-poverty programs from deep cuts during the current federal focus on deficit reduction and the debt ceiling. The Circle of Protection statement—signed by a broad array of national, state and local Christian religious leaders—declares in part that:

As Christian leaders, we are committed to fiscal responsibility and shared sacrifice. We are also committed to resist budget cuts that undermine the lives, dignity, and rights of poor and vulnerable people. Therefore, we join with others to form a Circle of Protection around programs that meet the essential needs of hungry and poor people at home and abroad.¹

The National Council of Churches (NCC), one of the endorsing organizations for the Circle of Protection, has also launched its own poverty initiative with a Facebook page, "National Council of Churches USA Poverty Initiative," and a website, www.nccendpoverty.org.

Perhaps the most dramatic national actions to date have occurred during the lead-up to the Aug. 2 deadline to raise the debt ceiling. As plan after plan was debated in Congress, cuts to programs for the most vulnerable were repeatedly proposed. Religious leaders—who had been holding daily prayer vigils near the Capitol to protest cuts that harm the poor—finally took their vigil right inside the Capitol Rotunda on July 28, where

12 of them were arrested while others observed in solidarity.

"Congress is paralyzed by toxic partisan politics while people suffer," said the Rev. Michael Livingston, NCC past president, one of those arrested in the rotunda. "Our elected officials are protecting corporations and wealthy individuals while shredding the safety net for millions of the most vulnerable people in our nation and abroad. Our faith won't allow us to passively watch this travesty unfold. We've written letters, talked with and prayed for our elected officials, and prayed together daily in interreligious community. Today, we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice to say to Congress, 'Protect the vulnerable

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Christian witness in a multi-religious world

In the June 28, 2011, edition of *The Christian Century*, the headline, “Historic Consensus on Proselytizing,” caught my attention.



David Leslie

The article that followed detailed the release of the document “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct” that was developed by the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, World Council of Churches and the World Evangelical Alliance (www.oikoumene.org/fileadmin/files/wcc-main/2011pdfs/ChristianWitness_recommendations.pdf).

The central premise of this extraordinary document (five years in the making) is found in the preamble: “Mission belongs to the very being of the church. Proclaiming the word of God and witnessing to the world is essential for every Christian. At the same time, it is necessary to do so according to gospel principles, with full respect and love for all

human beings.”

“Aware of the tensions between people and communities of different religious convictions and the varied interpretations of Christian witness ... this document (serves) as a set of recommendations for conduct on Christian witness around the world ... (and) to address practical issues associated with Christian witness in a multi-religious world.”

Included in the list of the “practical issues” are practices condoned by some Christians that adversely impact the Christian witness and are not, the authors would argue, gospel-grounded. These include exploiting situations of poverty and need to promote Christian outreach; taking forms of allurements including financial incentives and rewards in the act of mission outreach and service; bearing “false witness concerning other religions” to promote Christianity; and directly or indirectly aligning Christianity with political ends that lead to violence, abuse of power or religious persecution. While not giving specific examples, the authors note that these and other “inappropriate methods of exercising mission by resorting to deception and coercive means ...

betray the gospel and may cause suffering to others.”

In contrast to these practices, there is a call for the church to do more to be a healing presence in the world. Central to this approach to Christian witness is the “proclamation of the kingdom, service to neighbor, and the total gift of self even if that act of giving leads to the cross.” And in today’s pluralistic world, Christians must be engaged in respectful “dialogue with people of different religions and cultures.”

The authors of this document remind the church that central to the Christian witness is the call to imitate Christ’s love by engaging in acts of service and justice, promoting peace and rejecting violence, and building interfaith relations. In today’s world, Christians should exercise ministries of healing, promoting freedom of religion and belief and respect for all people. Furthermore, “Christians should continue to build relationships of respect and trust with people of different religions so as to facilitate deeper mutual understanding, reconciliation and cooperation for the common good.”

The release of the document “Christian Witness in a Multi-

Religious World” is timely. It is an important reminder that we are called to live faithfully in ways that honor the sacred connectedness we have with one another. It is also a reminder that the church is to be a force for peace and to reject all forms of violence, including psychological or social, by any religious or secular authority.

As we pause for a moment and reflect on the tenth anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, I am mindful of the healing and peace-filled witness that so many Christians throughout the world are engaged in, often in the face of severe personal and community cost. While there continues to be religious leaders from all traditions who use their pulpits and scriptures to foster division, violence, and separation from and against “the other,” there continues to be those who have the faith and foresight to challenge such practices both within and outside of their faith communities. May their witness be our strength in living into a message of hope that supports the well-being of all God’s people both in their likenesses and differences from ourselves.

Upcoming EMO sponsored & cosponsored events

September 11

9/11 Ten-Year Commemorative Interfaith Service. 6 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson St., Portland. See page 7 for more details.

September 17

Hunger and the Budget Crisis—a Faith-based Call to Action. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Mercy Corps Global Headquarters, 45 SW Ankeny St., Portland. For more details, see continuation of “Circle of Protection” on page 4.

September 18

Screening of “Raw Faith: The Story of a Woman Who Finds Faith in Herself.” Screening at 2 p.m. at the Hollywood Theatre, 4122 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Followed by a benefit reception and Q&A at a separate location. See page 7 for more details.

September 24

Moving Planet Portland: A Climate Action Fest. 12 to 3 p.m. at the Rose Garden Commons, Portland. With leadership from EMO’s Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (OIPL) and other organizations, the Portland metro area is observing 350.org’s “Moving Planet Day” by calling on folks to arrive to the event via no or low-carbon methods of

transport (bus, bike, foot) for a parade (1:30 to 2 p.m.), rally, fun educational activities and music. The theme of this third international day of action is “moving beyond fossil fuels.” Congregations are encouraged to come as a group with a banner for the parade. Close to MAX Lines. For more information, go to www.350Oregon.org.

September 23 to 25

Take Clean Transportation to Worship Days. EMO’s OIPL is encouraging congregations of all faiths to organize and educate their congregation around alternative, lower carbon options for getting to religious services around the time of the “Moving Planet Day of Action” (see event above). For worship, education and organizing resources, go to www.350Oregon.org.

October 21 to 23

Worship in Pink Weekend. Presented by Legacy Health and the Oregon and Southwest Washington Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure® with community sponsor EMO. The goal of “Worship in Pink” is to partner with interfaith congregations to provide breast cancer awareness and education to women in our communities and to increase the number of women receiving

mammograms. For information on how your congregation can participate, contact Kathy Kendrix, Worship in Pink coordinator, at (503) 735-1475 or kathyk@empowermentgroupworld.com.



October 24

Food Day. Save the date for the first annual national Food Day, sponsored by the Center for Science in the Public Interest. Events are being held throughout Portland, the state and the country to connect groups working on food issues, conduct policy education and provide a platform for groups to promote their work. Go to <http://foodday.org> to find out more. Congregations are encouraged to get involved by planning an educational forum, showing a movie or joining EMO’s Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership for a faith-based event in the Portland metro area. If you need ideas or are interested in planning an event please email foodandfaith@emoregon.org.

October 26 & 27

The 2011 Collins Lecture, “Restoring Sacred Balance,” featuring Fr. Richard Rohr. See front page for details.

Faith & land: Appreciating creation

The summer is a great time to appreciate Oregon's natural wonders and to think about what we can do to care for them. Two new wilderness areas are being proposed for the John Day Basin. Senators Wyden and Merkley reintroduced legislation this year that would protect Horse Heaven and Cathedral Rock areas. This proposal is the result of a partnership with John Day Basin landowners and consolidating Bureau of Land Management lands that have never been accessible to the public.

This proposal will create 16,484 acres of new wilderness area that the public will have access to and provide important habitat for a number of plant and animal species, including 36 sensitive species. These wilderness areas will also provide a link to a number of federal and tribal protected lands and create more recreation opportunities.

Young Life Washington Family Ranch, an adjacent Christian youth camp, is a strong supporter of the proposal. Representatives say, "We believe that this proposal represents the kind of solutions that are possible when diverse stakeholders come together to solve problems."

Wilderness Vision. Time spent in the wilderness can deepen our appreciation for God's creation and our role as its stewards. Wilderness experiences foster humility through creation's grandeur, and open restorative avenues as we exchange the rat race for nature's pace.

—NCC's "Out of the Wilderness"



Photo credit: Greg Burke

Two new wilderness areas are being proposed for Oregon's John Day Basin, including Cathedral Rock.

Share your Oregon outdoor story (& a photo)

We want to hear from you! There are so many beautiful parts of God's creation throughout Oregon. Do you have a favorite park, natural area or public land in Oregon? Perhaps it is a neighborhood park where you like to have a picnic or maybe a wilderness area you go to bird watch.

Send us a story about your favorite place outdoors and why it is so special to you. Stories will be posted on our website and featured in our monthly *Eco-Notes* newsletter. Please include a photo if you have one available.

The deadline for the first set of stories is Oct. 1, but stories will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Stories and photos can be emailed to awarren@emoregon.org.

Nourishing a healthy congregation



Ainsworth United Church of Christ (AUCC) is paving the way for Portland metro area congregations to create and implement healthy food policies and guidelines. The

AUCC Wellness Task Force used Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's "Congregational Health Index" (CHI) tool to assess congregational health and wellness.

The process helped AUCC to identify major concerns—such as the availability of high sugar beverages offered to children and coffee hour food choices—and to make an action plan. To promote wellness, the task force designated 25 percent of Sundays as "healthy fellowship food" days. Hosts received healthy fellowship food guidelines, and members responded by bringing alternative beverages for children such as juice, milk and water.

Although AUCC faced challenges along the way, they have witnessed great successes in the past year. Improved food choices can be seen

not only on designated "healthy fellowship food" days, but are also seen during additional Sunday fellowship hours. Fewer high-sugar foods are offered, while fruits and vegetables are more readily available. Fruit punch is now a thing of the past, while juice, water and milk are making a strong comeback.

Ainsworth United Church of Christ's promotion of congregational wellness is extending beyond nutritious food choices. Currently, the church is also working to install a bike rack, increase physical activity during Sunday school classes and promote walks/runs for fundraisers. In the near future, members hope to promote healthy living through showing films/documentaries, participating in a community garden, creating youth cooking classes and developing healthy food policies for potlucks.

For more information on wellness guidelines and conducting a CHI evaluation, please visit www.faihandwellness.org or contact Corey McAuliffe at cmcauliffe@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054, ext. 211.

Congregations invited to enter Cool Congregations Challenge

Has your congregation worked on becoming a better energy steward in the past year? Why not get rewarded for it?

Cool Congregations Challenge is a contest with prizes that recognize congregations that are becoming energy efficient and sustainable role models. Top cash prizes of \$1,000 will go to winning contestants in four categories: energy efficiency, renewable energy, grounds and water conservation, and helping congregants lower household energy use.

All faiths are welcome to participate, and it is free to enter. Carbon footprint/energy efficiency projects of any size completed in the last year from Oct. 20, 2010, through Oct. 20, 2011, qualify. An entry guide is available at www.emoregon.org/power_light.php. Entries

are due by Oct. 20.

Cool Congregations Challenge is sponsored by Oregon Interfaith Power & Light, a project of EMO and an affiliate of Interfaith Power and Light (IPL). With affiliates in 38 states and Washington, D.C., IPL works in over 10,000 congregations and promotes stewardship of Creation by responding to global warming through the promotion of energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Visit www.interfaithpowerandlight.org for details and call OIPL at (503) 221-1054, ext. 214, if you want assistance with your application.



New resource helps congregations use kitchens for community good

"When members of a congregation transform their kitchen into a community kitchen for micro-enterprise, they make a conscious decision to share their facilities with their neighbors. This transformation can fill genuine needs and build bridges between a congregation and its surrounding communities. Faith-based community kitchens that provide a micro-enterprise incubator also represent good stewardship of resources, foster economic development and support healthy eating."—*Creating Opportunity Through Micro-Enterprise*

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership is pleased to release a new handbook that outlines how your congregation can start a micro-enterprise program. *Creating Opportunity Through Micro-Enterprise: Faith Kitchens as Micro-Business Incubators* covers key topics including kitchen equipment and licenses, finding the right entrepreneurs and congregational support.

The handbook is available to download for free at www.emoregon.org/food_faith.php and for hardcopy purchase for \$10 each. Please call (503) 221-1054, ext. 210, to purchase a copy.

OFRAH calls on faith community for outreach to hungry seniors

By increasing participation rates of elders in *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*, congregations can improve their health & boost Oregon's economy

The Oregon Faith Roundtable Against Hunger (OFRAH) is working with congregations statewide to increase the number of Oregon seniors receiving SNAP benefits (previously known as food stamps). OFRAH launched its "Healthy Elders, Healthy Communities" outreach and education project this past fall, in an effort to combat the very low participation rates of seniors in the SNAP program.

While two-thirds of eligible Oregonians take advantage of SNAP benefits, only one-third of eligible seniors do so. As recently as July 2011, 64,158 seniors statewide received SNAP benefits; the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force estimates there are more than 100,000 seniors who are eligible but did not apply for benefits.

The lower participation rate of seniors is unfortunate for several reasons. Most importantly, when seniors on limited incomes sign up for SNAP benefits, they improve their economic security and their nutrition, which often directly benefits their health as well.

Many may not realize, however, that signing up for SNAP benefits is also good for Oregon's economy. In fact, in 2010 SNAP benefits brought more than \$1 billion into Oregon's economy. According to the USDA, each \$1 billion invested in SNAP results in an increase of 16,400 private-sector jobs. This is due to expanded economic activity in areas such as farming, livestock, food processing and food transportation, as well as the economic ripple effect in local communities created by this increased activity.

In addition, when seniors sign up for SNAP benefits, they also learn that they are eligible for Oregon's Senior Farm-Direct Nutrition Program, which gives seniors vouchers to buy fresh produce at farmer's markets or roadside produce stands.

Sometimes seniors don't sign up for SNAP benefits because they mistakenly think they are not eligible, due to ownership of a house and/or

a car. John Elizalde, who is helping coordinate this outreach project for OFRAH, explains this incorrect perception: "SNAP is primarily an income-based program, and for most Oregonians, assets like your home or car do not matter. In fact, many seniors receiving Social Security benefits are also eligible for SNAP benefits and don't know it."

This outreach effort is particularly timely, explained Norene Goplen, the lead convener of OFRAH. "The recent recession hit many elders hard, and others who have been ill find that health care costs have eaten up much of their savings," said Goplen. "For folks in these situations, with little income except for Social Security benefits, SNAP can make a big difference. And often the additional nutrition can actually help those who have been ill or hospitalized with their recovery at home."

During the coming weeks, OFRAH staff and volunteers are reaching out to pastors and other congregational leaders to identify additional volunteers willing to help with outreach to seniors in their congregation and community. OFRAH offers a workshop and training that addresses many of the myths and barriers that keep seniors from signing up for SNAP benefits, as well as how to identify and assist seniors in signing up for SNAP benefits.

Pastors and congregational members who are interested in learning more are encouraged to contact Goplen at lutheranadvocate@aol.com or (503) 502-6211, and Elizalde at john_elizalde@hotmail.com or at (503) 740-9810. Also, if you know a senior who you suspect is struggling to stay well-fed and want to get them assistance, Goplen and Elizalde are happy to help with that as well.

The "Healthy Elders, Healthy Communities" project is a partnership between OFRAH, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon, and the Oregon Department of Human Services. EMO participates in this



effort primarily through its role as one of the founding conveners of OFRAH, and through our continued participation in the project. There is additional information and a toolkit of resources for outreach to seniors on the Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon website at <http://oregonhunger.org/reaching-hungry-seniors>.

It's a SNAP

Signing-up for food assistance for hungry Oregonians of all ages is easy

SNAP benefits are determined on a sliding scale, based on household income and expenses. Benefits are distributed through the Oregon Trail Card, which is used like a debit card to purchase food.

To be eligible for SNAP, individual or household monthly income must be less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level. For a family of four, the income limit is \$3,446 per month; for an individual, \$1,679 per month; and for a couple, \$2,268 per month—though this also depends on your level of expenses.

The maximum benefit for a household of four totals \$668 per month. The average SNAP benefit per household is approximately \$250 per month.

Here are two ways that seniors and others can apply for SNAP benefits:

1. **Submit an application online** at <https://apps.state.or.us/connect/>. A representative from a local branch will contact applicants to schedule a time for either a phone or in-office interview.
2. **Call 1-800-Safe-Net (1-800-723-3638)**, and they will help you locate your local DHS office where you can apply.

Circle of Protection

Continued from page 1

and those living in poverty.”

And in a letter sent to the House of Representatives just two days earlier, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops laid out a bold statement of principles at odds with many plans under consideration in the House. In one paragraph, the Bishops outlined their core point:

A just framework for future budgets cannot rely on disproportionate cuts in essential services to poor persons. It requires shared sacrifice by all, including raising adequate revenues, eliminating unnecessary military and other spending, and addressing the long-term costs of health insurance and retirement programs fairly.

Sojourners, a national Christian social justice organization, ran a full-page ad in *Politico* on that same Thursday morning, warning politicians that “God is watching” their actions. Sojourners also reported that supporters had sent nearly 100,000 emails to

Congress on budget morality in the previous two weeks. “Scriptures teach that God is especially concerned with how the decisions of the politically powerful affect the poor and vulnerable (Isaiah 10),” Tim King, a spokesman for Sojourners, stated.

Fighting Poverty with Faith is a national interfaith coalition organizing more than a week of actions on hunger this fall from Oct. 27 to Nov. 6, including Food Stamp Challenges, Hunger Banquets and more. Their website is at <http://fightingpovertywithfaith.com>.

In Oregon, Bread for the World has convened a coalition of religious organizations, including EMO, that is organizing a conference on the federal budget crisis and its impact on the poor both within the United States and globally. Titled “Hunger and the Budget Crisis—A faith-based call to action,” the conference will be held Saturday, Sept. 17, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Mercy Corps Headquarters, 45 SW Ankeny St., downtown Portland. It is free and open to the public.

The goal for the conference is to develop an action plan for Circle of Protection advocacy

on federal issues here in Oregon. According to Mike Hiland with Bread for the World, Oregon, “The cuts proposed to date would literally roll back decades of work by anti-hunger groups on these programs.”

For more information, visit www.breadforthe.org or email Mike Hiland at breadfor@frontier.com, or contact Kevin Finney at kfinney@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054, ext. 204.

¹ You can find the full statement at <http://circleofprotection.us/pdf/Circle-of-Protection-Statement.pdf> and a Bread for the World page about the statement at: www.breadforthe.org/hunger/budget/circle-of-protection/.

SOAR's *New Americans Initiative* Promoting citizenship in refugee communities

The hope of providing a better future for their children, the possibility of meaningful civic participation, and the ability to travel freely are just a few reasons that immigrants and refugees choose to naturalize and become United States citizens.

At Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR), we are able to provide citizenship, legal and educational services free of cost, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security provided in October 2010. This grant has led to the creation of the New Americans Initiative—a program providing one-on-one legal services, citizenship classes, and Citizenship Day events in Portland, Salem and Hood River.

Although immigrants make up 13 percent of Portland's population, only about 56 percent of immigrants who are eligible to apply for citizenship in the state of Oregon actually apply. Citizenship is beneficial for both immigrants and the broader community. As a citizen, an individual can participate in civic life by voting, obtain a government job, bring additional types of family members to the United States, gain automatic citizenship for certain unmarried children under the age of 18, and become eligible for federal financial aid and scholarships.

Oregon's economy improves with the addition of more citizens, and the general public benefits from a wider and more representative civic participation from all its residents. Citizenship enables former

immigrants to become self sufficient, fully contributing members of our community.

Since the start of this grant, our legal staff and volunteers have had the opportunity to meet with more than 300 interested refugees and immigrants to provide legal services and information on how to become a citizen, both at the SOAR office and through Citizenship Day events around the state. Staff have provided dozens of presentations to refugee audiences discussing the benefits of citizenship, inviting Oregon's immigrants out of the shadows and into a meaningful discussion of what it means to be an American citizen.

As of May, SOAR has been able to expand the New Americans Initiative to include a voter education component, funded by the Multnomah Bar Foundation. This allows SOAR to provide classes to register newly naturalized citizens to vote, as well as teach them how to read a voter pamphlet, where and when to vote, and what meaningful civic participation entails.

Contact Caroline van der Harten, SOAR Immigration Legal program manager, for information on future events and opportunities to get involved in this important program.

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Collaboration offers housing solution for homeless students

"More than 1,400 youth are reported homeless by the Beaverton School District, a greater population than its biggest middle school of 1,100 students," reported *The Oregonian* on May 4, 2011. Of those 1,400 homeless students, nearly 400 are lacking an adult, parental presence in their lives.

Beaverton Youth Second Home is a community response to this problem of unaccompanied, student homelessness. In a unique and creative partnership, the city, the school district, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, neighborhood churches and several nonprofit organizations, as well as concerned citizens, are working together to support students in need. The goal of the program is to offer these young people safe and stable housing, so that they can graduate from high school, realize their potential, and develop dreams and a successful plan for their future.

If you know a student who is in need of housing and could benefit from the program, please contact Barbara Stone at Shared Housing, (503) 225-9924. If you would like more information about the program or to volunteer to be a home provider, or if you are interested in contributing financially, please contact Barbara Stone at the above number.

SOS: Stock Our Shelves NEFP's "Christmas in July" becomes a year-round event

Apparently a "Christmas in July" theme didn't quite fit with Lenten season. So when Augustana Lutheran Church wanted to help EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP) with a nonperishable campaign leading up to Easter, they chose the slogan, "Stock Our Shelves," or SOS. In five weeks, the northeast Portland congregation collected a record 2,600 pounds of food—some of it from knocking on neighbors' doors.

Traditionally, people are most likely to remember NEFP with cash and in-kind donations during the months of November and December. While the NEFP team of 250 volunteers and two staff are grateful for all that comes in during the holiday season, the demand for emergency food remains constant all year long.

For many years to fill this gap, Christmas in July has been the theme numerous congregations have used to help stock the

shelves of NEFP, especially in the summer when the need is high but attention on hunger low. While many congregations, such as Piedmont Presbyterian, have chosen to stay with Christmas in July, others have switched months like St. Luke Lutheran Church, which calls their successful food drive "Christmas in September."

"NEFP is expanding the Christmas in July food drive year-round, because the hunger needs of people are year-round," says Sue Van Winkle, the SOS coordinator for NEFP. "Congregations and other groups can stay with the holiday concept or even with July, but we want to cover all the months of the year—especially January through October."

One-third of NEFP's food supply comes from donations through houses of worship, schools, civic groups, community gardens, businesses and individuals. Another two-thirds comes through the Oregon Food Bank from local food drives, the USDA or in highly discounted "food to buy."

"Stock Our Shelves is a key component to keeping our shelves stocked year round—already ten congregations have signed up for six of the ten months," explains Van Winkle, who has volunteered with NEFP for more than a decade. "We still need to cover January, April, May and June, plus we have room for additional sign-ups in other months."



"Stock Our Shelves" is a key component to keep NEFP's shelves stocked with food year-round.

Each congregation finds a way to make SOS work for its own size and programs. St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal has paired up with a much larger partner, while Westminster Presbyterian, which runs several food drives a year, keeps the Christmas in July theme for their summer drive.

If your congregation would like to participate in Stock Our Shelves, contact Sue Van Winkle at susan41vanwinkle@comcast.net. Four weeks before the group's selected month begins, she will send posters and a priority needs list. At the end of the SOS campaign, the group brings its collected supplies of canned goods, other non-perishable foods, toiletries, diapers and toilet paper to NEFP on a Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday, between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. Both in-kind donations and cash/check donations are welcome.

- In 2010, over half a million pounds of food flowed through the shelves of EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program, located at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church.
- Over 40,000 people were helped with three- to five-day supply of emergency food and supplemental food supplies.

A faithful response to hunger, homelessness and poverty at Oregon's 2011 Legislative Session

Legislators cut funding for many critical programs, but EMO and other faith organizations make key contributions to successful efforts to prevent some of the worst cuts

At the outset of Oregon's 2011 Legislative Session, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) was already hard at work with many of our interfaith partners organizing *Interfaith Advocacy Day 2011*, with a theme of "Standing Up for Our Neighbors in Need."

In every major legislative session, *Interfaith Advocacy Day* brings religious leaders and activists to Salem from throughout the state of Oregon to speak out for programs that prevent hunger, reduce homelessness and expand access to health care.

In 2011, Oregon legislators faced a \$3.5 billion budget shortfall and were dealing with an unprecedented power-sharing arrangement in the evenly divided House of Representatives, where Democrats and Republicans each held exactly 30 of the 60 seats, and a nearly-even divide in the Senate, where Democrats held a slim 16-14 margin.

Our primary focus during the session was defeating proposed cuts to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. The most draconian of the cuts would have set an 18-month lifetime cap for receiving TANF benefits—instead of the current 60-month cap. Oregon would have had the shortest eligibility limit in the nation if these cuts were adopted.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon contributed to efforts to restore funding to TANF through direct lobbying and by circulating a faith community sign-on letter that over 160 prominent Oregon religious leaders signed. In addition, EMO's executive director, David Leslie, co-authored an op-ed piece on TANF with ELCA Bishop David Brauer-Rieke that appeared in *The Oregonian*.

The efforts of a broad coalition working to protect TANF families (all TANF recipients are families with children living in deep poverty) were successful in having the 60-month time limit retained and other elements of TANF restored, but some key TANF components, including job training programs, still suffered deep cuts.

The following are the outcomes on some of the other key issues during the session.

Health Care—In the 2011 Legislative Session:

- A weak health exchange bill passed. We had worked to include strong protections for

health care consumers in a bill (SB 99) that established a new health exchange, but the bi-partisan legislation that was able to pass did not include these provisions.

- **Funding cut for safety-net and school-based health clinics that serve many children who lack health insurance.** EMO expects to advocate for restoring some of that funding in 2012.
- **Health care "transformation" moves forward.** The passage of HB 3650 initiates a process to "transform" the way health services are provided to Medicaid recipients under the Oregon Health Plan. The aim is to reduce costs while improving health outcomes through more emphasis on primary and preventive care, but the Human Services Coalition of Oregon (HSCO) has cautioned that they are "deeply concerned about risk of assuming that these reforms will generate \$239.2 million in savings for year two of this biennium." If the process fails to achieve these projected savings, then additional budget cuts will need to be found unless state revenue projections improve.

Affordable Housing and Homelessness—

Much of EMO's work on affordable housing issues occurs through our membership and participation in the Oregon Housing Alliance. This session, most of the key affordable housing bills and budget appropriations did pass.

- **The Oregon Affordable Housing Tax Credit was extended** (HB 2527).
- **Current funding levels were maintained for the Emergency Housing Account.**
- **Runaway and Homeless Youth legislation passed** (HB 3260). EMO supported this bill to provide these programs with funding and a new agency home in the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Hunger and Economic Security—EMO works with the Oregon Hunger Task Force and the Oregon Faith Roundtable Against Hunger each session to advocate for emergency food programs and other programs that address hunger. This session saw mostly positive outcomes:

- \$357,000 was restored to funding levels for the General Fund Food Programs that provide support to emergency food services through Oregon's regional food bank network.
- Funding levels were maintained for Farm-Direct programs for seniors and WIC recipients.
- \$180,000 in funding was provided for start-up grants to expand the after-school snack and meal program.

Human and Civil Rights

- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon strongly supported **Tuition Equity Legislation** (SB 742), which passed the Senate on an 18-11 vote, but it could not get out of the House Rules Committee and never came to a floor vote in the House.

EMO launches new Web pages on hunger, homelessness & poverty

As part of our ongoing work to support faith community efforts to reduce hunger and homelessness in Oregon, EMO's Public Policy Advocacy has developed two new website pages with helpful resources.

The first of these website pages, titled "*Faithful Response to Homelessness and Hunger*," can be found at: www.emoregon.org/homelessness_hunger_resources.php.

The page contains information on different ways Oregon faith communities can respond to hunger and homelessness—providing shelter or housing, supplying food or improving food security, or offering mentoring and building relationships. This page also provides information on how to join our work on these issues and has links to key state and local organizations in Oregon.

The second page, titled, "*Interfaith Advocacy to End Hunger and Homelessness*," can be found at: www.emoregon.org/homelessness_hunger_resources2.php.

This page contains links to religious statements, organizations and resources related to hunger and homelessness. It also provides links to key government agencies and national advocacy organizations, as well as information on different policies and programs designed to help reduce or end hunger and homelessness.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon was able to develop these web resources due to collaboration with Neighborhood Partnerships and a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation. We thank them both.

Secure Families:

- **Expansion of state Earned Income Tax Credit for low-income working families** (SB 349) was unable to make it out of committee in this budget climate.
- **Legislation establishing a Work-Family Balance Task Force** (HB 3401) was also unable to make it out of committee. If the legislation had passed, the task force would have been directed to make recommendations for work-place policies that would make it easier for working families to balance the demands of employment with family needs.

The EMO Public Policy Advocacy is continuing its focus on the state legislature, spending time this summer and fall preparing for the 2012 Session, which is scheduled to run for 35 days starting at the beginning of February.



2011 *Interfaith Advocacy Day* participants marched to the state capitol, standing up for our neighbors in need.

Photo credit: Michelle Bush

Two “Raw Faith” Events: Film screening and reception to benefit EMO ministries

“Shining an intimate light on an individual in order to reveal greater truths about life and the world.” –The Village Voice

On Sunday, Sept. 18, at 2 p.m., Portland’s Hollywood Theatre will host a special screening of the nationally renowned documentary “Raw Faith” as a benefit for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

Praised by the *New York Times*, *Village Voice* and *Variety*, this surprisingly open and revealing documentary follows two years in the private life of the Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell, recently retired senior minister of First Unitarian in Portland.

Sewell is successful and beloved in the pulpit, but behind the scenes she is lonely and yearning for change. As she considers retirement, she knows she will be leaving her only social network. Yet when she falls in love for the first time, she realizes she does not trust intimacy. A study in contrasts, Sewell must rely on raw faith as she questions her future, her difficult past, her God and, most importantly, her ability to love.



Photo credit: Alive Mind Cinema

The Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell

Tickets for the movie are \$10 general and \$8 student; available at the Hollywood Theatre box office or at hollywoodtheatre.org. View the film trailer at www.rawfaith.com.

Benefit reception and Q & A to follow film screening

Following the film screening of “Raw Faith,” a fundraising reception will be held at the nearby St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, featuring a Q&A with Marilyn Sewell and the film’s director Peter Wiedensmith.

Reception price (includes admission to the film) is \$100, of which \$85 is a tax deductible donation supporting EMO.

Our profound gratitude to Sewell and director Wiedensmith for the gift of their time and insights at the reception.

For more details and to purchase tickets to the reception, visit www.emoregon.org or call the EMO office at (503) 221-1054.

Collins Lecture with Fr. Rohr

Continued from page 1

Rohr entered the Franciscans in 1961 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1970. He received his master’s degree in theology from Dayton University that same year. He now lives in a hermitage behind his Franciscan community in Albuquerque and divides his time between local work and preaching and teaching on all continents.

Rohr’s ministry and life work center on helping people connect to the contemplative traditions in order to be instruments of peaceful change in the world. Rohr himself spends a good part of every day in silence, solitude and surrender to what God and the moment are offering.

“With contemplative eyes, I can live with a certain non-dual consciousness that often allows me to be merciful to the moment, patient with human failure, and generous toward the maddening issues of our time,” states Rohr. “For me, it is the very shape of Christian salvation or any salvation. My sadness is that so few have been taught this older and wiser tradition, although many still come to it by great love and great suffering.” (*Sojourners*, ‘09)

Some of Rohr’s best known books include *Everything Belongs: A Gift of Contemplative*

Prayer; The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective; From Wild Men to Wise Men: Reflections on Male Spirituality; and his latest book, Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life, published in 2011.

Learn more and register

The 2011 *Collins Lecture* will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 26. The workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (registration/check-in begins at 8 a.m.) on Thursday, Oct. 27, and is limited to 200 people. Both events will be held at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, located at 147 NW 19th Ave., Portland, Ore. The registration fee is \$10 for the lecture and \$40 for the workshop, which includes continental breakfast and lunch. Students with ID are half price. Register securely online, or download a registration brochure, at www.emoregon.org; the deadline is Oct. 19.

The *Collins Lecture* is an annual event designed to provide an opportunity for clergy and laity to explore issues related to religion and social ethics. The lecture has been part of EMO’s ministry for over 40 years and is funded in part by the Collins Foundation.

For more information, call the EMO office at (503) 221-1054.

Sept. 11 anniversary interfaith service

To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Sept. 11 tragedy, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is honored once again to bring together the people of Oregon



for an interfaith service at the location of our original Sept. 11 service, held at First United Methodist Church in Portland.

As the ten-year anniversary approaches, we are reminded of the devastation and grief that touched our lives that day. As a nation, we have worked to build unity, understanding and peace in the wake of this horrific event; and as a community of faith, we have sought to be a catalyst in this process of hope for our country and the world.

Please join us in remembering the event itself and its aftermath in the following decade. The service will begin at 6 p.m. on Sept. 11 at First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson St., Portland.

Cosponsors to date include: Bilal Mosque, Congregation Beth Israel, Congregation Neveh Shalom, First United Methodist Church, Interfaith Council of Greater Portland, Islamic Society of Greater Portland, Oregon Area Jewish Committee, and Portland Campus Christian Ministry.

For further details about this service, please contact Jenny Pratt at (503) 221-1054 or jpratt@emoregon.org. More Sept. 11 commemorative services are listed on EMO’s events page at www.emoregon.org/events.php.

voice

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MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

African Methodist Episcopal Church • American Baptist Churches of Oregon
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) • Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Church of the Brethren • Community of Christ
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon • Episcopal Diocese of Oregon
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • Greek Orthodox Church
Presbyterian Church (USA)–Presbytery of the Cascades • Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland
United Church of Christ • United Methodist Church
Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

8 Development & Fundraising

Introducing EMO's new director of Membership Relations, Jenny Pratt

This summer, Jenny Pratt assumed the role as EMO's new director of Membership Relations. She had the opportunity to work with previous director, Jan Elfers, ensuring a smooth transition.

Pratt is excited to work with the EMO community. In a recent letter to our members, Pratt wrote:



We are joining together to put our faith values to work in a much more public and powerful way than we could do alone, making possible and contributing to direct ministries around the state, which are addressing homelessness, hunger and poverty; educating communities and congregations on how to improve our care of the earth; and strengthening our corporate voice through theological education and public policy advocacy with our senators and representatives in Salem. Thank you for helping to discern new and vital directions for relevant ministries of the future and for your energy, creativity and dedication!

Pratt is a graduate of Lewis and Clark College and holds a master's of divinity with an emphasis in cross-cultural studies from Fuller Theological Seminary. She worked for the Presbyterian Center for Mission Studies and was on the staff of Valley Community Presbyterian Church in Portland, before joining EMO last year as a part-time program assistant for Shared Housing's "Beaverton Youth Second Home" project.

If you have any questions about membership, please contact Jenny Pratt at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or jpratt@emoregon.org.

EMO celebrates recent grants & gifts

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Board of Directors and staff extend their appreciation to those who have supported EMO's ministries. The following is a partial list of foundation and community support received by EMO since the last issue of the *Voice*.

Donor (Fund)	Program
Autzen Foundation	Shared Housing
Avon Foundation	Russian Oregon Social Services
Broadway Cares Equity Fights AIDS	HIV Services
The Collins Foundation	Annual Fund, Collins Lectures
John A. Courtney	Annual Fund
George Crandall & Marilyn Sewell	Annual Dinner
Dignity Memorial	Annual Dinner
Equity Foundation	HIV Services
Marshall Goldberg/ Marjorie Sue Abramovitz Fund	Annual Fund
Herbert A. Templeton Foundation	Annual Fund
Hoover Family Foundation	Shared Housing
Jackson Foundation	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
Kaiser Foundation	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership, NE Emergency Food Program
Legacy Health	Annual Dinner
Gary Logsdon	Annual Fund
M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust	Annual Fund
Beatrice E. Momsen	Shared Housing
Multnomah Bar Association	SOAR Immigration Legal
National Council of Churches	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Neighborhood Partnership Fund	Public Policy Advocacy
Open Society Policy Center	Public Policy Advocacy
Oregon Community Foundation	Annual Fund
<i>The Oregonian</i>	SOAR Immigration Legal
PGE Foundation	HIV Services
Presbytery of the Cascades	Annual Fund
Providence Health and Services	Annual Dinner
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland	Annual Dinner
Susan G. Komen for the Cure	Russian Oregon Social Services
William Wright	Annual Dinner

EMO welcomes new members

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon welcomes new congregational members: *Community of Christ (Eugene)*, *Metzger United Methodist*, *St. Mark Lutheran* and *St. Matthew's Episcopal*. Our growing list of members reflects the vibrant community of faith in Oregon and enables us to establish partnerships, so we can better serve the needs of people in our state.

Membership benefits include access to EMO's medical and dental insurance plans for congregation/organization staff. Membership also provides a network for coalition-building with other faith communities and religious organizations who share an interest in ecumenical and interfaith witness and common mission. Members receive special email alerts and briefings on important issues, early notification about community events, invitations to private receptions and meetings, and much more.

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



Honor & memorial gifts

February through July 2011

Gifts in Honor

*In honor of Rocky Blumhagen
Otto & Eleanor Blumhagen*

*In honor of Alcena Boozer
Madeline B. Moore, Bruce E.
Richards, Gary & Barbara Ross*

*In honor of their twin daughters
Stephen & Florence Balog*

*In honor of the Delta Sigma
Theta Sorority
Marian G. Gilmore*

*In honor of John Elizalde
Betty Roren*

*In honor of Tom Jordahl
Eric A. Jordahl*

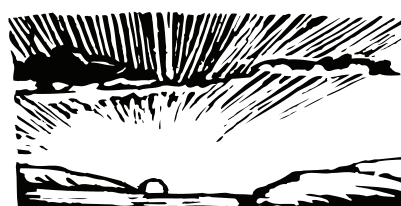
*In honor of David A. Leslie
Reedville Presbyterian Church*

*In honor of Gary B. Logsdon
LeRoy Haynes, Jr.*

*In honor of Arvin R. Luchs
Rosemary J. Dodds*

*In honor of Sisters of Providence
Elizabeth McCabe*

*In honor of Emma Tate
Tom Hogan*



Gifts in Memory

*In memory of Connor Ausland
Joanne Austin*

*In memory of Marvin W. Axtell
Jane R. Tatreau*

*In memory of Rosemary
Cooperrider
Edgar A. Brandt*

*In memory of Verne Cooperrider
Edgar & Mary Louise Brandt*

*In memory of David Duncombe
Mary Sue Evers*

*In memory of Pauline Green
Steven Green & Cynthia
Pentony*

*In memory of Cynthia Haynes
LeRoy Haynes, Jr.*

*In memory of Lois Hogan
Tom Hogan*

*In memory of Edward Jannsen
Charles Jannsen*

*In memory of Bobby Olive-Beltran
Balinda Beltran*

*In memory of Claude and Lola
Roberts
Claudia J. Roberts*

*In memory of John Patrick Ryan
Ellen Beckett*

*In memory of Eileen H. Starrett
Matthew & Carla Starrett-Bigg*