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EMO celebrates 40 years of ecumenism at annual event

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) will celebrate our 40th anniversary at the 2014 *EMO Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner* on May 14 at the Hilton Hotel in Portland.

The annual celebration has become the premier ecumenical event in Oregon, bringing together diverse communities of faith and community partners in celebration of ecumenism and the spirit of hope across Oregon. This year, the event will celebrate the growth of the ecumenical movement in Oregon since EMO's founding in 1974, following the merger of the Oregon Council of Churches and Portland Council of Churches.

Community leaders honored

The "Ecumenist of the Year" award will be presented to the *Rev. Lynne Smouse López*, pastor of Ainsworth United Church of Christ (UCC) and moderator of the UCC Central Pacific Conference Board of Directors.

Rev. Smouse López is being honored for her outstanding service in racial and gender work, the peace movement, and ecumenical and interfaith ministries, including leadership in the Interfaith Council of Greater Portland, EMO Board of Directors, Albina Ministerial Alliance, Jobs with Justice, and Jubilee Oregon.

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The Rev. Lynne Smouse López, pastor of Ainsworth United Church of Christ and moderator of the UCC Central Pacific Conference Board of Directors, will be honored with the "Ecumenist of the Year" award.

Bringing restorative justice principles into Oregon's criminal justice system

I was in prison and you visited me.

Matthew 25:36

A central question before all Oregonians is, "How do we develop and sustain the most just, equitable and humane criminal justice system possible that effectively reduces recidivism rates and restores hope to all impacted by crime including those who are incarcerated?" Living into this question is at the heart of restorative justice—a principle affirmed by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO).

Archbishop Desmond Tutu says of restorative justice, "It's a system of justice that focuses on repairing and building the relationship among perpetrators, victims and society. We seek to do justice to the suffering without perpetuating the hatred aroused."

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon has identified four areas of focus that offer strategies for putting the concepts of restorative justice into action. These include: reforming sentencing guidelines, ending prolonged

solitary confinement, increasing our knowledge about the criminal justice system, and enhancing the visitation of prison inmates.

Reforming sentencing guidelines

When the 2013 Oregon Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 3194—a comprehensive public safety reform bill—Oregon joined more than a dozen other states in the country who are taking a "justice reinvestment" approach to increasing public safety,

reducing victimization, holding offenders accountable and reducing corrections costs. HB 3194 reforms are projected to stop prison growth for the next five years and reinvest the resulting savings of \$300 million in community corrections, evidenced-based policing, victim services and other efforts to reduce crime.

Speaking before the Joint Committee on Public Safety, who sponsored HB 3194, Jail & Prison Ministries chair for the Episcopal Diocese of

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For all the saints

“They will rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.”

Revelation 13:14

As part of my research on the occasion of EMO’s 40th anniversary, I found a letter in the archives from William H. Boland, attorney at law to EMO’s first executive director, Rev. Richard N. Hughes, dated Dec. 10, 1973.

“Dr. Dick,” he writes. “I enclose the Certificate of Incorporation with attached duplicate copy of Articles of Incorporation. Congratulations! Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is now a legal entity.”

And so was born an institution and a movement. Guiding this new entity were men and women bound together on a journey of faith such as the initial directors of EMO, as outlined in early corporate documents: Mr. James R. Sitzman, Dr. Laurence F. Byers, Fr. Bertram Griffin, Mrs. John S. Jackson, Jr. (Jean), Mrs. Maurice B. Hodge (Blanche), Dr. Russell Hensley, The Rev. Glenn Camper, Dr. Ruben H. Huenemann, Bishop Jack M. Tuell, Mrs. Lloyd Thomas (Jane) and The Rt. Rev. Hal R. Gross.

Thanks to the faith and wisdom of this group and—as I learned from the minutes of the “Initial Directors Meeting” that took place on Dec. 20, 1973—a line of credit for \$15,000 from the U.S. National Bank of Oregon and a contribution of 200 shares of Tektronix stock from Mr. Howard Vollum, EMO was off an running.

These original directors, as well as the first president of the EMO Board of Directors—Judge George Van Hooissen—and other staff members including Rodney Page and Stephen Schneider, shared a common trait: a deep religious faith that motivates action and strengthens commitments of developing a world and environment that sustains life as God intends.

Now EMO’s institutional dynamics today share a lot in common with the EMO of 40 years ago. We still need an operating line of credit, as donations and contracts ebb and flow. We are always appreciative of gifts of stocks and other securities and are grateful for all the donors who entrust their resources to us. We continue to have a great team of faithful volunteers and staff who give so much in furthering EMO’s mission and who are always thinking about new ways of being of service.

On the ecumenical movement-building front, there are also timeless similarities. EMO remains faithful to building relations across our religious and societal divides. We remain faithful to Christ’s call to live into our essential unity and to join together in service and ministry that promote peace, justice and the integrity of creation.

Of course, the world in which we live today has changed much over the last 40 years, as have EMO’s programs and initiatives. Thankfully, many programs that EMO either started or nurtured through rocky times are still going strong under the EMO banner



David Leslie

or the stewardship of other organizations such as Hopewell House Hospice (Legacy Health System) and the Letty Owings Center (Central City Concern).

In recent years, EMO has greatly expanded membership to include more than 160 denominational, congregational, and local and regional ecumenical and interreligious partners across the state of Oregon.

New initiatives such as the Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership and the Oregon Interfaith Power & Light make visible our commitment to a healthy life-giving ecosystem.

Our refugee and immigrant programs have added new services, ensuring that we can more readily assist asylum seekers, reunite refugee families in the United States to family members trying to get to this country, and assist undocumented youth who grew up in this country navigate the complicated citizenship process.

We renovated the Patton Home, creating a safe and welcoming home environment for 63 adults in recovery and started the Second Home program so that homeless high school youth can live with host families so that they can focus on their education rather than where to sleep each night.

And we have expanded our peacemaking and advocacy work throughout the state, joining together faith communities and people and communities with limited voice and political power in joint action for enhanced economic justice and social equity.

The deeds and commitments of those who came before inspire new ways of ministry and service for which we can all be proud.

Simply put, at EMO there is no resting on our laurels! The deeds and commitments of those who came before inspire new ways of ministry and service for which we can all be proud.

“Congratulations! Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is now a legal entity.” With those simple words, an ecumenical journey and odyssey began. And with your support, EMO will continue well into the future, engaging the spirit and imagination in life-giving and transformative ways, as those saints who came before so clearly intended.

Pope Francis names an Auxiliary Bishop for Portland

Pope Francis has named Fr. Peter Leslie Smith an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon. Bishop-elect Smith



Archbishop Alexander K. Sample (left) with Fr. Peter Leslie Smith.

is currently serving as vicar general and moderator of the Curia for the Archdiocese, and will continue in those positions after he is ordained a bishop. His ordination as a bishop is tentatively set for April 29 at a venue yet to be determined.

Bishop-elect Smith said, “I am grateful and humbled by the confidence the Holy Father has shown in giving me this appointment. Please keep me in your prayers as being a bishop can be challenging as well as an opportunity to grow and to serve the faithful. God is full of surprises.”

Archbishop Alexander K. Sample responded to the appointment stating, “[Bishop-elect Smith] is a man of deep faith, great intellect and practical wisdom. He is also well respected by the clergy, religious and faithful of western Oregon. I look forward to having him by my side as an auxiliary bishop to assist me in caring for the Lord’s flock in this historic Archdiocese.”

Bishop-elect Smith was born in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. After moving to the United States, he entered the seminary in 1996, and earned a master of arts degree in theology in 2000 and a master of divinity degree in 2001, both from Mount Angel Seminary.

Bishop-elect Smith was ordained a priest by Archbishop Emeritus John G. Vlazny on June 9, 2001, at St. Mary Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. He is a member of the Brotherhood of the People of Praise, a private association of the faithful. After Smith served as parochial vicar at Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Lake Oswego, he studied at the Catholic University of America, earning a licentiate degree in Canon Law (J.C.L.). He served as pastor at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Portland from 2006 until his appointment as vicar general in May 2013.

Bishop-elect Smith is only the third auxiliary bishop appointed for the Archdiocese of Portland in its 168-year history.

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

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Supporting healthy corner stores in Rockwood

Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership (IFFP) is continuing its work to improve nutrition and health in the Rockwood neighborhood of Gresham, thanks to a generous two-year grant from the Kaiser Permanente Community Fund through the Northwest Health Foundation that focuses particularly on women and children.

The Rockwood Food Opportunity Project will make it easier for people to eat affordable healthy food by bringing more fresh produce into the community through corner/convenience stores, a farm stand or market; gardening, cooking and nutrition classes; and garden programs at preschools.

These efforts for increased access to healthy food are also intended to foster the prosperity and economic well-being of the community. As support for local businesses increases, new marketing opportunities are developed, and residents develop new marketable skills. One of the main components of this project is the Rockwood Healthy Retail Initiative, which aims to increase access to affordable, fresh produce in corner stores.

As part of the Rockwood Food Assessment that was completed in 2012 to 2013, community members conducted over 235 surveys in Rockwood and found that almost

all residents surveyed (97 percent) would like their neighborhood to have more places to obtain healthy food. The top three new places they most wanted in their neighborhood were farmers markets (37 percent), grocery stores (30 percent) and community gardens (20 percent). The average number of miles traveled for primary grocery shopping was 6.3 miles, and 43 percent said that transportation barriers (such as lack of a car or good bus service) make it difficult to shop for groceries.

The existing corner stores in Rockwood have an opportunity to respond to the community's interest in fresh produce. Rockwood corner stores within walking distance or near public transportation have the potential to meet a vital community need for more fresh produce, while increasing their sales and profile in the community.

Funding from the Northwest Health Foundation will allow IFFP to provide three \$1,000 mini-grants for store improvements that will assist with stocking produce. In partnership with community groups and community members, we will also provide training for store owners on marketing, signage and healthy food demonstrations, as well as support for business planning.



Photo credit: Dodge Foundation

Existing corner stores in Rockwood have the potential to meet a vital community need for more fresh produce, while increasing their sales and profile in the community.

The Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership looks forward to building on the partnerships and work we have already established in the Rockwood community. With the new Rockwood Food Opportunity Project, we will further our goal of improving the health of women and children by engaging the community in developing skills around leadership, food and nutrition.

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

Join us on April 22 for a special Earth Day event, *It's All Connected: The Web of Life, Food Webs & Mining*

Connecting ecological and human wellbeing in the context of faith is at the core of EMO's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns' (INEC) mission and work. We will celebrate INEC's 21st anniversary with an evening to explore these connections, featuring activist, writer and filmmaker Bill Carter.

During the event, *It's All Connected: The Web of Life, Food Webs and Mining*, Carter will take us on a tour of the global mining boom and explore the health and environmental implications in open-surface extraction of copper ore. From boardrooms of investors in London to the mountains of Indonesia, Carter connects the dots from his humble backyard garden to the CEOs of the multibillion-dollar global copper industry, confronting a resource that is so vital, yet which has the potential to cause horrendous and irrevocable damage to our planet and ourselves.

Carter won the Arizona/New Mexico book award for *Boom, Bust, Boom* and is the award-winning director of the documentary film *Miss Sarajevo*, made in collaboration with U2 and shot from within the besieged city of Sarajevo. His articles have appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and more. He is also the author of *Red Summer: The Danger, Madness, and Exaltation of Salmon Fishing in a Remote Alaskan Village*. Carter's books will be available for sale at the event.

Additional special guests will share how faith communities, tribes and fisherman collaborated



Activist, writer and film maker Bill Carter will explore the connections between the web of life, food webs and mining at special Earth Day event.

to oppose a copper mine (Pebble) proposed for one of the world's richest salmon habitats, which is key to family fishers of Bristol Bay and the culture and spirituality of Alaska tribes.

The event will be from 6:30 to 8:15 p.m., followed by book-signing and reception from 8:15 to 8:45 p.m., at First Unitarian Church in Elliot Chapel, 1011 SW 12th Ave., Portland. The event is sponsored by Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns with First Unitarian Church's Community for Earth. Suggested donation of \$10 to \$20.

For more information, contact Jenny Holmes at (503) 221-1054 or jholmes@emoregon.org

Earth Words 2014 Recognize your clergy or lay speakers for an inspirational sermon on creation care

Oregon Interfaith Power & Light, a project of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, is pleased to announce its fifth annual *Earth Words* contest.

This is a wonderful opportunity for congregations of all faiths to remember their deep faith connections to the Earth and inspire sustainable living. In addition, as an interfaith community, we will be able to celebrate and recognize our great clergy and lay speakers. You are invited to submit or nominate an Earth Day (on April 22) or other sermon, homily or other written and spoken faith message on care for creation that you or someone else has shared in a faith setting. The faith messages will be judged on clarity and focus of the entire sermon, aesthetic appeal, theological foundation, call to action and creativity.

The *Earth Words* theme this year is "Breath of Life"—clean air and climate in the context of faith, echoing the 2014 theme of the *Earth Care Summit*.

Prizes for the top three sermons/faith messages include gift certificates for Powell's Bookstore and ShopIPL energy efficiency store.

To enter, please send an audio (preferred) and/or printed version of the sermon along with the sermon writer's contact information by May 30, 2014, to Alison Warren at awarren@emoregon.org. If you have any questions, call (503) 221-1054, ext. 210.

SOAR Legal staff member becomes a U.S. Citizen through New Americans Initiative

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

It is with great joy and excitement that we announce EMO's SOAR Immigration Legal Services legal assistant, Aysmara Grey Morales Miller, became a U.S. Citizen last September!

SOAR Immigration Legal Services has been helping immigrants get U.S. Citizenship since 1992, but taking on Miller as a client and assisting her through the process made SOAR Legal staff particularly proud.

Miller came to the United States from Cuba in June 2008. She was a dentist and a pastor in Cuba, and leaving her home country meant leaving her professional credentials behind. The transition from her life in Cuba to her new life in the United States was difficult at first, but with the support of friends and the new family she found in the United States, Portland quickly became home.

Miller began working at IRCO, and in 2010 was hired by SOAR Immigration Legal Services as a self sufficiency coordinator. Through her work at SOAR Legal, Miller was given the opportunity to help newly-arrived Cubans understand the importance of becoming self sufficient. Her passion for working with immigrants comes from her desire to share her personal experience and help people like herself adapt to Portland and become successful.

Once Miller had been in the United States for five years, the required period of time, she approached SOAR Legal staff with her desire to apply for U.S. Citizenship. Reflecting on the citizenship process, Miller said, "The decision to become a citizen has been a five-year process of learning, work, change and adjustment. I had to let go of the past and prepare and plan for my new future in America. The adjustments came in many forms—different climate,



The entire SOAR Legal staff was present at Miller's naturalization ceremony (from left): Caroline van der Harten, Aysmara Miller, Rafael Lopez, Erin McKee, Juan Carlos Chavez and Kendall Moriarty.

culture, food and language, as well as driving a car. I started to feel a sense of pride as the years came closer to my legal ability to obtain my citizenship. I studied and worked with others to gain the knowledge to pass the test questions. Finally, on Sept. 18, 2013, I was sworn in as an American citizen. I could not be happier! I believe my experience gives clients of SOAR a warm and understanding environment as they begin their journey to citizenship."

New Americans Initiative

In order to assist more people like Miller, SOAR Legal began the New Americans Initiative in 2010, a comprehensive citizenship program through which the program provides legal services, citizenship classes and one-day citizenship legal events. Many of SOAR's clients come to the United States as refugees who have had to flee their countries due to persecution

based on their religion, race or political opinion. For this reason, many of our clients cannot return home and are forced to create a new life in the United States. Our program targets low income and disabled refugees and immigrants who may not otherwise be able to have access to competent legal services, due to lack of financial resources.

In recent years, this program has expanded to include a voter education component for newly naturalized citizens and culturally-specific Citizenship Classes in east Portland. Thanks to generous funding from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Citizenship, the Multnomah Bar Foundation and the East Portland Action Plan, this program is free of cost for immigrants and refugees.

Thanks to SOAR Legal's partnership with Causa, a statewide component that has been expanded is the Citizenship Day mobile clinics. This year, staff will travel to Bend, Eugene, Gresham, Hood River, Salem and Washington County to assist eligible individuals apply for U.S. Citizenship, with the help of volunteer attorneys and community members.

If you would like additional information on volunteering for the New Americans Initiative, please contact Caroline van der Harten at cvanderharten@emoregon.org.

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April 24: Dine out, fight AIDS

Join EMO's HIV Services on Thursday, April 24, 2014, for Portland's sixth 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 approximately \$25,000 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

15 McMenamins locations—and more restaurants are signing on daily. Dine out at one of these restaurants on April 24, 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 Community Ministries by the numbers in 2013

Food Services prepared 23,758 nutritious home-style meals for the clients of the HIV Day Center and Daily Bread Express and residents of the Patton Home.

HIV Services offered assistance for 255 people living with HIV/AIDS.

Northeast Emergency Food Program gathered and distributed 720,000 pounds of food to over 11,000 people.

Russian Oregon Social Services provided direct services to 3,258 people, including 631 victims of domestic/sexual violence.

Second Home housed 10 homeless and unaccompanied Beaverton youth.

SOAR Immigration Legal Services gave legal assistance to over 2,000 people.

Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees provided resettlement services to 380 refugees and 17 asylees.

Beaverton student theater group raises funds and awareness for homeless youth with production of *Oliver!*

Second Home is a collaborative effort to fill the housing needs of homeless and unaccompanied high school youth. For the first time since the program began, students from one of the Beaverton high schools that Second Home serves, the Arts & Communication Magnet Academy (ACMA), dedicated their time and talent to raising funds and awareness for the program.

When the cast and crew of ACMA's theater company were given the opportunity to use their production of the musical *Oliver!* to help spread the word about homelessness in today's society, they jumped at the chance. A portion of the proceeds from their first Saturday night performance on March 8 were donated to Second Home, and Kaia Communications pledged to match ACMA's contribution.

Although it is a musical, this production of *Oliver!* did not sugarcoat Charles Dickens' story of an orphan boy who encounters evil at nearly every turn. This is a bleak story, and the audience was not allowed to forget that. The directors and choreographer reminded the actors daily that while Dickens' characters are

often funny, hunger is painful, poverty is brutal, and homelessness is anything but cute.

"Homelessness is not a relic of the 19th century, unfortunately. Hundreds of kids in Beaverton don't know where they'll sleep tonight," says Chloe Duckart, who played the undertaker's wife. "We were all excited to learn about Second Home, and hope everyone who came to see *Oliver!* will think about how they can help."

"While Second Home has wonderful community support, this was the first time one of the Beaverton high schools has said, 'These are our peers, and we can help them,'" stated Beverly Woolf, Second Home program assistant. "What an incredibly generous and creative act on the part of these young people."

What ideas might your community be able to generate and attempt to benefit young people who are struggling with homelessness? To share your ideas or for more information about Second Home, contact Jenny Pratt at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or jjpratt@emoregon.org.



Photo credit: Arts & Communication Magnet Academy

The teenage cast and crew of ACMA's theater company dedicated their time and talent to raise funds and awareness for EMO's Second Home by donating a portion of the proceeds from their first Saturday night performance of the musical *Oliver!* to the program.

Take a stand against hunger: Join a *CROP Hunger Walk* this spring!

CROP Hunger Walks are community-wide events sponsored by Church World Service and organized by local congregations to raise funds to end hunger at home and around the world. With neighbors walking together, we raise awareness and funds for international relief and development, as well as local hunger needs.

The Portland *CROP Hunger Walk* will be held on April 27, with registration at 1 p.m. and the walk at 1:30 p.m. The course is a 2.7 mile route through downtown Portland, which will begin and end at First Christian Church, 1314 SW Park Ave. Refreshments and restrooms will be available at the church.

Seventy-five percent of the funds raised will support the international relief and development programs of Church World Service; 25 percent will be split equally between EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program and the Oregon Food Bank.

Other Spring 2014 *CROP Hunger Walk* events in Oregon include Gresham and McMinnville on May 4 and Milton Freewater on May 18.

For more information, contact the Northwest regional office at pn@cusglobal.org or (206) 988-1622, or Lisa Wenzlick, walk coordinator, at lwenzlick@gmail.com or (503) 891-7722.

NEFP honored volunteers and donors at annual *Sustainers' Breakfast*



Photo credit: Gregg Brekke/SixView Studios

Trader Joe's Hollywood was honored at NEFP's fourth annual *Sustainers Breakfast* for donating a quarter of a million pounds of food in 2013. Pictured from left to right: Sherry Dillard and Kevin Cole, volunteers from St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church; Mark Sakamoto, Trader Joe's Hollywood store manager; John Elizalde, former NEFP manager; and Katherine Cook, KGW reporter and emcee for the event.

Seven days a week, volunteers from St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in northeast Portland pick up food from the Trader Joe's store in the Hollywood district and transport the donated perishable items to EMO's Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP). Making their runs before dawn and again later in the morning, the volunteers deliver 680 pounds of food on an average day.

In 2013, the amount of food received from Trader Joe's reached approximately 250,000 pounds—about a third of the entire annual food inventory for NEFP. For this milestone, the store and volunteer team were honored at NEFP's annual *Sustainers Breakfast*, which was held on Feb. 26 at Mosaic Church, located in the same neighborhood as St. Michael and

All Angels and Trader Joe's. John Elizalde, a member of NEFP's Advisory Committee, presented a framed certificate of appreciation to Mark Sakamoto, Trader Joe's store manager, and recognized St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church volunteers.

Also recognized at the event is the weekly involvement of volunteer Alex Irvin, a teenager with autism. Jill Irvin, his mother, spoke of how warmly Alex has been received as a volunteer team member during the past year. Under the supervision of his assistant Jennifer Kapnek, Alex sorts produce and stocks shelves one morning a week.

The breakfast, emceed by KGW reporter Katherine Cook, raised over \$8,000 in cash and pledges. In the past three years, total giving

from sustaining partners has grown from \$8,000 to more than \$36,000 annually. Each year, NEFP serves 11,000 individuals with a total of 720,000 pounds of food and 50,000 items of clothing, all with the help of 250 volunteers and hundreds of financial partners.

For more information about NEFP or if you'd like to volunteer, contact Howard Kenyon, NEFP program manager, at (503) 284-5470 or hkenyon@emoregon.org.

Bringing restorative justice principles into Oregon's criminal justice system

Continued from page 1

Oregon, Deacon Tom English, said, "We honor, support and thank those individuals working in our criminal justice system and those who render judgments. Our hope in the coming of God's justice makes us especially mindful of victims and the isolation and dehumanization of individuals convicted of crimes, as well as the shortcomings of a system in crisis."

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon recently sent a letter, along with 16 other state organizations, asking the Legislature to continue to support the HB 3194 approach and reject legislative proposals that would undermine it. The letter said that this commitment was "necessary in order to ensure the continued success of justice reinvestment in Oregon. One key to the success of justice reinvestment in Oregon is not opening a currently closed prison or building a new one; the cost of doing so would obliterate the savings generated by the bill." The letter went on to state, "While the bill modified existing law to control the need for future prison beds, it did not account for future policies that might increase sentence lengths, add to the prison population or otherwise utilize public safety resources in ways that are inconsistent with the goals of HB 3194."

Ending prolonged solitary confinement

Nationally, EMO works closely with the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT). As a NRCAT board member, EMO Executive Director David Leslie has been working to prevent the widespread use of solitary confinement in the United States as a form of punishment for people in prison and jail. Many studies have documented the detrimental psychological effects of prolonged solitary confinement, such as hallucinations, paranoia and panic attacks. NRCAT believes that prolonged solitary confinement is torture, because it causes severe mental and physical pain or suffering. As stated on the NRCAT website, www.nrcat.org: "Prolonged solitary confinement destroys prisoners' minds, denies the opportunity for community, and violates the inherent, God-given dignity and worth of every person."

In February, a delegation of faith and community leaders visited the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville and met with Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) Director Colette Peters and other officials. One goal of the meeting was to discuss the use of solitary confinement in Oregon prisons.

Currently, the DOC uses solitary confinement as punishment for prison rule-breaking. The DOC calls this usage "disciplinary segregation." The department also uses solitary-like conditions as an intervention strategy with inmates who act out and who tend to end up repeatedly in segregation. After serving their time in segregation as punishment, these men and women will be moved to the Intensive Management Unit.

In both the segregation and the Intensive Management Units, prisoners are placed alone in small cells (some are double bunked and house two people) for 23 hours a day, with one hour allowed outside the cell for solitary exercise.



Earnest Collins stands in an "Intensive Management Unit" at Clallam Bay in Washington state. Collins said of solitary, "If you're not mentally strong, it'll drive you crazy"

Photo credit: Bettina Hansen/Seattle Times

In some states, such as California and Louisiana, prisoners are held in solitary conditions for periods as long as 20 to 40 years. Many Oregon prisoners have also served years in solitary, but the DOC has recently instituted a cap of 180 days punishment in segregation, as it is trying to move away from using solitary as punishment. The DOC has also limited putting people with high levels of mental illness in segregation. Inmates can stay in the solitary confinement of the Intensive Management Unit for longer than six months until they demonstrate compliant behavior.

The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) does not use solitary confinement/segregation for either punishment or programming purposes. OYA only uses isolation for very short periods (usually a few hours and never more than five days) to help youth who are acting out to stabilize themselves before they return to their living units. Some advocates believe OYA's approach provides a possible model for adult corrections. European countries such as Germany and Norway rarely use solitary confinement for adults.

New York state is now leading the country on the issue of solitary, having just announced policy changes. A lawsuit filed on the behalf of inmates held in solitary in New York led to negotiations between the governor, prison officials and reform advocates that abolished the use of solitary confinement for the most vulnerable—young people, the developmentally disabled and pregnant women. This decision came after a study revealed that people kept in solitary were almost seven times more likely to harm themselves than those in the general prison population, and juveniles and the severely mentally ill were the most likely to harm themselves after being placed in solitary.

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois calls solitary confinement a "human rights issue that cannot be ignored." He has been leading the efforts in Congress to address the issue.

Increasing knowledge about the criminal justice system

In furthering criminal justice reform and faith community involvement in Oregon, the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon created a liturgy and program called "Criminal Justice Sunday." This year in February, four Eugene churches—Central Presbyterian, the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, St. Mary Episcopal Church and the Eugene Mennonite Church—held

services that focused on the theme of criminal justice reform. These services included sermons on a Christian response to crime and to those who commit crimes, followed by an adult education program on the topic.

Integrated in the Sabbath activities was the screening of *Oregon Out of Balance*, a five-minute video produced by Partnership for Safety and Justice—a multi-faceted, statewide advocacy organization based in Portland. It was followed by a discussion on how to bring more balance, effectiveness, and moral wholeness to local, state, and national criminal justice systems. Participants committed themselves to praying, learning more about ways to improve the criminal justice system from sources such as the Episcopal Prison Ministries Commission and EMO, writing and talking with legislators about reform through Partnership for Safety and Justice Action Teams, and taking part in lobby days sponsored by EMO and Partnership for Safety and Justice. Representatives from a very successful community-based prison reentry program called Sponsors Inc. provided information on mentorship opportunities to ex-offenders returning to Lane County.

In the coming months, EMO will continue to pursue avenues for advocacy with our partners to help create a more effective, compassionate and less costly criminal justice system that brings restoration to victims, perpetrators and society as a whole.

Enhancing the visitation of prison inmates

Critical to the success of the criminal justice reform movement is enhanced humanization and getting personally engaged by visiting those who are incarcerated. A 2011 report from the Minnesota Department of Corrections revealed that inmate visits from friends and family can result in up to a 25 percent decrease in the risk of recidivism. The study concludes, "Prison visitation can improve recidivism outcomes by helping offenders not only maintain social ties with both nuclear and extended family members—especially fathers, siblings and in-laws—while incarcerated, but also by developing new bonds such as those with clergy or mentors. In doing so, offenders can sustain or broaden their networks of social support, which was important in lowering recidivism."

Our churches across the state are uniquely positioned to provide the visits that are so central to preparing a newly released inmate for a productive life outside of prison walls. As Jesus states in Matthew 25, when we show compassion for those living on the margins of society, we are being faithful to the God of Compassion.

To find out how to become a volunteer visitor and participate in trainings, contact Home for Good, an award-winning DOC program based on a vast statewide network of faith and community-based volunteers and organizations working together, at: www.oregon.gov/DOC/OMR/pages/religious_services/home_for_good_in_oregon/hgo_home_page.aspx.

For more information on criminal justice reform, contact Jan Elfers, EMO Public Policy associate, at (503) 221-1054 or jelfers@emoregon.org.

EMO welcomes new members

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon welcomes the following new members, which have been affirmed by the EMO Board of Directors: *Congregation, Sunriver Christian Fellowship; Ecumenical Organization, Macdonald Center in 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.

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

Menucha offering practical church leadership training

Led by Scott Lumsden, executive presbyter of Seattle Presbytery, this series of workshops is designed especially for smaller churches but helpful for anyone interested. They will be held at Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in Corbett, Ore., on May 10 and Nov. 22. The cost for each workshop is \$30 (includes lunch and all materials).

Learn more or register at www.menucha.org.

2014 Collins Lecture

Karen Armstrong speaks to sold out audience on the power of compassion

On the evening of March 6, the 2014 Collins Lecture was delivered by internationally known author, comparative religion scholar and “Charter of Compassion” founder Karen Armstrong. Over 800 people filled the sanctuary at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland to listen to Armstrong’s lecture, “The Transformative Power of Compassion.”

The following day, the conversation continued with a half day seminar, “Interfaith Perspectives on Compassion and the Common Good.” The educational event included an interfaith panel discussion and Compassion Applied break-out sessions covering the public arena, criminal justice, education and health care. Armstrong made an impromptu appearance during the seminar, sharing more of her wisdom on compassion with the 125 participants in attendance.

Armstrong’s Collins Lecture will be available for free download on EMO’s website, www.emoregon.org.



Photo credit: Jenny Pratt

A sold out audience at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral listened to the 2014 Collins Lecture by Karen Armstrong on March 6.



Photo credit: Jenny Pratt

Karen Armstrong (right) made an impromptu appearance at the seminar on compassion, sitting in with interfaith panelists including Salma Ahmad (left).

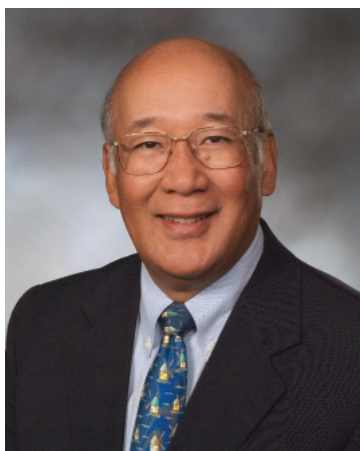
Northwest denominational annual gatherings

Disciples of Christ, May 2-3, Hood River
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, May 16-18, Portland
 United Methodist Church, June 12-14, Salem
 United Church of Christ, Sept. 26-28, Pendleton

Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon, Oct. 10-12, Pendleton
 American Baptist Churches, Oct. 17-19, San Lorenzo, Calif.
 Presbytery of Eastern Oregon, Oct. 24-25, Milton-Freewater
 Episcopal Diocese, Nov. 13-15, Salem

Annual Celebration

Continued from page 1



Sho Dozono

The “Vollum Ecumenical Humanitarian Award” will be presented to **Sho Dozono**, president and CEO of Azumano Travel. The award is presented in recognition of his lifetime

of leadership defending human dignity, promoting justice and profoundly enhancing the quality of life in Oregon. A strong advocate of diversity and equal opportunity, as well as a respected business and civic leader, Dozono devotes much of his time to civil and individual rights.

The “Ecumenical Service Award” will be awarded to **First Christian Church in Silverton**. A major catalyst for ecumenical work in the Silverton area, the church founded a community dinner to help three families who lost their jobs during the recession and has grown to serve 300 to 400 people a week.

By June of this year, it is projected to have served 100,000 dinners.

The “Two Pauls Award”—in recognition of outstanding promotion of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, service and relations—will be posthumously awarded to **Dr. Nohad Toulan and Dirce Angelina Moroni Toulan**, who passed away in a tragic accident last year. Nohad, a Muslim, was a renowned urban planning expert and founder of Portland State University’s School of Urban Studies and Planning. Dirce, a Roman Catholic, was an architect, planner and former Fulbright Scholar. Dr. Toulan was a bridge builder who worked to build connections between Muslims and people of other faiths. Together, the Toulans modeled the best in interfaith relations and were champions



Dirce Angelina Moroni Toulan and Nohad Toulan

of the universal value of the inherent worth and dignity of all peoples and faiths.

Sponsors

The event’s “40th Anniversary Sponsor” is Providence Health & Services. Silver sponsors are Legacy Health System and Rodney Allen Reeves. Bronze sponsors include the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, Augustana Lutheran Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oregon, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, First United Methodist Church in Portland, Income Property Management, Neil Kelly Co., Oregon Food Bank, Rodney Page and Ron Means, and Wright Land Co.

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 May 14, 2014, at the Hilton Hotel in downtown 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 at www.emoregon.org or call (503) 221-1054.

Presidents' Circle honors EMO's past & guarantees its future

Former Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) presidents Rev. John Dennis, Rev. Alcena Boozer and Bonny Groshong joined former EMO Executive Director Rev. Dr. Rodney Page in gathering 35 friends of EMO at the Multnomah Athletic Club on Oct. 9, 2013, to charter the *Presidents' Circle*.

The *Presidents' Circle* is a group of supporters who have pledged to put EMO in their will or other planned giving vehicles. They are dedicated to ensuring EMO's capability to respond to future needs faced by generations to come and will play a vital role in continuing the ecumenical work in this region.

At the October event, over 25 new *Presidents' Circle* members signed up, for a total of 39 "charter members"—those who join this year as we celebrate EMO's 40th anniversary of service and profound cooperation that forever changed the face of Oregon's faith community.

"For 40 years through EMO, people of faith



*Honor the Past,
Guarantee the Future*

have joined together to work, pray and serve in unity, while celebrating their diversity," says Page. "You can be part of a solid foundation for the

future of ecumenical leadership beyond this 40th anniversary by joining the *Presidents' Circle*."

Current charter members include: Thomas Aschenbrener, Alcena Boozer, Lori Brocker, Dan Bryant, F. Wayne Bryant, Jim Buck, Leonard Cain, John Dennis, Gordon Dickey, Don Frueh, Bonny Groshong, Lynn Hingson, Mark Knutson, Arvin Luchs, Margaret and Karl Marcuson, Ron Means, Rodney Page, Rodney Reeves, Virginia Robertson, Stephen Schneider, Marilyn Sewell and Lynne Smouse López.

A second *Presidents' Circle* event was held at Holladay Park Plaza in March and a third is scheduled for May 1 at First Congregational Church in Eugene.

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.

Why I am a member of EMO's Presidents' Circle

By Gordon Dickey, MSW

My relationship with ecumenism goes back to ordination as a Roman Catholic Priest in 1965 and a legendary ecumenical leader at the time, Pope John XXIII. By convening the Second Vatican Council, Pope John opened church windows wide to renewal and launched an epiphany of ecumenism ... an epiphany, for I remember the day when it was considered sinful to go into a Protestant church.

Like most people, I loved Pope John, his welcoming smile and humor. Happily, doesn't Pope Francis remind you of John the XXIII?

I was privileged to see Pope John in St. Peter's Cathedral giving a talk while sitting down. His enthusiasm was so huge that he couldn't sit still, but kept bouncing up and down in his chair, gesturing with a wide smile. I didn't know what he was talking about, but it didn't matter because of that smile and body language. He reminded me of St. Francis of

Assisi's statement, "Always preach the gospel and sometimes use words."

During the Council, one of the most outstanding theologians of the 20th century, Robert McAfee Brown, a Presbyterian pastor, Stanford University professor and an official Protestant Council observer, stated, "If the Catholic Church lives up to the decrees of Vatican II, the Reformation is over." What a profound compliment. While ushering in sweeping changes, the Council never quite lived up to Rev. Brown's hope and promise.

While ecumenical leadership began during the 1960's from the top down, since that time, leadership has transpired from the bottom up. That's why I have left a planned giving legacy to Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO), because of personal knowledge of legendary bottom up leaders at EMO like Dick Hughes, Rodney Page, Barbara George, Willie Smith,



Gordon and Mary Ann Dickey are charter members of EMO's *Presidents' Circle*.

Bonny Groshong, John Dennis, and now David Leslie ... among so many other pioneering leaders.

I am deeply influenced by one pioneering ecumenist, Fr. Bert Griffin. At Bert's funeral service at St. Mary's Cathedral on Aug. 3, 2000, Rev. John Dennis said:

"I am honored this morning to represent not only Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, but also Fr. Griffin's many ecumenical friends across Oregon.

"Fr. Griffin was president of the Greater Portland Council of Churches and president of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon twice; he pioneered the way for the Portland Archdiocese to be the first archdiocese in the United States to join an ecumenical organization.

"In meetings I remember that Bert would stand through most of the meeting; and he was never the first to speak, often he was the last.

"And I remember how well he listened to us; he gave full attention to what we were saying. As a result, we spoke more thoughtfully than we otherwise were likely to do. Now I realize that one of the greatest gifts that Fr. Griffin gave us was the gift of respect, he took us seriously."

The gift of respect and taking life seriously are also attributes of EMO. Being respected and taking life seriously around social, political and religious issues have influenced so many people and have contributed to my incredibly full and rich life. That's why my wife Mary Ann and I have made a planned giving pledge to continue EMO's legacy for future generations, so that they will be respected and benefit from an organization that takes life seriously around social, political and religious issues of their time.

A challenge worth taking

We are deeply grateful to the Collins Foundation for leading the way again in EMO's 2014 Annual Fund drive with a \$70,000 challenge grant. Your donation to EMO will be matched at 100 percent by the Collins Foundation. As a supporter of EMO's Annual Fund, you serve as a faithful partner with EMO in bringing together Oregon's faith community for interfaith dialogue, peace work, direct service to those who need it most, and advocacy against the root causes of poverty and against environmental degradation. *To double your gift to EMO, please use the form below or you can make a secure online donation at www.emoregon.org.*

Help EMO reach the goal of raising \$70,000 for the Collins Foundation 2014 challenge grant. Double your gift today!

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City/State/ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please make tax deductible checks to EMO or pay by: Visa MasterCard Am. Express

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Amount: \$2,500 \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other _____

Please send your gift to: EMO, 0245 SW Bancroft St., Suite B, Portland, OR 97239.

You may also make a secure on-line donation at www.emoregon.org.