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EMO celebrates faith leadership throughout Oregon

As the premier ecumenical event of the year in Oregon, *Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner* will bring together over

400 members of our diverse communities of faith and community partners.

Evoking Amos 5:24, "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream," we will celebrate the ecumenical movement in Oregon and honor those who are guided by their faith to serve Oregonians in need.

The event will be held on April 25 at the Portland Hilton Hotel.

Community leaders honored

The "Ecumenist of the Year" award will be presented to the *Rev. Kent Harrop*.

Senior pastor of First Baptist Church in McMinnville and longtime ecumenical community leader, Harrop is being honored

for his outstanding work in ecumenical dialogue, community ministry and public advocacy.

The "Two Pauls Award"—in recognition of outstanding promotion of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, service and relations—will be given to *Wajdi Said*, co-founder and president of the Muslim Educational Trust. The award honors Said's decades of work towards interfaith understanding and cooperation.

The "Louise Hunderup Religious Education Award" will be presented to *Tom Krattenmaker*, *USA Today* contributing columnist and author of the forthcoming book "The Evangelicals You Don't Know."

The "Vollum Ecumenical Humanitarian Award" will be given to philanthropist *Joseph Weston*, in recognition of a lifetime of leadership in enhancing the quality of life in Oregon.

"Ecumenical Service Awards" will be awarded to *Gorge Ecumenical Ministries* and the *Rev. Kate Lore*, minister of social justice at First Unitarian Church in Portland.

Special posthumous recognition will be given at the event to two beloved ecumenical and interfaith leaders and good friends, *Emily Gottfried* and the *Rev. Trudy Bradley*, for their lifetime achievements in serving their communities and promoting inter-religious understanding.

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The Rev. Kent Harrop, senior pastor of First Baptist Church in McMinnville, will be honored with the "Ecumenist of the Year" award.

Interfaith Advocacy: Faith in action 2013 Legislative Agenda highlights EMO's public policy vision for Oregon

Interfaith Advocacy Day

On Feb. 28, nearly 200 people convened at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Salem for the *2013 Interfaith Advocacy Day*. Gathered together under the theme "Calling Oregon to Compassion in Action: Uniting faiths, confronting poverty," these advocates came to Salem to challenge the Oregon Legislature to support people and communities living in poverty.

Placing advocacy in shared religious values, Rabbi Rachel Joseph of Temple Beth Israel, Francisco Lopez of Causa,

and Imam Mikal Shabazz of Oregon Islamic Chaplains Organization participated on an interfaith panel, "Roots of Concern with Poverty, Hunger, Homelessness and Health Care."

Advocacy training and workshops focused on advocating for Ending Hunger, Affordable Housing and Homelessness, Health and Health Care, and Poverty Reduction and Family Security helped to prepare participants for meetings with their legislators.

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Photo credit: Jenny Pratt

On Feb. 28, nearly 200 people of faith marched to the Capitol Building to challenge the Oregon Legislature to support people and communities living in poverty.

Faithful witness in the public square

Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute.

Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Proverbs 31:8-9

Earlier this year, I was leading an adult forum at a local congregation on the witness of the church in the public square. I started the class by asking a question that is often asked of me, “Should the church be engaged in advocacy in the legislative halls of power?”



David Leslie

Well, a member of the class answered my question with conviction.

“No,” he said. “The church should not be engaged in anything political and definitely not advocacy on public policy issues.”

Not letting this opportunity for a rousing discussion pass us by, I asked him, “Well, if your city council decided to levy a tax on your church’s property, do you think it appropriate for the church’s leadership to lobby the mayor and city council to terminate the proposal?”

Without missing a beat, he declared, “Absolutely.” And then he smiled—he’d been hooked.

Essential to the mission of the church is standing with and advocating on behalf of the poor and marginalized. There are four important reasons for this “public witness ministry” (to borrow a phrase the Presbyterian Church USA).

First, there is a shared ecumenical understanding that healthy democracies depend on robust civic participation by all its citizens, including those in the religious community. Additionally, there is a strong belief that the very existence of the public square and the democratic principles it represents depend on active religious sector support of and participation in our democratic institutions. Toward these ends, we publish a voters’ guide on statewide ballot measures and initiatives and help organize *Interfaith Advocacy Day* during Oregon Legislative Sessions, in order to get people of faith to Salem to advocate on issues of mutual concern.

Second, many religious institutions engage in collaborative partnerships with government agencies to deliver critical services to people and communities at-risk and in need. The recovery from Hurricane Sandy, for example, continues to depend on FEMA, the Red Cross and the United Methodist Committee on Relief working together to meet the needs of those impacted by the hurricane. To ensure that these types of partnerships are appropriately developed, ongoing dialogue between religious and governmental leadership is needed and encouraged.

Third, there are also constitutional and legal motivations for religious engagement in the commons that are embedded in the familiar words of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” These simple words, however, are not always

consistently or rationally applied. Thus, when the religious communities engage in these venues, it is often for the sake of a commitment to constitutional integrity (federal and state) and to protect their very existence and the integrity of their belief systems and practices.

I am reminded of the passage of Oregon House Bill 3686 in 2010, which removed the ban on wearing of religious attire in public schools and other workplaces. This ban had been the law of the land in Oregon since the early 1920s—thanks to the KKK and its allies that wanted to prevent Roman Catholics from teaching in Oregon’s public schools. With the passage of this bill, Oregon closed a chapter of religious discrimination, which included the firing of a Sikh teacher in Eugene for wearing a turban as her faith required. Thanks to strong legislative leadership and a coalition of Sikhs, Muslims, Jews, Seventh Day Adventists, and other mainline and evangelical Christians, this ban was finally lifted, recognizing that religious attire is often part of the exercise of one’s faith and it can be worn in respectful, non-proselytizing ways.

The fourth, and ultimately the most important, reason for religious engagement in the public square stems from the theological and ethical mandates and teachings that call for such engagement. Jewish and Christian perspectives on immigration reform, for example, begin with the Biblical narratives related to hospitality to the stranger (Leviticus 19:33). Responses to global warming and climate change will most certainly begin with a creation narrative in Genesis, before moving to the humanitarian or scientific arguments for addressing the crisis before us. Jesus’ personification of the poor and marginalized in Matthew 25 is the beginning point for much of Christianity’s advocacy on behalf of the economically disenfranchised. And as the Proverbs verse above makes clear, being loud on behalf of the cause of justice is part and parcel of the religious calling.

Simply put, religious engagement in the public square is not an option.

The call to engage in the public square is ancient, and for the church it rests in the witness of Christ and the prophets, who were relentless in their advocacy in support of those on the margins of society. So in their spirit, let us strengthen our advocacy for peace and justice, confident that in doing so, we are living faithfully and creating a more equitable, sustainable and peaceful world for all.

Catholic Archdiocese of Portland installs new archbishop, Alexander K. Sample

In January, Pope Benedict XVI appointed 52-year-old bishop from the Catholic Diocese of Marquette, Mich, Alexander K. Sample, to Metropolitan Archbishop of Portland. The Mass of Installation is scheduled for April 2 at the University of Portland’s Chiles Center.

Archbishop Sample takes over the pastoral leadership of the Archdiocese of nearly 400,000 Catholics from retired Archbishop John G. Vlazny, who was archbishop of Portland since 1997. Upon the appointment of Sample, Vlazny stated, “He comes well prepared to assume his new responsibilities as the chief pastor of this local church. ... Michigan’s loss is Oregon’s gain.”



Photo credit: The Oregonian

New Archbishop Alexander K. Sample, during his introduction in Portland in January 2013.

While Michigan’s Upper Peninsula is about 24 percent Catholic, in western Oregon, the number is only 12 percent. The new archbishop is not phased by the region’s famed religious non-affiliation. “I see it as rich, fertile ground for the planting of the New Evangelization,” he said at a press conference in Portland. When asked to list the skills he brings to the job, Sample said he is full of zeal and loves teaching. He told listeners that the main thing they should know about him is this: “I am a believer.”

Sample was ordained a priest of the diocese in 1990 at St. Peter Cathedral in Marquette, Mich. He served in several parish assignments before moving to Rome, Italy, from 1994-96 to earn a degree in Canon Law. Upon returning to the diocese, he held a number of duties in the chancery office. In 2006, by the mandate of Pope Benedict XVI, he was ordained bishop of Marquette. He is a member of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Sub-committee on Native American Catholics and the Sub-committee on the Catechism.

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
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

Earth Care Summit on “living waters” connects water & justice

By Barbara Kelley, Lake Oswego United Church of Christ member and Green Team leader

On Jan. 27, nine of us from Lake Oswego United Church of Christ attended the 2013 *Earth Care Summit: Living Waters*, organized by EMO’s Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns (INEC) and Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (OIPL). Presenters were scientists, organization representatives and other professionals of many stripes, while in attendance were over 250 concerned citizens from across Oregon.

Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, leader of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, spoke during dinner about our spiritual and practical connections to, and responsibilities for, the Columbia River Watershed. U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer spoke of his efforts for clean water internationally and domestically in Congress. After dinner, we were given a rich choice of 18 workshops led by highly credible professionals.

I attended two workshops: “Tribal Perspectives on Water,” led by Sara Thompson of the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission, and “Toxins in Fish,” led by Dr. William Lambert, an OHSU epidemiologist.

Lambert said that a colleague was “jaw dropping shocked” by revelations of such high levels of contaminants in fish samples from the Columbia River. One fish, a sucker, was found to have 27,000 times the so called “safe level,” while sturgeon exceeded the set limits by 78 times and bass 20 times. Contaminants were PCB’s, arsenic, mercury, heavy metals and flame retardants—all of which can have serious health effects on humans and the environment

as they travel up the food chain.

In the “Tribal Perspectives on Water” workshop, Thompson discussed the disproportionate effect that toxins in fish and water have on Native Americans. She told us of the historic importance of fish to her people and its central place in their diet.

Native Americans recently achieved a significant victory in this environmental justice issue. In a rare example of government agencies working together for a common good, the Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Quality Control, and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality reached an agreement to raise the fish consumption rate in calculating pollution limits. Under the revised Clean Water Act, this translated into more stringent standards. Pollutant sources include pesticide-treated land, municipal water treatment facilities and factory effluent. But lowering the set limits of toxins in fish will not in itself make the water clean. Nor is this a local problem—just for those who fish the Columbia. All waters run together in the hydrologic cycle, and we are all vulnerable to these dangerous chemicals.

The hard working Native Americans who led the fight for the new standards deserve our gratitude for this victory. Now this work needs to be continued until the river is clean; otherwise, the toxins will continue to poison our food chain. However, this victory is a vital first step in achieving a long-range river cleanup. While it is rare for government agencies to



Bishop William S. Skylstad, leader of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, gave the keynote address on our spiritual and practical connections to, and responsibilities for, the Columbia River Watershed.

adequately enforce their own regulations, in our country, citizens have the precious right under citizen suit provision of the Clean Water Act to defend themselves and their environment. It is “we the people” who generally have to challenge the offenders. When the people lead, the leaders will follow. Justice is rarely granted, it must be won!

We are all grateful to EMO and INEC for organizing and presenting us with this amazingly comprehensive and informative conference. *Thank you!*

Equipping communities & congregations for food justice

In August 2012, EMO’s Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) started its third community food assessment project—this time in the Rockwood neighborhood of Gresham, where 26 percent of residents are at or below the poverty level. Most of the project is funded by a USDA Community Food Projects Grant.

A Community Food Assessment is a collaborative and participatory process, using a variety of tools such as surveys, that focuses on community strengths. Assessments thoroughly examine a broad range of community food issues and assets to inform action and engage the community.

Thanks to a grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, IFFP hired eight low income residents to direct and conduct the Rockwood assessment. We Are Oregon provided canvassing training and coordination. The team completed 236 surveys in English and Spanish.

Survey results show that almost 60 percent of Rockwood residents travel over 4.5 miles to get groceries, and over a third cite transportation as a challenge to getting groceries. Not surprisingly, 97 percent would like to see Rockwood have more places to obtain healthy food, with farmers’ markets, closer stores, and community gardens being the top choices for new food access points.

This spring and summer, community forums will be held to share assessment results and engage residents in making changes.

To learn more about the Rockwood project or for information on initiating a community food assessment for your neighborhood, call Caroline Kelly at (503) 221-1054, ext. 215.

Farm Fresh: Another model making healthy food available to all

Supporting health and local farms are the key motivations behind the *Farm Fresh Buying Club*, started by EMO’s Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) several years ago. It is one of many models IFFP has developed to connect communities and congregations with farmers and to make produce accessible to people with low incomes.

By coming together to buy farm-direct in large quantities, everyone saves. Farm Fresh offers affordable prices from sustainable farmers who take pride in providing food that nourishes both body and soul. The main source of produce for the buying club is Deep Roots Farm, and last year organic fruit was added from Pro Farms.

The majority of the 60 Farm Fresh members pick up their orders weekly, and some buy only large quantities in peak season for canning, drying or freezing. Participants also have opportunities to learn about cooking, eating seasonally, and expanding and sharing their knowledge about our food system through a newsletter and classes on canning and cooking.

A unique feature of Farm Fresh is acceptance of SNAP, WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market coupons that enable broad access to nutrient-dense produce. IFFP is working to get even more people with these benefits to take advantage of the buying club.



Farm Fresh offers fresh produce pick-up from May to October, every Wednesday from 4 to 5:30 p.m., in the cafeteria of Holy Redeemer Catholic School in north Portland. The cost of membership is \$5 to \$15 (sliding scale), and all members are encouraged to volunteer a few hours at least once during the season. There is no required or minimum order, so participants can order just what they need. Congregations and individuals are welcome to join.

For more information about the Farm Fresh Buying Club or to schedule a presentation on hosting a community supported agriculture drop at your congregation, call Caroline Kelly at (503) 221-1054, ext. 215. Handbooks on farm-to-congregation models can be found at www.emoregon.org/food_farms.php.

4 Community Ministries

SOAR Legal assists “Dreamers” with applying for deferred action

Antonio Guerrero Jimenez was born in Guatemala and was brought to the United States when he was a young child. Antonio was raised in the United States, and like many DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) eligible youth, he shared the same experiences as most Americans. However, the threat of deportation is a fear that he has lived with for most of his life.

Announced in June 2012 and implemented in August, DACA provides some relief for childhood arrivals such as Antonio, but as a temporary two-year grant of deferred action, it must be renewed and does not provide a pathway to citizenship. With discussions of Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the DREAM Act, Congress has the power to create a pathway to Citizenship for undocumented youth and others.

In order to qualify for deferred action, individuals must demonstrate that they (1) came to the United States before the age of 16; (2) have continuously lived in the United States since June 15, 2007, and were present in the United States on June 15, 2012; (3) are currently in school, have graduated from high school, have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or are honorably discharged veterans of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; (4) have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, or three or more other misdemeanors, and do not pose a threat to national security or public safety; and (5) were under the age of 31 on June 15, 2012.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s SOAR Immigration Legal Services, in partnership with other nonprofit legal service providers in Oregon, has been a source of legal representation, as well as information for young people affected by this new directive.

Antonio is one of the estimated 1.76 million undocumented youth in the United States who qualify for DACA; approximately 16,000 of those youth live in Oregon. Antonio attended David Douglas High School and graduated with honors. He has volunteered for many community events over the years, been a guest speaker at events, and participated in leadership conferences. Antonio is currently enrolled at Mount Hood Community College and has been a member of Associated Student Government. He has also been involved with Oregon DREAMers—an Oregon-based group of high school and college students formed to advocate for changes in the immigration laws.

Antonio came to SOAR Immigration Legal Services to apply for DACA. SOAR represented him, his case was approved, and recently he received his approval and work permit.

“DACA has drastically changed my life,” says Antonio. With his work permit, he was able to get a job as the manager of a restaurant. “Thanks to DACA, I’m no longer afraid to drive, and I’m able to work and help support my family.”

Passage of the DREAM Act would make an even bigger impact on Antonio’s life. “Many people who oppose such reforms see it as more people taking advantage of other services, when in reality, all we want to do is get a [college] degree and work so that we can also contribute to the economy of this great country,” says Antonio. “I personally see the passing of the DREAM Act or another immigration reform with a pathway to citizenship as finally having permission to call the United States my home. This nation has given me many opportunities I wouldn’t have had otherwise, and I would like to be able to show my appreciation for these. It would be an honor to be given the right,



Antonio Guerrero Jimenez recently received DACA approval and a work permit, with the assistance of EMO’s SOAR Immigration Legal Services.

or at least the opportunity, to call myself a U.S. Citizen.”

Antonio will graduate from Mount Hood Community College in June with an Associate’s Degree and will transfer to Portland State University, where he will pursue a Masters in Business Administration (MBA).

If you would like more information about DACA, or if you would like to schedule a DACA Information Session for your congregation or community group, please contact Caroline van der Harten, SOAR Legal managing attorney, at (503) 384-2482 or cvanderharten@emoregon.org.

April 25: Dine out, fight AIDS

Join EMO’s HIV Services on Thursday, April 25, 2013, for Portland’s fifth annual *Dining Out for Life*.

Dining Out for Life is an annual international dining fundraising event, raising money for AIDS service organizations. Dine out at one of the participating restaurants and a substantial percentage of your bill will go directly to programs serving people with HIV/AIDS locally. The fundraiser is held in over 55 cities throughout the United States and Canada. In the Portland metro area, *Dining Out for Life* benefits EMO’s HIV Services and OHSU’s Partnership Project.

Last year, more than 30 *Dining Out for Life* participating restaurants in the Portland metro area donated 20 to 30 percent of their proceeds to both local programs. Diners also had the opportunity to give personal donations that night, raising more than \$17,000 for the two organizations.

Great Portland metro area restaurants are lined up again this year, including (but not limited to) Red Star Tavern, Saraveza and multiple McMenamins locations—and more

restaurants are signing on daily. Dine out at one of these restaurants on April 25, and be sure to mention that you’re there for “Dining Out.”

“*Dining Out for Life* is a win-win-win,” says spokesperson Ted Allen, host of the Food Network show “Chopped.” “The event helps bring new customers into neighborhood restaurants, it gives everyone an opportunity to make a contribution just by having breakfast, lunch or dinner with friends, and all money raised in each city, stays in that city.”

For more information and a full restaurant listing, visit www.diningoutforlife.com/portland, or call Lindsay Ross-Hunt, HIV Services program manager, at (503) 460-3822.



EMO Annual Celebration

Continued from page 1

Sponsors

Major sponsors this year include Legacy Health System, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Archdiocese of Portland, American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast, Augustana Lutheran Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oregon, Income Property Management, Linfield College, Neil Kelly Co., and a growing number of individuals, denominations, congregations, unions, businesses, nonprofit organizations and faith communities across Oregon.

To learn more about sponsorship, please contact Carla Starrett-Bigg or Christopher Siems at (503) 221-1054.

Join us!

The Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner will be held on April 25 at the Hilton Hotel, 921 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland. Check-in, silent auction and reception begin at 5 p.m. with dinner to follow at 6:30 p.m. The cost of the event is \$75 per person, or \$750 for a table of ten. Reservations may be made securely online at www.emoregon.org, or you may call (503) 221-1054.

The Million Meal Plan: Spare your change, feed the hungry

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP) provides food for over half a million meals each year to people in need throughout the Portland metro area, particularly in Portland's inner northeast neighborhoods. Even with food passing through our pantry to the tune of 50,000 pounds a month, the program can't keep the shelves full enough to provide for all the people who come.

To solve this problem, NEFP has been working on a two-stage plan: (1) expand our storage capacity, especially for nutritious perishables, and (2) fill the expanded storage with a cornucopia of food.

Stage One: Walk-in cooler/freezer

Stage one is now complete: our new 9x27 walk-in cooler/freezer with glass shopping doors is in full operation. Over the past year, NEFP's supply of perishables—fresh produce, dairy products, meat and bread—has increased by over 2,000 pounds per week, maxing out the program's old storage capacity. The new unit helps preserve this bounty and ensures more of it gets to our clients without spoilage.

To complete this stage, NEFP successfully raised \$44,000 from individuals, nonprofit organizations, businesses and foundations including Swindell Foundation, Oregon Food Bank, Portland Kiwanis, Westminster Presbyterian Church, St. Luke Lutheran Church, and other local congregations.

Stage Two: Million Meal Plan

To meet the ever-growing demand for emergency food, the Northeast Emergency Food Program would like to increase its food distribution to one million meals annually. Thanks to the new walk-in cooler/freezer, NEFP finally has the capacity—now we need to fill it!

The "Million Meal Plan" spare change fundraiser will help NEFP do just that. *How much does it cost for one balanced, nutritious meal for one person? Only 25¢ in change.*

The Million Meal Plan works very simply and is a great way for congregations, large and small, to get involved. Any individual, group, congregation or business can request as many of our recycled, specialty-labeled coin collection canisters as they can use. Individual members or employees of a congregation, organization or business can even have their own coin canister and collect change as the month goes along.

Each organization can come up with its own arrangement; for example, some congregations have a designated collection Sunday each month. When the members of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church heard the plan launched at NEFP's *Third Annual Sustainers Breakfast* in February, they each took cans to fill and placed extras in the church's foyer. As the cans fill, members return them to the church office and take new ones home to start again. Staff at neighboring Sacajawea Head Start simply bring over their cans to NEFP.



Photo credit: Lowen Berman

The Northeast Emergency Food Program's new 9x27 walk-in cooler/freezer with glass shopping doors is in full operation—preserving NEFP's supply of perishables and ensuring more of it gets to clients without spoilage.

Million Meal Plan cans may be picked up and returned to the offices of EMO (SW Bancroft and Kelly, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays) or to NEFP (4800 NE 72nd Ave., any Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday, from 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.).

To order "Million Meal Plan" coin donation cans or for more information about the fundraiser, contact NEFP program manager, Howard Kenyon, at hkenyon@emoregon.org.

Organizations active in disaster relief gather in Portland

The largest coalition of nationally recognized faith-based, community-based, non-governmental organizations, the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), along with federal, state and local government agencies supporting nonprofits, is holding its *21st Annual Conference* at the Hilton Portland and Executive Towers, May 14-16, 2013. The Oregon Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (ORVOAD) is the host for this prestigious conference, at a time when more than 16,000 volunteers are still deployed to active declared disaster sites hit by hurricanes, tornadoes, wild fires, blizzards and drought.

When Hurricane Sandy was reported 200 miles off the East Coast in October 2012 and projected to come ashore, first-responders, governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations in the states that were expected to be hit were finalizing their plans of action. At the same time, over 100 NVOAD member agencies and their partners were preparing to deploy over 50,000 volunteers from around the country to communities that were expected to suffer the most damage.

Getting resources in place early was one of the biggest lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, which decimated the Gulf Coast in 2005. NVOAD plays a very active and important role promoting cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration among the members to eliminate duplication of efforts and confusion, and to be effective as quick as possible to as many people



Photo credit: Brethren Disaster Ministries

Members of Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster participated in rebuilding efforts in Haiti, after the devastating earthquake in 2010.

as possible.

The growth of this cooperative response has its roots in 1969, when Hurricane Camille came ashore in the Gulf of Mexico along the Mississippi coast as a Category 5 hurricane. It hit landfall with sustained winds over 190 miles per hour and leveled almost everything in its path. Many faith-based communities, along with other organizations wanting to help, independently rushed into the damaged area. Because there was little to

no planning between the groups, much of the efforts were duplicated, wasting valuable resources and time, as well as leaving some areas that needed help with little or no support. In a number of situations, many of the volunteers became part of the problem.

The next year, in 1970, seven national disaster response organizations convened for the first time to find a way to effectively serve disaster survivors and their communities. As a result, NVOAD was formed as a forum for sharing knowledge and coordinating resources—money, materials and manpower—throughout the disaster cycle: preparation, response and recovery.

As NVOAD grew and expanded, it recognized the need for an annual forum to share information and the lessons learned from responding to events during the previous year. At the 2013 conference, there will be more than 50 workshops and training sessions focusing on: long-term recovery; volunteer management; communication technology; partnerships between nonprofits, public and private-for-profit companies; and many other topics.

Take advantage of this rare opportunity to meet leaders and members of disaster response organizations from across the country. Add to your knowledge and skill by learning the latest techniques in many areas of disaster response.

For more information and registration details, visit <http://nvoad.org/events/>. Be sure to take advantage of the early registration discount.

Interfaith Advocacy: Faith in action *(continued from page 1)*

After a luncheon keynote address by Bruce Goldberg, director of the Oregon Health Authority, participants marched to the capitol building, where they were welcomed by Rep. Lew Frederick (D-Portland) and Rep. Mark Johnson (R-Hood River). The afternoon was then spent in meetings with legislators.

Sponsors of *Interfaith Advocacy Day* included: Dasmesh Darbar Sikh Temple, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO), Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon, Family Bridge Interfaith Hospitality Network, Interfaith Council of Greater Portland, InterReligious Action Network of Washington County, Islamic Society of Greater Portland, Jewish Family Child Services, Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Muslim Educational Trust, Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries, Occupy Inter-Faith Eugene/Springfield, Oregon Area Jewish Committee, Oregon Faith Roundtable Against Hunger, Oregon Muslim Citizens Alliance, Presbytery of the Cascades, Robison Jewish Health Center, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, and Unitarian Universalist Voices for Justice.

Advocacy Continues

Following the momentum created by *Interfaith Advocacy Day*, EMO's Public Policy leadership team continues to work with our coalition partners to support legislative efforts that strengthen families, increase access to adequate food and affordable housing, expand human and civil rights for all, reduce violence, and improve public safety. The following are key areas of focus.

Family and Economic Stability—In the 2013 Oregon Legislative Session, there are several key pieces of legislation that strengthen families and help in keeping them out of poverty.

Last year, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) helped over 266,000 families to make ends meet, while providing a pathway out of poverty by increasing their household income. Both HB 2477 and SB 326 extend the Dec. 31, 2013, sunset for the EITC. HB 2850 and SB 507 will increase the percentage of federal earned income credit allowable as credit against Oregon personal income tax. *(Read personal story about EITC in box on this page.)*

HB 3440 also helps protect children and strengthen Oregon families living in extreme poverty by providing funding for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). TANF is helping 34,355 Oregon families, including 64,124 children, by offering basic assistance for shelter, utilities and other daily necessities, as well as support for families to return to employment.

HB 2417 is legislation that will create ongoing, dedicated funding for housing for low-income veterans. These bills have had initial hearings and will need continued strong support from the religious community.

Human and Civil Rights—HB 2977 (Construction Labor Contractor Bill) makes construction labor brokers subject to the existing labor contracting system used in agriculture and reforestation. It requires licensing by the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), a bond to ensure payment of wages, and written disclosure of wages and working conditions.

HB 2976 (Day Labor/Contingent Labor Bill including Notice and Payroll Stub Provisions) attacks wage theft of temporary workers. It provides a "Bill of Rights" including disclosure of wages and working conditions and prohibition on charges for tools and for cashing a paycheck. It also requires temporary agencies to register with BOLI and post a wage bond. The provisions added this year include requirements that employers provide information with each pay stub, including wage rate, hours, etc.

HB 3142 (Definitions Bill) standardizes the definitions of "employ," "employee," "employer," and "wages" in Oregon wage and hour statutes. It also creates a rebuttable presumption of employee, not independent contractor.

These House bills are all currently in the Committee on Business and Labor.

In the Senate, SB 573 (Wage Lien) provides that an employee can create a lien against all employer property for non-payment of wages. This lien supersedes all other debts, with the exception of tax liens and commercial lending institution liens filed before the wage lien. The bill includes procedures and employer protections. It is currently in the Senate Committee on General Government, Consumer and Small Business Protection.

The Tuition Equity Bill, HB 2787, passed in the Oregon House and passed the Senate on March 21. The bill now heads to the governor's desk for his signature. The measure allows graduates of Oregon high schools who are undocumented to pay in-state tuition to Oregon public universities, which will take effect during the next academic year. It is anticipated that a bill providing the opportunity for undocumented immigrants to receive an Oregon drivers license solely for driving privileges will be submitted this session.

Criminal Justice Reform—Building on the governor's pledge in his State of the State address to "find effective and alternative ways to sanction non-violent offenders, including crime prevention and community corrections strategies instead of additional prison beds,"

Why legislation matters: A personal story

Several years ago, Howard and his wife were unemployed, due to the economic recession. Both have college degrees. At the time, they had children living at home, and the economic stress was frightening. Eventually, they were able to find part-time jobs, but they were still struggling to make ends meet.

Thankfully, discovering that they were eligible for the Federal and state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) was "a blessing ... living on the edge, as we were." The state EITC helped to return more money to this family and helped them weather the financial storm they were facing.

Today, Howard Kenyon is the senior program manager of EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program—and he is helping others weather the financial storms they face in their lives.

EMO is working with stakeholders to develop a strategy that takes a "whole system" approach to criminal justice reform. Public safety decisions profoundly affect every other public institution. The systems approach affirms the connection between crime and prevention and reduced recidivism rates and support for children and families, health care and education.

We will examine potential campaign issues such as sentencing reform, abolition of the death penalty, transformation of the juvenile justice system, and the prevention of gun violence. Oregon is doing something right on crime, and we need to keep advancing what we are doing well. Violent and property crime in Oregon has dropped dramatically by over 50 percent since the 1990s, and Oregon has the lowest recidivism rate in the nation compared to 41 states.

The Governor's Commission on Public Safety has placed a series of sentencing reforms before the current legislature that will: 1) advance evidence-based practices in our criminal justice system that are contributing to the drop in crime and recidivism rates; 2) maintain the present levels of incarceration; 3) prevent Oregon from having to add an additional 2,300 prison beds to meet current forecasts for prison growth at a cost of \$600 million over the next ten years; and 4) free up budget money for justice reinvestment in community corrections.

Rep. Mitch Greenlick (D-Portland) has introduced a bill to refer the abolition of the death penalty to the voters. EMO will examine all of these and other positive developments to determine where EMO can best have a strategic role in promoting public safety and a better quality of life for all Oregonians.

Environmental Stewardship—Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is supporting several initiatives in the Oregon Legislature this session that protect the state's scenic waterways, safeguard children's health from toxic exposure, and slow climate disruption. Sen. Alan Bates (D-Medford) introduced SB 401 in February to extend protections to Oregon rivers from unregulated and destructive uses, such as suction dredge mining by extending the Scenic Waterways Act.

HB 3162 was introduced by Rep. Greenlick in March to establish an efficient system to identify, collect and share information about toxics when they exist in children's products sold in Oregon.

SB 488, introduced by Sen. Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland) in March, would remove the 2015 sunset from the Oregon's Clean Fuels Program. The program encourages lower-carbon fuels like Oregon-made sustainable biofuels, electricity, natural gas and propane. It also can create thousands of jobs, while reducing Oregon's dependence on imported gas and diesel and contributions to global warming.

These bill numbers may change as the session progresses. EMO will continue to update our constituents on the developments of these important pieces of legislation.

If you would like to get involved as a volunteer in supporting any of EMO's Public Policy priorities, or you would like to receive EMO's Public Policy Advocacy program electronic newsletter and action alerts, please contact Jan Elfers at (503) 221-1054, ext. 204, or jelfers@emoregon.org.

Emergence Christianity will be the focus of the *Wright Lectures* with Phyllis Tickle

Registration is open for the 2013 *Wright Lectures* at Menucha with Phyllis Tickle, one of the most highly respected authorities and popular speakers on religion in America today. Tickle will speak on her books *The Great Emergence* and *Emergence Christianity: What It Is, Where It Is Going, and Why It Matters*. The event will run Oct. 13-15 at Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in Corbett, Ore., and is limited to 60 participants. Over the three-day period, Tickle will lecture, offer extended question and answer periods, and encourage small group conversations in which participants can discuss the implications of what they are hearing.

In *The Great Emergence*, Tickle argues that Christianity currently is undergoing a massive upheaval as part of a regular pattern that occurs every 500 years, in which old ideas are rejected and new ones emerge. Her follow-up book *Emergence Christianity: What It Is, Where It Is Going and Why It Matters* further describes and defines the progress of this multi-faceted, “radically Jesus-oriented, communal, post-Protestant” movement. She also describes it as “largely based in virtual reality as opposed to bricks and mortar,” and “deeply concerned with theologies of religion that get rid of Christian particularity or exclusivism.”

Tickle, a speaker, author, Episcopal lay Eucharistic priest and the founding editor of the religion department at *Publishers Weekly*, says this Great Emergence means that the Christian church has entered a post-



Author Phyllis Tickle will speak on emergent Christianity at the 2013 Wright Lectures at Menucha.

denominational mode. This sociological and cultural shift involves a distrust of all institutions and is forcing mainline Protestant Christianity to become less hierarchal and more communal. At the same time, she says, it offers an opportunity for Protestantism to renew and refine itself. “Wherever it’s going, there’s every reason right now to rejoice. God is doing a new thing amongst us and it’s called emerging or emergent Christianity.”

For more information or to register, please go to menucha.org/programs/wright-lecture-series.

National Council of Churches to consolidate operations in Washington, DC

In a move aimed at streamlining operations to “free up the Council to be about the priorities that the churches set together,” the National Council of Churches (NCC) will consolidate its operations in Washington, D.C. The NCC will remain in New York through satellite offices for three senior program staff.

Six administrative positions have also been eliminated by the Council, as a result of its ongoing restructuring and a streamlining of its accounting system. The long-term savings of the consolidation in Washington are projected at between \$400,000 and \$500,000, according to Peg Birk, NCC transitional general secretary.

The decision to consolidate operations in Washington followed a feasibility study by staff to determine “where the NCC can best achieve its work, providing the flexibility required by the new structure,” said Birk. “The critical NCC policy work can be coordinated from any location but to be the prophetic ‘voice of the faithful’ on the ground in the places of power, it is best served by establishing our operations in Washington. ... This consolidation will free us from the infrastructure of a bygone era, enabling us to witness more boldly to our visible unity in Christ, and work for justice and peace in today’s rapidly changing ecclesial, ecumenical and inter-religious world.”

Since its founding in 1950, the National Council of Churches has been the leading force for shared ecumenical witness among Christians in the United States. The NCC’s 37 member communions—from a wide spectrum of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Evangelical, historic African American and Living Peace churches—include 40 million persons in more than 100,000 local congregations in communities across the nation.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon offers a great service to area pastors, not only by equipping us with practical resources to use in our local congregations, but also the benefit of ecumenical relationships that strengthen our understandings of what it means to be a Christian in the world today ... We tackle the real, hearty issues, from gun violence to ethical economics to global climate change.

I enjoy building relationships across denominational lines, and across professional fields as well, with the chance to bring a word from faith leaders to political leaders in Salem at the recent *Interfaith Advocacy Day*. EMO is a gift to us in congregational life and to the state as a whole!

*Audrey de Coursey
Living Stream Church of the Brethren*

EMO welcomes new members throughout Oregon

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon welcomes the following new members, which have been affirmed by the EMO Board of Directors:

Congregations: Episcopal Parish of St. John the Baptist, Zion Lutheran Church, Trinity Lutheran Church, Sunnyside United Methodist Church, Bethel Congregational United Church of Christ, East County Church of Christ

Ecumenical Organizations: L’Arche Portland, Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries

Interfaith Partners: Interfaith Council of Greater Portland

Our growing list of members reflects the dynamic community of faith in Oregon and allows us to establish collaborative partnerships, through which we can better serve the needs of the people in our state and throughout the Northwest. Membership provides opportunities for education, joint service, and a growing momentum for positive change and growth in diverse communities throughout Oregon.

To learn how your congregation or faith organization can become an EMO member, contact Rev. Jenny Pratt, director of Membership Relations, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or jpratt@emoregon.org, or download an application at www.emoregon.org/membership.php.

Testimonials from a few EMO members ...

I have had the pleasure to know EMO for the past 10 years and feel blessed with this connection. I have made friendships with people working at this organization ... EMO plays a vital role in bringing intra-faith peace and harmony in dealing with the various factions within the Christian community ... Their advocacy for the less fortunate is a reflection of what Jesus Christ (Peace be upon Him) has urged us to do. They have opened their office to the Interfaith Council of Greater Portland and encouraged us to foster better interfaith relations. I am honored to know Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and its people.

*Gulzar Ahmed
Interfaith Council of Greater Portland*

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a movement of the faithful that enables us to see the beauty and the sufferings of our communities. Its wide, distinctive programs reflect our spiritual convictions that relationships are never ever, ever, voluntary. EMO reminds us that we can’t choose to be or not to be in relationship with each other.

*Rev. John Boonstra
Bethel United Church of Christ, White Salmon*

EMO celebrates grants & gifts

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

Donor (Fund)	Program
Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon	Annual Fund
Black United Fund of Oregon	NE Emergency Food Program
Boeing Employees Community Fund, Portland	NE Emergency Food Program
Broadway Cares Equity Fights AIDS	HIV Services
Cascade AIDS Project, Inc.	HIV Services
Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ	Annual Fund
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oregon	Annual Fund
Church World Service	NE Emergency Food Program
Collins Foundation	Annual Fund
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	Annual Fund
East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon	Annual Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	Annual Fund, Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership, NE Emergency Food Program
Fremont United Methodist Church	NE Emergency Food Program
Harris Family Foundation	NE Emergency Food Program
Holzman Foundation, Inc.	Second Home
Hoover Family Foundation	Second Home
Hopeline-West	Russian Oregon Social Services
Income Property Management	Annual Fund
Irwin Foundation	NE Emergency Food Program
Joseph E. Weston Public Foundation	Annual Fund, Second Home
Josiah Hill III Clinic	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Juan Young Trust	Second Home
Kent Richard Hofmann Foundation	HIV Services
Kiwanis Club of Portland Foundation	NE Emergency Food Program
MAC AIDS Fund	HIV Services
Macy's Passport Grant Fund	HIV Services
Moreland Presbyterian Church	Annual Fund, Russian Oregon Social Services
Northwest Health Foundation	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
OHSU Division of Adult HIV/AIDS	HIV Services
Order of Benevolent Bliss	HIV Services
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence	Russian Oregon Social Services
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
Pride Foundation	HIV Services
Regeneration Project	Oregon Interfaith Power & Light
Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust	HIV Services
St. Luke Lutheran Church	NE Emergency Food Program
St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church	NE Emergency Food Program
Susan G. Komen for the Cure	Russian Oregon Social Services
United Methodist Church Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Valley Community Presbyterian	Second Home
Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC	Annual Fund
Westminster Presbyterian Church	NE Emergency Food Program
Whole Foods Market	NE Emergency Food Program
Willamette Week	NE Emergency Food Program
Wright Land Company	Annual Fund

Upcoming EMO events

April 25: EMO's Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner. 5 p.m. at the Hilton Hotel, Portland. More details on page 1.

April 25: Dining Out for Life. More details on page 4.

May 12: A Mother's Day Event for the Earth: A Call to Protect the Planet for Future Generations. 12 to 5 p.m. at Pioneer Square, downtown Portland.

June 5: World Environment Day. For more information, go to <http://www.unep.org/wed/>.

June 20: World Refugee Day.

Find more details about these events on EMO's website at www.emoregon.org/emo_events.php.

Honor & Memorial Gifts

August 2012 through February 2013

Gifts in Honor

In honor of Clay Andrew
Daryl Blanksma, Silas Olson, Dan Wilson-Fey

In honor of Kristin Baack
Gaile Baack

In honor of Robert Bailey
Kevin Boggs

In honor of Wayne Bartnik, Jane Beach, Eleanor and Larry Blumhagen, Chuck Feist, Gayle Harris, Marseille Jaco, Maxine Kaye, Bob Morris, Dane Nelson, Electra Royse, Morgan Royse, Ron Royse, Nancy Soforenko, and Marian Whiteman
Richard Royse

In honor of Bruce Bishop
Robert Lawrence

In honor of Rocky Blumhagen and Richard Royse
Eleanor Blumhagen

In honor of Ricky Casias and Tim Bealer
Mary Wiedeman

In honor of Alyssa Cook
Jamie Cook

In honor of Mark and Jane Cotton
John W. Cotton

In honor of John Davis
Joyce Lew

In honor of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
Marian Gilmore

In honor of Bill Foust
Dana Kane

In honor of Alice Frevert
Robert Fletcher

In honor of Claire Gilbert
Amy Manning

In honor of Jenny Holmes
Carla Starrett-Bigg, David Leslie

In honor of the ordination of Carol Kyllingstad
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Louis Brunner, Megan Burt, Frederick Camp, Daniel Corrigan, Susan Dunaway, Catherine Hood, Donald Hook, Patrick Kelly, Sharon Malen, Donna Mihnos

In honor of David Leslie
Robert Leslie

In honor of Brynn Lillian Markovich
Patricia Blakeslee

In honor of Ross Miller
Nathan Miller

In honor of Mission of the Atonement

Amy Manning

In honor of Rodney Page
Elizabeth Eklund

In honor of Jim Peters
Julia Peters

In honor of Raymond Petit
Lisa Jean Hoefner

In honor of Benny Sollebello
anonymous donor

In honor of Matthew Starrett-Bigg
Carla Starrett-Bigg

In honor of Mara Steen
Arthur Coolidge

In honor of Theresa
Patricia Dickerson

Gifts in Memory

In memory of Dave Bahret and Richard Burton
Reed Fowler

In memory of Don Beam
Ruth Beam

In memory of Brian Bounous
Brenda Mendiola

In memory of John Casas
Raymond Barnes

In memory of Tom Deas
Jerry Deas

In memory of Robert Ell
Patrick Ell

In memory of Emily Gottfried
Robert Wilson

In memory of Carol Howard
Harold Howard

In memory of Jimmy Johnson
Deborah Hedges

In memory of Dorothy Lambert
Phyllis Krueger

In memory of Lois
Maria Grumm

In memory of Patrick Loomis
Michael Prendergast

In memory of Daniel Mevis
Kathleen King

In memory of Mina Lee Sandau
Lisa Wenzlick

In memory of Michael Scott
Tomas Rannells

In memory of Ronald Selis
Virginia Robertson

In memory of J. V. Shepard
Jane Shepard

In memory of Robert Wright
Cecil Prescod