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Border Crisis: A call for hospitality

Increase of children fleeing violence & persecution in Latin America creating a crisis for all refugees

By Caroline van der Harten, managing attorney of SOAR Immigration Legal Services

A humanitarian crisis is taking place in Central America that is causing tens of thousands of children to flee to the United States and other countries, seeking safety and security. While many of these children are showing up with a parent, many are also showing up alone, or unaccompanied.

The events causing this large scale migration did not suddenly occur overnight. Factors, such as a dramatic increase in violence, forced conscription into gangs, human trafficking, sexual assault and abuse have been occurring with increasing frequency in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) states that although the United States is seeing a large number of individuals coming to the southern border seeking asylum, the number of asylum claims in Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Belize have also sky rocketed.

The journey that many of these children undertake to get to the United States or other countries is treacherous. Many are injured, killed or further abused in transit.

Legal protections for unaccompanied minors

Under both international law and U.S. law, these children have a right to present



Photo credit: voanews.com

In 2013, 38,833 unaccompanied minors were apprehended by the Border Patrol, a 59 percent jump from the year before, and a 142 percent increase from 2011. This year, officials have told refugee advocates they anticipate the numbers to double again, to as many as 74,000 unaccompanied children.

themselves at the U.S. border and ask for protection from the violence and persecution that they are fleeing. These

individuals are not breaking the law when they come to our country asking for help.

Continued on page 6

Put your faith into action on *Interfaith Advocacy Day*

The 2015 *Interfaith Advocacy Day* will bring together hundreds of people from many religious traditions from throughout Oregon for a day of worship, dialogue and advocacy. The much anticipated biennial event will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2015, at St. Mark Lutheran Church and the State Capitol Building in Salem.

On *Interfaith Advocacy Day*, people of faith answer the call to be a voice for the voiceless, speak out for an end to poverty, and support

programs that eliminate hunger and homelessness and guarantee access to quality health care to all. Activities include presentations from faith leaders on the religious roots of concern for the poor, training in advocacy skills, issue briefings, procession to the Capitol Building, and afternoon meetings with elected representatives and senators.

Individuals and groups from congregations and community organizations are encouraged to participate. The registration fee is

\$20 (includes continental breakfast, lunch and materials) and \$10 for students with ID. Parking passes are \$15. Online registration will be available by Jan. 2, 2015, at www.emoregon.org.

Cosponsors to date include Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Jewish Federation of Portland, Muslim Educational Trust, Peace and Justice Committee of the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon Area Jewish Committee, and others.

Cosponsors' displays and materials will be exhibited in the Galleria throughout the day. If your congregation or organization is interested in being an event cosponsor, please download a sponsorship form at www.emoregon.org. The deadline for cosponsoring is Nov. 21.

For more information about Interfaith Advocacy Day, including sponsorship, contact Jan Elfers, EMO director of Public Policy Advocacy, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 204, or jelfers@emoregon.org.

Forty years of service and ministry embedded in a timeless calling

The ongoing unfolding of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) 40th anniversary continues to bring forth reconnections to the people and ideals that have been part of the ecumenical movement in Oregon over the years.



David Leslie

I have met men and women whose first exposure to EMO was when they were in high school or college through the School for Religious Learning. I have had the pleasure of listening to stories of personal and community transformation as a result of congregations hosting refugee families who were fleeing religious and political persecution in places like Vietnam, Somalia, Iraq and Burma. I have reconnected with people who have been served in our community ministries, such as the HIV Day Center and Northeast Emergency Food Program, and listened to their gratitude for the hospitality and assistance offered at times in their lives when love and support were desperately needed. I have watched with pride as a number of our interns have gone on to graduate studies or employment opportunities where service remains central to their educational and vocational commitments.

And through all of these encounters, I am constantly reminded that one of EMO's major contributions over the years is our commitment to a public theology where our commitments and actions are placed within the faith and broader community commons in order to inspire action that promotes unity, peace and justice. As I experience daily, and the stories of past actions remind me, EMO is an ecumenical organizing force seeking out those issues, areas of the world, and peoples that often time do not get the attention or respect they need and deserve.

Our collective commitment to a healthy environment, dignity and fairness in the workplace, promises stated in treaties with tribes, respect for all people and global peace have allowed us to join together with a diversity of organizations and people in collective efforts to improve the quality of life for all who live in Oregon. Through these encounters, we have built bridges, repaired breaches, torn

down walls, and challenged theological, political and marketplace assumptions that intentionally and unintentionally divide us. I have been reminded time and time again during this anniversary year that this commitment to a public ministry and witness based on hope and re-imagined possibilities must continue to be part of EMO's mission, for there are still too many community divides, societal inequities and conflicts in the world today that need our collective attention.

World events during the past few weeks remind me of this fact and weary the soul. The shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., conflict in Gaza and Israel that has resulted in the deaths of more than 2,000 civilians, spread of the Ebola virus in West Africa, and the ongoing unraveling of the Cover Oregon health insurance debacle leave one wondering when peace and sense and sensibility will ultimately prevail—timeless wondering that cuts across the ages.

Thankfully there are people with deep reservoirs of faith who, in spite of the troubles throughout the ages, seek each other out for prayer, dialogue and joint action in acts of healing and hope that allow us to affirm with the Psalmist that, instead of giving up and turning inward, we find the strength to "turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

... indeed we are more faithful and effective when we serve in faith together ...

On May 14, more than 400 people from around the state gathered at the Portland Hilton to celebrate EMO's accomplishments during its first 40 years. This gathering was another important public reminder that indeed we are more faithful and effective when we serve in faith together—the heart of the ecumenical calling.

So as EMO goes forth into its 41st anniversary, we do so with the public commitment to continue to foster unity, seek justice and pursue peace—for this our calling yesterday, today and well into the future. Come join us!

Catholic Charities of Oregon appoints new executive director



Dr. Richard Birkel

Photo credit: Jon DeBellis, Catholic Sentinel

In August, Catholic Charities of Oregon announced the appointment of its new executive director, Dr. Richard Birkel.

Birkel has been a nonprofit leader, public health activist and researcher for more than three decades. During that time, he has worked with diverse communities to address health disparities and to achieve social justice. He is recognized as a national expert on a range of public health issues including mental health, disability and family care-giving. He has worked closely with Latino and African American leaders in Washington, DC, to address the challenges of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse.

Birkel holds a doctorate in psychology and a master's in public administration from the University of Virginia and a bachelor's degree from Yale. He has worked for the National Council on Aging, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Rosalynn Carter Institute on Caregiving, and Joseph P. Kennedy Institute for Developmental Disabilities at Catholic Charities in Washington DC, where he worked with Cardinal James Hickey. He is also an ordained deacon.

"I'm excited to be able to merge my faith and professional life once again," said Birkel of coming to work for Catholic Charities in Oregon. "Being able to work for the good of the Church is a terrific gift."

Founded in 1933, Catholic Charities acts as the official social service arm of the Catholic Church in western Oregon and aims to assist clients by helping them meet economic and personal goals and by supporting their physical and social wellbeing.

Voice

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

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MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

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

Northwest denominational annual gatherings

Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon: Oct. 10-12, Pendleton, Ore.

American Baptist: Oct. 17-19, San Lorenzo, Calif.

Presbytery of Eastern Oregon: Oct. 24-25, Milton-Freewater, Ore.

Episcopal Diocese of Oregon: Nov. 13-15, Salem, Ore.



Pollinator sanctuaries: Protecting the smallest creatures saves us all

Toxic pesticides, habitat loss, mono-cropping and climate change are taking a toll on pollinator species, which brings us one of every three bites of food we eat. Your faith community can help the species by establishing a “pollinator sanctuary” on its grounds by creating habitats, reducing or eliminating pesticide use, and educating your members.

The introduced honeybee is the most well-known pollinator, but there are many native species of pollinator insects in Oregon. The pollinators are crucial for various Oregon crops, including blueberries, pears, cherries, apples, clover, cranberries and vegetable seeds.

To inspire and support faith-based action, EMO’s Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns has launched the Pollinator Sanctuary Project. This project builds on a 2013 pilot project that INEC partnered on with the Faith Task Force of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign and the Tributary Fund, which provided national webinars and mini-grants to help 14 Portland metro area congregations establish pollinator gardens.

Funding from the Gilhousen Family Foundation will allow us to present educational events and provide more mini-grants for congregations.

If your congregation is interested in applying for a mini-grant or you would like to know more about the project, email jholmes@emoregon.org or call (503) 221-1054, ext. 214. The deadline to submit a mini-grant proposal is Oct. 6, 2014; another round of grants will be awarded in early 2015.



Pollinator Resources

Congregations Caring for Watersheds and Wildlife Handbook—Download INEC’s handbook for congregations on wildlife and watershed projects and how to integrate these projects into the ongoing life of your congregation at www.watershedsandwildlife.org/index.php/handbook.

North American Pollinator Protection Campaign—Access brochures connecting faith traditions with pollinator protection at www.pollinator.org/nappc/brochures.htm.

National Resources Conservation Service—Good overall pollinator resources available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/pollinators.

Xerces Society—Excellent resources for pollinator protection can be found at www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation.

Save Oregon Bees—Learn about the 2014 bill passed by the Oregon Legislature to protect pollinators at www.saveoregonbees.org/save-oregons-pollinators-bill.

2015 Earth Care Summit will explore “The True Costs of Climate Change”

Join EMO’s Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns on Jan. 24 and 25, 2015, to examine “The True Costs of Climate Change” at the fifth annual *Earth Care Summit*. This two-day event at the University of Portland will feature keynote speaker Dan Misleh, executive director of the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change.

The summit will begin on Saturday with a climate arts and music session, followed by a reception, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. The event continues on Sunday from 4 to 8 p.m. with an optional dinner, keynote address and breakout sessions exploring the costs of climate change in more depth. Topics will include economic equity, biodiversity, social inequality, transportation, and more. Environmental resource people in the community will be leading workshops and tabling at the event. They will have plenty of ideas and resources to share to help your congregation with their greening efforts.

Congregational cosponsorships are a big reason we can make this event happen. If your congregation is interested in cosponsoring the *Earth Care Summit*, you can download a cosponsorship form at www.emoregon.org.

For more information about the Earth Care Summit, call (503) 221-1054 or email oipl@emoregon.org.

Earth Words 2014

We are excited to announce the winners of Interfaith Network for Earth Concern’s annual Earth Words sermon contest.

The first prize winner is the *Rev. Donna Pritchard* for her four-part sermon series titled “It’s a God Thing.” Pritchard is a pastor at First United Methodist Church in Portland. The two runners-up are “No Time but Now ... There’s No One but Us: An Earth Day Sermon” by the *Rev. Thomas Disrud*, First Unitarian Church in Portland, and “God’s Dance Party” by the *Rev. Brooks Berndt*, First Congregational Church in Vancouver.

Congratulations to our winners and thank you for your leadership in preaching about earth concerns! All of our winners will receive a certificate of recognition, a gift certificate to Powell’s Books and energy efficient products through www.shopipl.org.

Now is already the time to start thinking about next year’s contest. Please consider preaching a sermon on earth care and submitting it before May 31, 2015. Clergy and lay persons are welcome to apply. Details about the contest and this year’s winning sermons can be found at www.emoregon.org/power_light.php.

Planting seeds in Rockwood

Team members of Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership’s *Rockwood Food Opportunity Project* have been working hard in the Rockwood area of Gresham on a number of projects to improve nutrition and health of residents. These projects will make it easier for people to eat affordable, healthy food by bringing more fresh produce into Rockwood through community gardens, corner stores, farm stands, and classes on gardening, cooking and nutrition.

Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership’s Jesuit Volunteer Corps NW members are facilitating activities at the Sanctuary Community Garden at Anawim Christian Community in the Rockwood community of Gresham, as well as cultivating local instructors. The garden plots are all subscribed, with diverse cultures represented. Offerings in 2014 include a number of cooking and gardening classes, including a “Seed to Supper” class on how to garden on a budget that was conducted by Oregon Food Bank and Oregon State University Extension.

Members of the “Healthy Retail” team have been working hard to encourage corner stores in Rockwood to stock more healthy produce. To date, four corner stores have committed to do this. We will award grant money to help the corner stores with the process this fall.



A farm stand was established in September at the Plaza del Sol in the heart of Rockwood at NE 187th and Stark. The farm stand accepts SNAP and WIC. In partnership with the Rockwood Co-op, the International Marketplace will also feature ethnic foods and crafts.

This pilot market will run every Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. until Oct. 26; it will resume in April or May 2015.

The *Rockwood Food Opportunity Project* is funded by a two-year grant from the Kaiser Permanente Community Fund through the Northwest Health Foundation and other funders including the Bill Healy Foundation, Catholic Campaign for Hunger Development and Presbyterian Hunger Program.

For more information about the project, please contact Jenny Holmes, EMO Environmental Ministries director, at (503) 221-1054 or jholmes@emoregon.org.

NEFP is cooking up tasty events this fall for the annual *Give!Guide* campaign

How can we create the easiest path possible for year-end giving, and at the same time hook young readers on the year-end giving tradition? That was the question that launched the *Willamette Week Give!Guide* a decade ago.

In the last two years, EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP) has been a recipient of this annual giving tradition, last year doubling our total amount of *Give!Guide* donations over the previous year.

This year, NEFP wants to get the most donors age 35 years and under who contribute to a Portland area nonprofit in the *Give!Guide*. Our goal is to reach 200 donors age 35 and under, in hopes of winning a cash prize that goes with this accomplishment.

The traditional kickoff event for NEFP's *Give!Guide* campaign is the "Taste of Thanksgiving" at Whole Foods Market Hollywood in northeast Portland, which will be held on Thursday, Nov. 6, 2014. Whole

Foods provides a sumptuous buffet of holiday foods and drinks. The suggested donation is \$10, with all proceeds going to NEFP. For more details, including the event time, visit www.emoregon.org or contact the store at (503) 284-2644.

An exciting addition to NEFP's *Give!Guide* campaign is "One Place Many Tastes." Sponsored by Embassy Suites Portland Airport, the event will include a live cook-off among chefs from five local hotels, food tasting stations from 10 countries, beer and wine tasting, a silent auction, live music, and *Give!Guide* donation stations. The event, priced at \$20 per person (proceeds will support NEFP), will be held at the Embassy Suites Portland Airport on Nov. 20, 2014, from 6 to 9 p.m. To register, go to www.emoregon.org.

Even if you can't attend one of these tasty events, you can still contribute to NEFP's *Give!Guide* campaign. We are asking 2,000



Last year's "Taste of Thanksgiving" at Whole Foods Market Hollywood kicked off NEFP's *Give!Guide* campaign, and the event raised over \$2,000 for the program.

friends, including 200 young people age 35 and under, to give at least \$10 each. Starting Nov. 6, go to giveguide.org to make your donation—please designate "Northeast Emergency Food Program." The deadline to donate is Dec. 31.

New job training initiative changes lives

By Howard Kenyon, director of EMO's Community Ministries

After four long years of unemployment, Keith called me two months ago with some wonderful news. He had just landed a job at one of the busiest sandwich shops in Portland—minimum pay and erratic hours, but a real paycheck.

In the midst of the Great Recession, Keith and his wife began a very long and weary journey—first losing his job, then their housing, suffering physical injuries on his part, and finally learning that she has an aggressive form of Multiple Sclerosis. Mixed in were the joys and challenges of raising a family of three young children.

The one constant in their lives has been the Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP), where the family was able to get food, clothing and diapers. And while all this was a helpful blessing, what Keith really wanted was to move beyond reliance on emergency assistance by landing a job with a steady income. Unfortunately, a long employment gap made this difficult.

Thankfully, Keith was one of four individuals last year to go through several months of training in the Service Learner Initiative (SLI), our new pilot project providing training for long-term unemployed individuals, among others.

As an SLI intern at NEFP, Keith gained valuable work skills including customer service and data entry. He was able to add this experience to his resume, which contributed to his recent employment.

Upon seeing the results of our pilot program, the Oregon Community Foundation provided \$20,000—half the budget needed to enable us to expand the SLI program and assist 20 people in 2014-2015.

In addition, we are networking with business associations and businesses in Portland to



After gaining valuable skills and job experience at EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program through the Service Learner Initiative, Keith landed a full-time job as store manager at one of the busiest sandwich shops in Portland.

provide jobs for our trainees including Portland State University, Community Works Project, Our 42nd Street, Bienestar de la Familia, and the Cully Boulevard Alliance.

How can congregations and faith-based organizations get involved in the program? Business owners in your faith community are invited to partner with SLI in providing training and job opportunities. Those in need of job training are welcome to contact us about the various opportunities available.

To learn more about the SLI program, contact Howard Kenyon at (503) 221-1054 or hkenyon@emoregon.org.

One more word about Keith: He received a promotion this past month and is now a full time store manager at the sandwich shop. In his new position, Keith has come full circle—he is responsible for hiring new employees, providing opportunity for others in need of a job.

"Hungry for Change" summit examines emerging themes to end hunger

The outrage of hunger amidst plenty will never be solved by "experts" somewhere. It will only be solved when people like you and me decide to act. – Francis Moore Lappé

The 2014 Food Security Summit will be held on Oct. 21, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at CH2M Hill Alumni Center, Oregon State University (OSU), 725 SW 26th St., Corvallis, Ore.

The event, titled "Hungry for Change: New thinking and emerging themes in our work to end hunger," aims to change the conversation around hunger by shaking up assumptions and to re-energize Oregonians involved in anti-hunger work. The morning session themes revolve around farm worker/grower perspectives, hunger as a health issue, and the social justice implications of hunger.

The summit is hosted by Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon, Oregon Food Bank, Oregon Hunger Task Force, and OSU. Early registration rates are available through Oct. 13 for \$75 (\$20 for students); after Oct. 13, registration is \$100 (\$30 for students). Registration includes continental breakfast, lunch, mid-morning and afternoon breaks, and all Summit-related materials.

Learn more and register at oregonstate.edu/conferences/event/2014hungersummit.

Circles of Support and Accountability offers support beyond prison walls

By Rev. Audrey deCoursey, Circles of Support & Accountability program coordinator

“I was in prison and you visited me.”

Matthew 25:36

In late 2013, the Multnomah County Department of Community Corrections approached Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) with a collaborative proposal to serve sex offenders who were returning to the Portland area from Oregon Department of Corrections’ facilities. Specifically, the County was interested in initiating Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) in Oregon to provide more community support for offenders reentering society.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon embraced the vision of this innovative program and, in early 2014, launched the CoSA Oregon initiative. The hope of EMO, along with our county and corrections partners, is to reduce recidivism and achieve the CoSA mission: *no more victims*.

History of CoSA

Twenty years ago in Ontario, Canada, a Mennonite pastor was contacted by prison officials to help support a high-risk sex offender being released into the community. The offender had attended his church once or twice years earlier; the pastor didn’t quite remember him, but the offender had mentioned him as the only person on the “outside” who might help him. Realizing the man would be returning to the community and concerned about his reoffending, the pastor organized a small group of volunteers who successfully supported the offender, alongside correctional officers and service and health professionals. The man did not re-offend through the rest of his life, and CoSA was officially launched.

Since then, the program has been replicated in cities across Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and the United States, including regions in Vermont, California, Colorado, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Washington. Studies on CoSA have shown recidivism rates decline by over 70 percent, while volunteers enjoy meaningful service and core members report gratitude for the social support they might never have found otherwise.

Throughout its development, CoSA has retained its community-based approach, and central to the success of the program is strong faith-based support. The program follows a restorative justice model, with the goal of healing both individuals and a community after violence. The vision of CoSA is that sex offenses are not just private matters, they are community matters, and communities can and need to play a role in decreasing future victimization.

The power of community support

The transition from prison back into a community is a time of great stress and adjustment for a sex offender with a serious, public criminal record. Finding housing and

employment are particular challenges, as many people are wary of hiring a sex offender or having that person move into their neighborhood.

In addition, social connections have often been severed by offenses and length of incarceration. Criminal justice research identifies key factors that contribute to the risk of reoffending, including low social support, criminal peers and associates, negative attitudes and isolation.

Circles of Support and Accountability helps reduce risk in concrete ways by offering the *core member* (offender) healthy relationships with people without criminal histories, attitudes of hope, a source of purpose to work toward outside of prison, and support to stay in their community corrections program.

Volunteers who form the *inner circle* are provided with extensive training about sex offenders and boundaries. They come from diverse faiths and backgrounds, but together they model healthy relationships and socialization for the *core member*.

Volunteers from the community are organized into circles that meet regularly with the *core member* during the first year out of prison. Circles provide a forum for the *core member* to discuss his unique challenges upon re-entry, from securing employment to encouragement to stay on treatment plans. These seemingly simple interactions help break down social isolation and enhance community engagement, reducing the risk of re-offending.

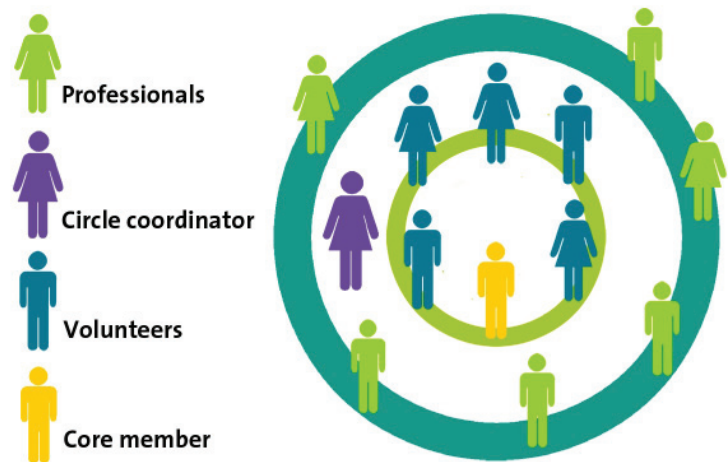
While other criminal risk factors—like substance abuse, unemployment, and lack of housing—are not issues CoSA addresses directly, *inner circle* volunteers support their *core member* emotionally as he works through these struggles.

The *inner circle* of offender and volunteers is supported in turn by an *outer circle* of professionals who address needs beyond the scope of the circle. The *outer circle*—including parole officers, counselors, faith leaders, recovery sponsors and housing advocates—provides links to services that offenders need as they transition out of prison.

At the heart of CoSA is a testimony to the power of healthy relationships, which can transform lives, strengthen communities and help keep our vulnerable members safer. You are invited to join EMO in this new ministry, working toward our goal of creating communities with *no more victims*.

Get involved in a circle

In Matthew 25, Jesus said, “I was in prison and you visited me,” affirming the transformative power of prison visitations. So too is the power of post-incarceration engagement, especially with people convicted of sex-related crimes. At the heart of the CoSA mission is breaking the



cycles of repeated abuse and violence.

As part of the new CoSA program in Oregon, EMO is recruiting volunteers to join CoSA circles. This sort of volunteering is not easy and not for everyone, but it is life-changing, healing, essential work for those who are ready to embrace the challenge.

Volunteers are placed into teams of four to six people and matched with a *core member* who has volunteered for the program and has been approved by the Oregon Department of Corrections. Volunteers undergo a background check and extensive training. Once the circle is developed, ongoing meetings begin.

The CoSA Oregon program also has employed the consultation support of internationally-recognized CoSA experts, psychologists Dr. Robin Wilson and Andrew McWhinnie. EMO staff member, the Rev. Audrey deCoursey, coordinates the circle development and supports the members of the circle.

As testified throughout the increasingly global CoSA network, community support and appropriate relationships can transform lives. Many people have no trouble forming healthy, mature relationships with their peers, but for some offenders that sort of relationship-building takes more intentionality. A circle may be the only place they come into contact with people who care about them and are not paid to be with them. The power of these relationships is amazing, leading people to discover meaning and purpose to life, without resorting to the criminal behaviors of the past.

Learn more about CoSA Oregon during a *Community Information Session* on Friday, Oct. 17, 2014, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. This evening event, with light refreshments and presentations by Dr. Robin Wilson and Andrew McWhinnie, is free and open to anyone interested in learning more about CoSA. A more thorough *CoSA Volunteer Training* will be offered on Saturday, Oct. 18, 2014, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Both events will be held at the Interchurch Center in Portland.

For more information about CoSA Oregon or to RSVP for the Information Session and/or Volunteer Training, contact Audrey deCoursey at (503) 988-8580 or cosa@emoregon.org and visit www.CoSAOregon.org.

Advocate for reform on Criminal Justice Sunday

There is a growing movement in Oregon to engage the faith community in criminal justice reform efforts.

To that end, EMO is encouraging congregations to recognize *Criminal Justice Sunday* by holding a service that focuses on the theme of criminal justice reform, featuring the topic in an adult forum, or inviting a guest speaker.

For example, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has designated Sunday, Jan. 25, 2015, the third Sunday of Epiphany, for their observance. Resources are available at www.pcusa.org/resource/criminal-justice-sunday-resources. The Episcopal Diocese of Oregon is urging their parishes to select one of the last three Sundays in January 2015 to lift up criminal justice reform in their liturgies.

If your church is interested in more information about Criminal Justice Sunday or you would like to schedule a guest speaker, please contact Jan Elfers, director of Public Policy Advocacy, at jelfers@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054.



Forum to explore ethics of GMOs

What are genetically modified organisms (GMOs)? How should we think about them? Why are they being developed? Why are so many people concerned about them?

These questions are on the minds of many Oregonians this fall, as we will vote on Measure 92, which would require the labeling of food products containing GMOs.

On Wednesday, Oct. 15, Warner Pacific College and EMO's Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) are partnering on a *GMO Ethics Forum* to bring together scientists, teachers and faith leaders to consider the questions above. We will also explore how our faith traditions can inform our thinking about the uses and risks of GMOs in our agricultural systems.

The *GMO Ethics Forum* will include a brief presentation explaining what GMOs are and

what they're used for, as well as time for Q&A with the panelists. Panelists include Dr. David Ervin, professor emeritus of Economics and Environmental Management and senior fellow at the Institute for Sustainable Solutions, Portland State University; Ivan Maluski, director, Friends of Family Farmers; Rabbi Debra Kolodny, P'nai Or of Portland; and Dr. David Terrell, professor of Physical Science, Warner Pacific College.

The Oct. 15, 2014, forum will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Warner Pacific College in the Schlatter Chapel, 2219 SE 68th Ave., Portland. There is no cost to attend, but there will be a free will offering to benefit IFFP. RSVP appreciated to foodandfaith@emoregon.org. For more information about the forum, call (503) 221-1054.



Border crisis

Continued from page 1

According to the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services is required by law to take custody and provide care for unaccompanied foreign children who present themselves at the U.S. border asking for help, as long as they are from countries that do not border the United States.

As such, we have both a legal and ethical duty to evaluate the circumstances that drove these children to our nation and to provide the proper protections that qualified individuals are eligible to receive under the law.

Faith response to the crisis

There are many ways to help these newly arriving children.

Nationally, faith-based groups like Church World Service (www.cwsglobal.org/what-we-do/refugees/), Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (lirs.org), and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (www.usccb.org) are encouraging people and communities of faith to support those individuals coming to the United States in search of safety.

These organizations are sending legal staff and volunteers to help individuals understand and advocate for their rights. Additionally, they are collecting funds for basic needs such as food, water, clothing, diapers, medical care, housing and bus tickets for those without other means of support.

Locally, the Oregon Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) (www.ailaoregon.com) has organized and sent teams of attorneys to provide direct legal assistance to individuals arriving at

the border. Children with these cases are just starting to arrive in Oregon, and AILA attorneys are organizing a strong pro bono response. EMO's SOAR Immigration Legal Services (www.soarlegal.org) is assisting with referrals to these pro bono attorneys, and Morrison Child and Family Services serves as the initial shelter offered to children who are sent to Portland.

While children await their court dates, additional support will be necessary. The Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice, formerly the Oregon New Sanctuary Movement, is initiating a campaign to connect directly with children by writing letters of welcome and solidarity. This is a great way for congregations to get involved. For more information, visit www.imirj.org.

Additionally, SOAR Immigration Legal Services provides culturally-competent legal representation and education to low income refugees and immigrants in Oregon and southwest Washington. Last year, SOAR provided legal services, educational services and legal consultations to more than 2,000 people. Our caseload includes naturalization, adjustment of status, family reunification, temporary protected status, parole renewal, humanitarian parole, employment authorization, asylum counseling, refugee travel documents and Cuban removal defense.

Through SOAR's services, we promote immigrant integration and civic engagement, as we guide refugees and immigrants along the pathway to U.S. Citizenship. Community support for these services is always needed and welcomed.

Funding crisis for all refugees

The funding pool the government uses to serve the needs of these unaccompanied children is the same pool used to serve planned refugee arrivals to the United States. Each year, Congress allocates funds to the Office of Refugee Resettlement. Due to the unexpected increase of children arriving at our southern border, the funding is insufficient to serve both the anticipated number of refugee arrivals and the increasing number of unaccompanied children. If the budget is not increased, there will be drastic cuts to refugee services both locally in Oregon and nationally.

For this reason, we urge you to contact your senators and congressional representatives to ask them to increase the Office of Refugee Resettlement's budget, so they can adequately address both the needs of these children and the vital refugee services that have become common for new arrivals to our country. To find contact information for your senators and representatives, go to www.emoregon.org/gov_legislative.php.

Oregon and the United States have been welcoming communities, where individuals fleeing persecution and violence have been able to start over and safely begin new lives. Let's ensure that this continues. Your voice and action here in Oregon and on the national level will ensure a faithful response and make a tangible difference.

For more information, please contact Caroline van der Harten, managing attorney of SOAR Immigration Legal Services, at (503) 384-2482 or cvanderharten@emoregon.org, or visit www.soarlegal.org.

Break the silence on domestic & sexual violence

While many religious leaders have been vocal about abortion, same sex marriage and other social concerns, they have remained fairly quiet on one major issue: domestic violence.

Millions of Americans report having experienced domestic and sexual violence. According to a survey from LifeWay Research, which interviewed 1,000 senior pastors of Protestant churches in the United States, pastors rarely include the topics of domestic and sexual violence in their sermons.

Cosponsored by the Christian nonprofits Sojourners and IMA World Health, the survey also found that pastors were more likely to believe domestic violence was an issue in their community (72 percent) than an issue in their church (25 percent).

This discrepancy may not be entirely the pastors' faults, however, as 52 percent of senior pastors say they don't have sufficient training to address domestic or sexual violence in their communities; 81 percent said they would work to reduce domestic violence if they had more training.

The survey's findings are unique, as the data on how pastors think about and address domestic and sexual violence is sparse. "Commissioning this report was critical," stated Rick Santos, the president and CEO of IMA World Health, "as there is little information out there about what is actually happening in the U.S. faith community on this issue."

A report detailing the survey's findings and methodology, entitled "Broken Silence: A Call for Churches to Speak Out," is available at www.imaworldhealth.org/images/stories/technical-publications/PastorsSurveyReport_final.pdf.

Speak Out Sunday

Congregations across denominations and faiths and can make a difference on Nov. 23, 2014, by dedicating "Speak Out Sunday" to dialogue, teaching, prayer and action about sexual and gender-based violence and its prevention. Learn more at wewillspeakout.us/speak-out-sunday/.

Strengthening our region through interfaith action

On Oct. 28, 2014, the Interreligious Action Network of Washington County, the Interfaith Council of Greater Portland, and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon will sponsor *Strengthening Our Region through Interfaith Action: What can we do together that we cannot do by ourselves?*

This unique and exciting full-day gathering will offer an "open space" format, through which participants will have the opportunity to create the agenda together. We will explore diverse points of view and inspiring new directions for interfaith relations and action throughout the state.

All are invited to share their presence, voice and ideas at the event, which will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Neveh Shalom, 2900 SW Peaceful Lane, Portland. Vegetarian food will be provided. Please register at ianofwashingtoncounty.org/interfaithopenspace. There will be a sliding scale free-will offering.

For more information, contact Jenny Pratt, director of EMO Membership Relations, at jjpratt@emoregon.org or (503) 221-1054.

Conference addresses practical approaches to the emerging church

Pastors and interested lay people have a chance to learn more about the emerging church—a growing edge of Christianity that appeals to those who would walk past the doors of traditional congregations—at the *2014 Wright Lectures: Practical Approaches to Emerging Ministries*. The conference will be held Oct. 12-14, 2014, at Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in Corbett, Ore.

At the Wright Lectures, participants will:

- Gain new skills for taking the church out of the building and into the community.
- Learn how to ask the right questions when starting or maintaining something new.
- Consider the values today's church needs to express in order to engage the millennial generation.

- Capture a vision for starting new worshipping communities.
- Become part of a Holy Spirit movement that is transforming the church.

The featured speakers are leaders in the emerging church movement. Vera White heads the Presbyterian Church (USA) 1001 New Worshipping Communities initiative; and Rev. Jeff Eddings and Rev. Jim Walker are co-pastors for Hot Metal Bridge, a rapidly-growing faith community in Pittsburgh, Pa., supported by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Methodist Church.

For more information and to register, visit menucha.org/programs/wls or contact Scott Crane at (503) 695-2243 or scott@menucha.org.

Learn about modern America's mysterious religious anomalies

Professor Jon Butler will speak on what he calls "Modern America's Mysterious Religious Anomalies" on Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2014, from 7 to 9 p.m., at Portland State University (PSU). Butler is the Howard R. Lamar professor emeritus of American Studies, History and Religious Studies at Yale University.

America's 21st century religious peculiarities are "puzzling and mysterious," says Butler. "By so many accounts," he notes, "the United States was largely 'secularized' in the early and mid-20th century." If this is the case, Butler asks, "How do we explain the influence of ministers such as Jerry Falwell and Martin Luther King, the popularity of Tim LaHaye's 'Left Behind' books, the success of the American anti-abortion movement, and the Hobby Lobby decision?"

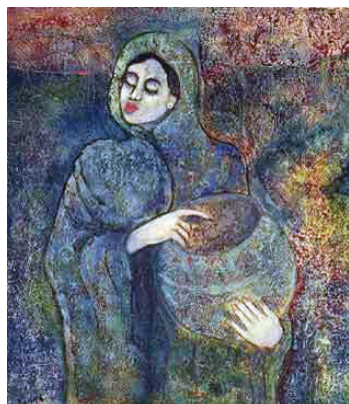
In his lecture, Butler will explain how these seemingly contradictory trends go to the heart of one of the nation's most misunderstood features—the 20th century rise, not fall, of organized religion in America—and the challenge that 21st century cultural changes pose to American religious groups that have otherwise seemed so close to achieving new religious sway in the United States.

The lecture will be held at Lincoln Hall Auditorium, Room 75, 1620 SW Park Ave., Portland. It is free and open to the public.

Celebrate ecumenism during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2015* will take place during Jan. 18 to 25. The chosen theme for 2015 is "Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.'" John 4:7.

The Church Unity Octave, a forerunner of the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*, was developed by Fr. Paul Wattson, SA, at Graymoor in Garrison, New York, and was first observed January 1908. Today, the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* invites the



whole Christian community throughout the world to pray in communion with the prayer of Jesus "that they all may be one" (John 17:21).

Materials for the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2015*—including daily scripture and prayer guide, ecumenical celebration of the word of God, prayer card, poster and worship bulletin cover—can be ordered

from Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute at www.GEII.org/Order.

What will your legacy be?

For 40 years through EMO, people of faith have joined together to work, pray and serve in unity, while celebrating their diversity. You can be part of a solid foundation for the future of ecumenical leadership beyond this 40th anniversary by joining the Presidents' Circle.

— The Rev. Dr. Rodney Page, former EMO executive director

Join EMO's *Presidents' Circle* and make ecumenism part of your legacy. Those who join during our 40th anniversary year will become a "charter member." Members to date include: Thomas Aschenbrener, Alcena Boozer, Lori Brocker, Dan Bryant, F. Wayne Bryant, Jim Buck, Leonard Cain and Roberta Badger-Cain, John Dennis, Gordon and Mary Ann Dickey, Don Frueh, Lowell Greathouse, Bonny Groshong, Lynn Hingson, Mark Knutson, Arvin and Sue Luchs, Margaret and Karl Marcuson, Ron and Carol Means, Rodney and Sandi Page, Rodney Reeves, Virginia Robertson, Stephen Schneider, Marilyn Sewell and Lynne Smouse López.

Presidents' Circle



*Honor the Past,
Guarantee the Future*

If you would like more information about the Presidents' Circle or are interested in becoming a charter member, please contact Carla Starrett-Bigg at (503) 221-1054, ext. 275, or csbigg@emoregon.org.

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
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Bill Healy Foundation	Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership
Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ	Annual Fund
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon	Annual Fund
Equity Foundation	HIV Services
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	NE Emergency Food Program
Gilhausen Foundation	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Herbert A. Templeton Foundation	Annual Fund
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral	NE Emergency Food Program
Jackson Foundation	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Jouris Family Foundation	Second Home
Kent Richard Hofmann Foundation	HIV Services
Legacy Health System NW	Annual Fund
McMenamins Pubs & Breweries	HIV Services
Multnomah Bar Foundation	SOAR Immigration Legal Services
Nike Employee Grant Fund	Second Home
Northwest Health Foundation	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Oregon Community Foundation	NE Emergency Food Program
Oregon Episcopal School	Annual Fund
Oregon Food Bank	NE Emergency Food Program
Presbytery of the Cascades	NE Emergency Food Program
Providence Health & Services	Annual Fund
Southminster Presbyterian Church	Second Home
Spirit Mountain Community Fund	Russian Oregon Social Services
St. Luke Lutheran Church	NE Emergency Food Program
St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church	NE Emergency Food Program
Susan G. Komen for the Cure	Russian Oregon Social Services
Verizon Wireless	Russian Oregon Social Services
Westminster Presbyterian Church	NE Emergency Food Program
Whole Foods Market	NE Emergency Food Program

Honor & Memorial Gifts

March through July 2014

Gifts in Honor

In Honor of Ainsworth UCC
Walter Weaver

In Honor of Clare Andrew
Clay & Jennifer Andrew

In Honor of Rania Ayoub
Wajdi Said

In Honor of churches and pastors of the Cascadia District
Peg Lofsvold

In Honor of Chuck Currie
Mark Fisher

In Honor of Sho Dozono
Peter Leineweber, Lynne Marie Longfellow, Betty Jean Harry

In Honor of Hideo Hashimoto
Ralph Bunch

In Honor of Howard Kenyon
Miss Elaine, John Elizalde, Stephen Kenyon, Michael K. Miller, Susan Murtagh, Matthew & Carla Starrett-Bigg, Patti J. Stewart, Susan & Lewis Van Winkle, Robin Vestal, Nina Wendler, George Paul Wood, Douglas & Janet Youel, Rhonda Ziegler

In Honor of David Leslie
Dale & Barbara Brandt, Jeffrey & Francine Reingold, Kathryn O. Sharp

In Honor of Natalie Malter
Sue Malter

In Honor of Rodney Page
Andrew & Julie Wheeler

In Honor of Ruth Saenz Ortiz
Priscilla Rodriguez

In Honor of Douglas Wirt
Robina Ingram-Rich

Gifts in Memory

In Memory of George Azumano
Sho Dozono, Lynne Marie Longfellow

In Memory of Mirjana Banova
Nancy Alexander

In Memory of Delvon Barrett
Donald J. Barrett, Ronald & Marsha Barrett Grosjean

In Memory of Ellen Caton & Lydia Watkins
Keith & Wilhelmina Watkins

In Memory of Garth Christopherson
Rose Christopherson & John Combs

In Memory of Verne & Rosemary Cooperrider
Edgar & Mary Louise Brandt

In Memory of John Cox
Mary Lyman Cammann

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Richard & Margaret Brown

In Memory of Sara Jane White
James White

In Memory of Faye York
Barbara Erland, Paul Romanaggi, Clifton Faye York Trust