

Celebrating 35 years: 1969-2004

CHANNEL

Building community that is humane, compassionate and just

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40 Days of Purpose:
One congregation's
experience
... see page 4

Pastor honored for lifetime of service in Tacoma's Hilltop

Associated Ministries announces Pastor Holle Plaehn will receive lifetime achievement award

BY GINA BREUKELMAN AND MARION SHARP

Associated Ministries is happy to announce that it will present Pastor Holle Plaehn with the Virginia Y. Miller Lifetime Achievement Award at the Spring Celebration dinner and auction on April 17 at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Tacoma.

Pastor Plaehn retired last August after serving 32 years as pastor at Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood. Under his pastoral presence, a dwindling congregation of German Lutherans became a thriving multi-ethnic church with an attached community center serving many of the community's needs.

Associated Ministries' Executive Director Rev. David Alger said, "We honor Holle's years of dedicated service here in the Pacific Northwest and his commitment to ministering to individuals from all racial, economic, political and faith backgrounds. His advocacy on behalf of low-income people, his commitment to social justice, and his support of ecumenism are well-known, well-documented, and deeply appreciated. Tacoma is a better place because Holle Plaehn lived, worked and served God in our community."

Long-time congregation member Carol Watson said, "Holle arrived at a turbulent time in our community. The neighborhood was changing and members of the congregation were moving out. When he arrived, there were sometimes three families in the pews on Sunday morning. He hung in there."

"He walks and talks his faith," Watson said. "He's non-judgmental, just a genuine man of God."

Rev. Ron Vignec of Salishan Lutheran Mission talked about Pastor Plaehn's commitment to the Hilltop neighborhood. "At the height of drugs and gangs in the community, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, there were few people who walked the neighborhood. Holle did that, literally, and talked to people, stopping to pray at places where violence had occurred. It was an act of courage."

A persistent, gentle man, Pastor Plaehn has been described as a "real pastor." Bishop Robert Hofstad of the Southwestern Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America said, "Holle represents the best of Lutheran pastors doing Word and Sacrament ministry in a good and faithful way. He has been an inspiration and model for many of us."

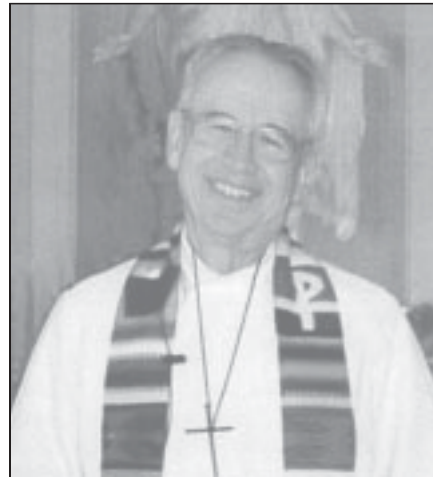
Known throughout the Hilltop for his gracious acceptance of everyone without regard for religion, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, what stands out about Pastor Plaehn is what former ELCA Bishop, Rev. David Wold called "Holle's sweet, sweet spirit."

"A church must touch the needs of the people and Holle helped anyone with a need, whether they were hungry or cold or needed consolation. He became a presence in the Hilltop, someone people could trust. He never turned anybody down."

Wold, a previous recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, commented on "the remarkable gift of hospitality that both Holle and (his wife) Carol have, to bring people together with no affectation or expectation of someone else reciprocating."

Since his retirement last fall, Pastor Plaehn is still active in the community, occasionally serving at Salishan Lutheran Mission and speaking up for the Hilltop at public hearings.

The Lifetime Achievement Award is not awarded annually and has only been given three times. Past recipients include Virginia Y. Miller, Rev. Earnest S. Brazill,



Pastor Holle Plaehn will receive the Virginia Y. Miller Lifetime Achievement Award at the April 17 Spring Celebration.

and Bishop David C. Wold.

At the Spring Celebration, Associated Ministries will also honor Lynn Raisl of Mason United Methodist Church and Steve Larson of the University of Puget Sound with the 2004 Ecumenical Service Awards.

Each year Associated Ministries recognizes remarkable individuals, groups, or congregations who significantly improve the quality of life in our community. The Ecumenical Service Award winners embody the spirit of *shalom*, a desire for the fullness of life for all people and a dream of health, wholeness, and justice. In short, the Associated Ministries Board of Directors and staff see the spirit of *shalom* reflecting the divine vision for the life of people on this planet.

The Associated Ministries Board of Directors reviews nominations made by representatives of the local faith communities and chooses award recipients. This year, the board chose to honor Steve Larson for his peacemaking and volunteer work in our community and Lynn Raisl for her efforts to reach out to residents of our community, offering friendship, support, inspiration and God's love.

The Ecumenical Service Award is presented to people who are engaged in the promotion of peace in the broadest sense, the desire for fullness of life for all people and a vision of health, wholeness and justice. Steve Larson's efforts to promote peace and to serve individuals in need in our community were instrumental in his being selected as a youth recipient of the Ecumenical Service Award.

Adam Bray of University of Puget Sound's Center for Spirituality and Justice nominated Steve to receive the Ecumenical Service Award. In his nomination letter, Adam documented Steve's impressive efforts as an activist, educator, organizer and volunteer for peaceful solutions to problems locally, nationally and internationally. In 2001, Steve started Drummers for Peace, now the largest student activist group at UPS. Along with participating in marches and protests, Drummers for Peace provides forums, teach-ins and awareness campaigns to inform students about peace and justice issues.

Steve participates in multiple student activities at the University of Puget Sound, including Freakout!, the Food Salvage Program, the Social Justice Residence Program and the Coalition to Achieve Change. Steve is also committed to volunteer and peacemaking work in the larger community and has volunteered for Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful, the Guadalupe House, the Tacoma Public Library, the Earth Charter Community Summit and the TEACH Program.

Steve is also active in the religious community on campus and serves as the chapel musician for weekly services. He is a full-time student majoring in Comparative Sociology and maintaining a 3.75 grade point average.

Continued on page 2

Pierce County offers Livable Communities Fair

Pierce County will host its second Livable Communities Fair in Parkland. This biennial event will take place Saturday, April 3 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the campus of Pacific Lutheran University. The public is invited to attend this free event and learn ways to help make the community a safer, healthier and better place to live. Events will be available for the entire family.

Like a garden or home show, the Livable Communities Fair features interactive displays and provides speakers on a wide range of topics including energy conservation, car-pooling, recycled building materials, neighborhood emergency preparedness, affordable housing, low impact development, water quality, public safety, clean environment, agriculture,

parks and recreation and similar topics. There will be educational material and resources for everyone attending. Nonprofits, businesses, individuals, county and other government agencies will bring together these ideas for making our community the kind of place for families today and in the years to come.

Master Gardener Ciscoe Morris will share his expertise hosting the "Gardening with Ciscoe" show, which will be broadcast live on 710 KIRO news radio from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Other attractions include visiting with Smokey the Bear, Bert the Salmon, and Rhubarb, the Rainiers' mascot; exploring a fire engine, a vactor truck and the EnviroChallenger van; fishing in the trout pond; visiting a petting farm; and making arts and crafts

from recycled materials. Attendees can learn more about Pierce County's environmental and transportation services; check out the transportation and growth plans for the area; and see how the county works with citizens to protect our environment. Amtrak companion fares and other prizes will be given away during the day.

More than 15,000 people are expected to attend the fair. Admission and parking are free, and a special service route will be provided by Pierce Transit from the parking lots of PLU to the fair entrance. Additional fair information, directions and speakers' schedules can be found on the web at www.livablepiercecounty.org, or by calling (253) 798-6691.

Inside	Page
40 Days of Purpose	4
April Happenings	8
Book Review: Gordon Lathrop	5
Book Review: Michael Kinnamon	6
Center for Spiritual Living	2
Director's Corner	3
Fair Housing Month	4
In Brief	7
Looking Back	2
Marita Dingus	5
Needs & Wants	6
Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful	2
Stewards in the Spotlight	3
UPS Inauguration	2

"I have full confidence that Steve's future will continue to embody the principles of shalom," Adam Bray wrote.

Lynn Raisl's embodiment of the spirit of *shalom* was expressed in the more than twenty nomination letters we received from individuals and families whose lives she has touched through her friendship, generosity, mentoring and tireless commitment to our community. Debbie Curtis wrote that her "face, heart, soul and life is shalom—welcoming and justice."

Associated Ministries chose to honor Lynn with the 2004 Ecumenical Service Award because of her extraordinary commitment to our community and to God. Her commitment to education is seen in her dedication to her children's school through fundraising, volunteering and support of extra-curricular activities. Lynn's commitment to community is seen in her volunteer work at FISH Food Banks, St. Leo's Hospitality Kitchen, the Junior Daffodil Parade and the YWCA. Her commitment to God and to the Church are seen in her

teaching of Sunday School, support of Youth for Christ, organization of Christmas Eve and Easter services and facilitation of a long-term women's fellowship group at Mason United Methodist Church.

"Gandhi was once quoted saying, 'Be the change you want to see in the world.' I think change, especially significant change, happens one step, one hand, one smile, one friend at a time" wrote Maria Ridenour. "I know without a shadow of a doubt, that Lynn has very significantly improved the quality of life in this community we all live in together. Lynn has definitely been a role model for the change we are all seeking for the world we live in."

The recipients of the 2004 Ecumenical Service Awards and the Virginia Y. Miller Lifetime Achievement Award will be honored at Associated Ministries' Spring Celebration dinner and auction at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 17, at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Tacoma. For reservations, please call (253) 383-3056 ext. 119 or email ginab@associatedministries.org.

Center for Spiritual Living will hold Centennial celebration on May 1

Deputy Mayor Bill Evans and noted historian Michael Sullivan will speak at the Center for Spiritual Living's Centennial Celebration on Saturday, May 1. The dinner and silent auction event, held from 6:00-9:30 p.m. at 206 North J St., is open to the public. Tickets are \$20, which includes dinner.

The building has housed some notable Tacoma people: Rev. Henry Victor Morgan, father of Murray Morgan, Northwest historian, was minister there for 40 years, and Murray Morgan was married in the church in 1949.

The May 1 event includes visual displays of Tacoma's surrounding neigh-

borhoods musical entertainment as well as presentations by Evans, Sullivan and Rev. Frances Lorenz, minister of the Center for Spiritual Living. There will also be musical entertainment. Proceeds from the auction will benefit the building restoration fund.

One hundred years ago, the church building was a Universalist church, then became a Divine Science church that was deeded to the Tacoma Church of Religious Science. The church was renamed Center for Spiritual Living in 1998.

For information or tickets to the May 1 event, please call (253) 383-3151.

Associated Ministries announces grant award

Associated Ministries is pleased to announce that it has received a grant from The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation for \$5000 for operating expenses and its Family Emergency Fund. A grant to help meet operating expenses allows Associated Ministries to provide services that the community needs, to answer the door and the phones, and to refer people to other agencies when appropriate. The agency's Family Emergency Fund meets unaddressed emergency needs and unexpected expenses that can push at-risk families to extremes, sometimes to homelessness. The grant was provided by the Mountain View Memorial Park Fund of The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, the Frances C. Heidner Charitable Lead Trust administered by The Union Bank of California, with selection of recipients made by The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, and the John G. Merry Fund of The Greater Tacoma Com-

munity Foundation.

The mission of The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation is to enrich the quality of life through philanthropy in the Greater Tacoma area. The GTCF brings together citizens who care deeply about the community with those who are acting locally to improve the quality of life. Miriam Barnett, Marketing/Communications Officer, says, "We connect people who care with causes that matter."

Founded in 1982, the Foundation currently has \$43 million in assets and gives approximately \$2.5 million each year in grants and scholarships. The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation first funded Associated Ministries in 1986, and has given the agency and its programs a total of \$59,300 over the past 18 years.

More information on The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation can be found at www.tacomafoundation.org.

Inauguration of University of Puget Sound President Ron Thomas set for April 23



Ronald R. Thomas

Ronald R. Thomas will be formally installed as the 13th president of the University of Puget Sound at 3:00 p.m. Friday, April 23 in Memorial Fieldhouse on

the Puget Sound campus. The entire Pierce County community is invited to the ceremony, the theme of which is "Celebrating the Liberal Arts and Civic Engagement."

A week of lectures, concerts, seminars, and other celebratory events will precede the inauguration. Included are a welcome and blessing by the Puyallup tribe, and a reading and presentation by Robert Pinsky, former poet laureate of the United States. A full schedule of events is on-line at <http://www.ups.edu/inauguration/inaugurationEvents.html>.

Thomas, just the fifth president at Puget Sound since 1913, assumed his duties July 16, 2003. He came to Puget Sound with a twenty-year record of accomplishment as an award-winning scholar, teacher,

and administrator at Trinity College, the University of Chicago, and Harvard University. A scholar of Victorian literature and culture, he has authored three books and numerous articles on subjects ranging from the role of the novel in the development of the modern detective, mapmaking, dream interpretation, forensic science, and the invention of the cinema. As vice president and acting president at Trinity, Thomas oversaw the college's \$100-million master plan and played a leadership role in its nationally recognized engagement with the city of Hartford, Conn.

Since arriving in Tacoma, Thomas has met with numerous local business leaders, civic organizations, and other groups to further explore the role of the university in the community. "Our unconditional commitment to the discovery of knowledge must go hand in hand with an unwavering commitment to the broader community," Thomas wrote in a *News Tribune* editorial on August 22, 2003. "I come to Puget Sound with a strong commitment to the principle of the college as a good citizen and a collaborative approach to the distinctive challenges and remarkable opportunities we face."

Give a gift that keeps on giving



By SALLIE SHAWL, DIRECTOR, PAINT TACOMA-PIERCE BEAUTIFUL

One of the best parts of my job is getting to hear from homeowners and volunteers throughout the year about how much they are still getting out of our program. The painting may occur in July and August, but the impact on people's lives continues for a long time. This goes for both homeowners and the volunteers who paint their homes.

Take Debra Williams, whose home was painted last summer. She wrote to us in December:

"The green color fits in beautifully to this winter season. For the first time the house is adorned with clear white icicle lights on both eaves, and the holly bush is adorned with red lights that glow like holly berries. The result is a house that takes my breath away and brings tears to my eyes. My house has become a home of warmth and love and peace. Thank you for your part..."

Corrie Black and Helen Moore of Heritage Bank recently told us that they've been visiting "their homeowner" periodically since they met her last summer. Every year I hear stories of crews that are maintaining contact with their homeowner, sometimes doing yard work, other times visiting over the holidays, other times just

visiting to maintain the friendship that developed during the summer.

Yes, we're painting houses, and the new paint jobs are extremely important. As a wonderful by-product, we also are providing opportunities for new relationships. In this 21st "on-the-go" century, when people hardly know their neighbors, seniors are often lonely. Many are widows or widowers, and because it's not uncommon for most or all of their friends to have passed, they don't get a lot of social contact.

Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful organizes volunteer crews to paint the homes of low-income seniors and low-income disabled men and women in our community. We're hoping to paint around 100 homes this summer, and our only limit is the number of volunteer crews. How about your church? Your service club? Your book club? Your child's soccer team? A number of families on your block, painting the home of a neighbor? This program does so well because people get creative and find others to work with them on the project. What might you do?

For further information, visit www.paintbeautiful.org or call (253) 383-3056, ext 105.

Looking Back: Glimpses into Pierce County's rich religious history

From The Ledger May 29, 1939:

Back in 1879 a bell in St. Peter's steeple called good Episcopalians of Tacoma to worship and today, just as it did 61 years ago, the bell in this first church in Tacoma rings forth, extending invitation to Bible classes conducted every Sunday by the Northwest Bible School Association.

Another of the city's oldest and most picturesque churches, St. Luke's, which has been in disuse since the merging of

its congregation several years ago with Trinity Episcopal to form Christ Church on North K Street, would have gone under the wrecker's hammer this year but pioneer citizens and Episcopalians won a fight to preserve the historic stone edifice. Presented as a memorial to Tacoma 52 years ago by the late Charles B. Wright, who also gave the city the Annie Wright Seminary and Wright Park, the old church is to be moved to the site of St. Mark's at North 36th and Gove Street and will become, according to plans of the restoration committee, a place of memorials for all time to come.

First Baptist, which has stood at the center of the city's main business district for 51 years, was in danger of closing its doors this year because of a heavy mortgage on its modern plant, but arrangements were made whereby it will pay \$250 per month for five years to the Central Life Insurance Company of Des Moines, IA, and wipe the debt off the slate at the end of the period with a payment of \$73,000.

On April 8th Trinity Lutheran Church, South 13th and I Streets, began services in celebration of its 50th anniversary, continuing the observance until the 12th. It was the first German Lutheran church to

be founded in the Northwest Territory.

Pastors of the most representative of the Protestant churches in Tacoma, which has more than 80 congregations of all denominations, are members of a central interdenominational organization, the Tacoma Ministerial Federation, headed this year by Rev. E. M. Hegge of Central Lutheran Church. Following a custom of several years standing this group sponsored special union services at First Baptist Church each noon during Holy Week, an effort in which they were assisted by the YMCA and a number of the businessmen's clubs.



Stewards in the Spotlight

Each month, *The CHANNEL* features individuals, congregations and organizations who truly exemplify the spirit of stewardship in their day-to-day lives and work. This month Marion Sharp interviews Robert Call, president of the Tacoma South Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. To suggest a candidate for a Stewards in the Spotlight profile, please contact *The CHANNEL* at (253) 383-3056, ext. 120.



Church Name: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Tacoma South Stake

Location: 2455 South 78th Street, Tacoma WA 98409

Meeting Times: There are nine wards (congregations), in the Tacoma South Stake, which meet in three buildings. The Sunday services in each building start at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 1:00 p.m.. Visitors are welcome.

Number of members: 3400

History: The Church was officially organized in New York state in April of 1830. Western migration began in 1847, with the first members arriving in Washington state in the late 1800s. There are currently six Stakes in Pierce County (a Stake is organized with geographical boundaries, presided over by a Stake President and is typically comprised of 7 to 13 wards or congregations). There are approximately 20,000 members in Pierce County in these six Stakes. All Stakes of the Church report to the International headquarters in Salt Lake City. The Tacoma South Stake was organized in 1986 as an offshoot from the Tacoma Stake.

Creed/Mission: The mission of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ; to perfect the saints (members); and to redeem the dead, those who died without the benefit of receiving the gospel.

What special programs does your congregation offer? A church welfare system for members in need, an employment office, a family history library, a Bishop's food storehouse with commodities for families in need, with surplus food donated to local food banks, a college student *Institute of Religion* adjacent to Tacoma Community College with day and evening religious instruction, an early morning seminary program for daily religious instruction for all high school students, Cub Scout and Boy Scout troops sponsored by every ward (congregation), a thrift store (with work opportunities) and a summer camp for young women and families. A women's organization offers a wide-variety of services, including monthly home, family and personal enrichment classes. We also provide a youth program for kids ages 12 to 18, a primary children's program for children ages 3 to 12, a single adult program for singles under 30 years old and a separate program for 30+ year old singles, local and international service opportunities for seniors, men's organizations providing gospel training, leadership opportunities and family, parenting and marriage training. There is missionary service and training, including two-year service opportunities to foreign and domestic locations. There are social services for members with special needs, including family counseling, substance abuse programs, and adoption services

With what other organizations is your congregation involved? Paint Tacoma/Pierce Beautiful, Associated Ministries, Pacific Harbors Council of the Boy Scouts of America, and the Emergency Food Network.

How does your faith call you to action? Without a full-time paid ministry, each member of the church serves in a volunteer capacity to help with all Church functions: Sunday school teachers, choir directors, Bishops, youth leaders, women's organization presidencies, etc. All are given responsibilities to help. We grow in the gospel by serving and teaching each other. We are also called to action by the Savior's charge to go into the entire world and preach the Gospel. Our young people heed this call by serving full-time missions, and all of us heed this call by sharing our love of the Lord with our neighbors, friends and family members. We also feel it a great privilege to research our family histories, and to perform sacred saving gospel ordinances for our ancestors by proxy, vicariously in our temples.

What is your biggest concern for the world/ community? Our biggest concern is embodied in our mission: To preach the gospel so that every soul on the earth today has an opportunity to partake of the ordinances and blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ; to reach out to all of our members to strengthen them, bless their lives and extend all the blessings of the gospel to them; and to finish the work for the dead, all in preparation for the prophesied second coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ, so that the mission of our Heavenly Father can be accomplished: "To bring to pass the immortality and Eternal Life of Man."

What is your biggest hope for the world/ community? That all may rejoice in a knowledge of the Savior of the World, and that every knee will bow and every tongue confess that he is the Savior of the World.

What is your message to the Associated Ministries community? We are very grateful to know and associate with such devoted and loving people who selflessly give and serve their fellow man.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



This is a glorious time of the year. But as spring arrives and Easter is approaching I find myself troubled. The days are getting longer. Trees are blossoming and their fresh leaves are unfolding. Spring flowers are showing their colors. It is truly a wonderful time of the year. So why am I troubled?

It's not the fact that my backyard is a disaster and will require hours and hours of work to bring it into shape. It's not the many social ills that still confront us. It is not that we live in a world that seeks to solve problems by military might or other forms of coercion. Those are all troubling, but they are part of the ongoing work of my personal life and the work of all of us as people of faith. What is troubling me is that we are facing the longest Presidential Election that I can ever remember. We are just getting started and it will continue through April, May, June, July, August, September, October and into November. Dear friends, that is more than 200 days of ads and sound bites from the incumbent and his challenger.

These two men are going to do whatever it takes to win your vote. The incumbent has accumulated a campaign fund of over \$150,000,000 and he is just getting started. The challenger is out trying to raise a similar sum of money. All this is so each can run ads. Now ads are not necessarily the best tools for truly informing the public about who the candidates are. Their purpose, as we all know, is to put the person paying for the ads in the best possible light and the opponent in the worst possible light. It has only been a couple of weeks and I am troubled.

How are we going to feel about presidential politics in another couple of months? We have huge problems facing the world today. What are the best steps that need to be taken in Afghanistan and Iraq? A while back the United States expressed some serious interest in the AIDS epidemic in Africa. How are we going to address that? Millions have died in the Congo. Worldwide poverty is still the major issue facing all of us. Environmental issues are still before us. Our national fiscal deficit is looming so large that it will take decades to balance the books of our federal government. What will happen with these issues for the next few months? Well, we will be playing politics with them. We will be pointing the finger at the other guy. We also will hear lofty statements and many promises. But what troubles me is that I really believe little, if anything, will be done.

It is time for our political leaders to become real problem solvers. I am told by colleagues and friends who work in Washington, D.C. that relationships between most Republicans and Democrats are so low that civility has almost disappeared entirely. We are paying these folks some pretty good salaries to make decisions for the good of this country and the world we are a part of and they will hardly talk with one another. It was refreshing to read the comments of Senator McCain in the March 19 edition of *The News Tribune*. He was challenging some comments by Vice President Cheney about challenger John Kerry. The senator was doing several important things. First, he was standing up for his friend, who happens to be a Democrat. Second, and equally important, he was saying that we need to raise the level of discussion so that citizens can clearly see where each candidate stands and make an informed decision. I would hope that Senator McCain and our own two senators would take this attitude into the Senate Chambers. The same could be done by our members of the House.

It's going to be a long seven months. There is probably little that you or I can do to change the way the campaign will be run. I am going to tackle the problem of my backyard. I am going to continue to work, as best I can, on the pressing issues before us as people of faith. I am going to use the mute button on my remote when the ads come up on the TV. And I am going to research the issues as best I can to determine just where these two men stand.

Lighten up a bit, David. The sun is shining. The Sound is gorgeous. The flowers are blooming. And off in the distance, the Mountain is peeking through the clouds.

Rev. David T. Alger
Executive Director, Associated Ministries



Associated Ministries is a Christian organization representing more than 200 congregations, religious groups, and interfaith partners in Tacoma-Pierce County. We are compelled by our faith to build community that is humane, compassionate and just.

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The Channel is Pierce County's only ecumenical and interfaith newspaper, reaching more than 10,000 people each month.

Readers are invited to submit news items, letters, articles, opinion pieces and photographs of interest to the faith communities of Tacoma/Pierce County. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Materials may be submitted via mail, fax, e-mail or delivery, but must include a contact name and phone number or e-mail address. Submissions will be published at the discretion of the editor, and may be edited for space and clarity. Submissions will not be returned but may be kept on file for future use. Photos will be returned upon request.

For advertising information, contact Dorothy Moe at (253) 460-1443 or Judith Jones at (253)383-3056, ext. 120.

40 Days of Purpose: One local congregation's experience

BY REV. DR. JONATHAN SCHMICK

About a year ago, at a local clinic, a nurse shared with me that she was reading a new book entitled *The Purpose-Driven Life*. She told me that the congregation where she and her husband were worshipping was studying the book together in a small group format and that the results were positive.

I remember thinking that might be a great book for our church to study, as a way to bring new life to our small group program. But then I thought – *The Purpose-Driven Life*, that must be by the same guy who wrote *The Purpose-Driven Church*, Rick Warren. Wasn't he that Southern Baptist Pastor who had a mega church in California? Immediately my skeptical mind began to wonder – what good could come out of a Southern Baptist pastor of a mega church in California? There must be something wrong. It had to be another one of those slick church growth gimmick programs.

Yet just as I was about to discard the idea, I met another local pastor whose church was using the book. He gave me a copy. Over the next month I strangely found it inspirational and spiritually uplifting. While there were certain things that I took issue with theologically, I found the majority of the book was very good. Some later expressed my feelings saying the book is like a good forest with a few trees you don't like. You don't cut down the forest just because of those trees. You deal with the specific trees.

Further, I was impressed by the very first phrase in the book: "It's not about you!" If I could just get Christians (including myself) to understand that concept, the book would be worth it. But there is more. It helps define five simple purposes for our life. They are: "Worship—You Were Planned for God's Pleasure," meaning we are to focus on loving and serving God. Next is "Fellowship—You Were Formed

There is something unique about an entire church reading one book together. There is something exciting about getting together in new small groups to study a common theme.

for God's Family," meaning we are connected to other believers. Third is "Discipleship—You Were Created to Become Like Christ," meaning we are to be growing spiritually in Christ-like maturity. Fourth is "Ministry—You Were Shaped for Serving God," meaning we are to find our area of ministry in the Church. Fifth, "Mission—You Were Made for a Mission," meaning we are to share God's love with those in the world.

Initially I thought we might get some people in our small group ministry to study the book together. (At the time we had about 15 small groups.) I thought if we could increase our number of small groups by five or ten, that would be a success. But then I learned about the 40 Days of Purpose Campaign. It was a church-wide spiritual growth program. Suddenly the idea started to grow.

The 40 Days of Purpose Campaign would use multiple reinforcement to teach about the five purposes. There would be sermons and worship on Sunday morning. There would be small group meetings. There would be individual reading. There would be Bible verses to memorize.

I introduced the program to my leadership team. They studied the book together. They prayed. We started to set goals and make plans. (The program is laid out well in materials provided to you from Saddleback Church.) Instead of just five to ten groups we set a goal of 100 small groups. Instead of just a few people participating we set a goal of 100 percent participation.

Rick Warren suggested that we consider the concept of small group host homes. I stood before the congregation

and told them I was looking for 100 small group hosts. (Notice I said host and not leader. The term leader is frightening to many. They think they need to be trained and able to teach.) I simply said: If you live in a home, if you have a TV, if you can turn on a VCR, if you can bake some cookies – you are eligible to be a small group host. We will provide a video curriculum. We will provide all the materials. All you have to do is invite a few of your friends to your home, insert the video, turn on the TV and ask a few questions. (Actually, it was a little more than that, but not much more.) I had more than 75 people volunteer to be small group hosts. (Remember, we only had 15 small groups.) In addition over 600 individuals signed up to be in the small groups. (We have 625 in membership and about 425 in Sunday Worship attendance.)

You might say that there was a "buzz" of excitement in the church. With everyone reading the book, with everyone watching the small group video material, with the worship services being centered on a different purpose each Sunday, the whole congregation was focused. Numerous individuals said they understood in a new way their purpose in life. Numerous individuals said they grew spiritually.

We concluded the campaign with a Ministry Fair where people signed up for various ministries. We also had a Mission Fair where people signed up to get involved in the community. Then we had a celebration where almost 300 people showed up for an evening of singing and sharing about what God had done in their lives. In this mainline Presbyterian Church not a single person reported this as a negative experience. The overwhelming

response was positive.

Perhaps you wonder what has been the long-term result? We didn't double in membership. We aren't on our way to becoming a mega church. While there were certain areas of growth and excitement, by and large we are still the same people. We currently have about 50 small groups. Worship attendance has increased some, but not much – about 5 percent. Some people are involved in more ministry and mission.

I have to remember that *The Purpose-Driven Life* is just a book and the 40 Days of Purpose Campaign is just a program. If you are considering using this in your church, I would strongly encourage you. However, recognize what it is – a book written by an ordinary man and a program designed by ordinary people. Yet it is also something that I believe God can use to reach people. It is a tool which can be effective in ministry. After all, God is noted for using ordinary things for his purpose.

If you do decide to use this material, my suggestion is that you use all of it, let your entire congregation focus together. There is something unique about an entire church reading one book together. There is something exciting about getting together in new small groups to study a common theme. There is something uplifting about reading a book together, learning together and then having worship services focused on your theme. Try it, you might just like it and more than that, God might touch and change a life.

Rev. Jon Schmick, D.Min., is Senior Pastor of Marine View Presbyterian Church in Northeast Tacoma.

[Ed. Note: Has your congregation begun a new program or ministry that you would like to share with the wider community? Send your stories to CHANNEL editor Judith Jones at (253) 383-3056, ext. 120 or channel@associatedministries.org.]

April is Fair Housing Month: Do you know your housing rights?

BY ABBY WEST, FAIR HOUSING CENTER OF SOUTH PUGET SOUND

April is Fair Housing Month, and a good time to recall the relatively short history of effective fair housing legislation in the United States.

Although the Civil Rights Act of 1866 guaranteed equal rights to all citizens, it was largely ineffective. In 1962, President Kennedy signed an executive order entitled "Equal Opportunity in Housing" which prohibited discrimination in housing owned, operated or assisted by the federal government, but the order was limited and had little impact on the housing market.

Real change did not come about until April 1968 when the Fair Housing Act was adopted, making it illegal to discriminate against certain protected classes in any housing transactions. This law was based on the release of the Kerner Commission Report, compiled by the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The report indicated that America was "moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." It outlined problems of residential and school segregation and the formation of racial slums. Within days of the report's release and Dr. King's assassination, the House voted 250-172 to accept the Civil Rights Act of 1968. In June of that same year, the Supreme Court held that the Act banned private as well as governmental racial discrimination in housing. Since 1968, new protected classes have been added. The law currently covers national origin, religion, gender, race, color, dis-

ability and familial status (families with children under the age of 18) giving strength to the administrative and judicial enforcement of the Act.

The Fair Housing Act covers most housing. Some of the acts prohibited with regard to protected classes are:

- Refusal to rent or sell housing
- Refusal to negotiate for housing
- Denial that housing is available when in fact it is
- Setting up road blocks for individuals to obtain housing
- Requiring different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental
- Refusal to provide a reasonable accommodation or modification to a person with a disability.

For more information regarding the Fair Housing Act, see the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) website at www.hud.gov and follow the link to the fair housing section.

The City of Tacoma will sponsor a fair housing conference at the Tacoma Sheraton on Wednesday, April 21. Cost is \$65 prior to April 1 or \$75 at the door. For more information, please contact the City of Tacoma at (253) 591-5151.

There are also free quarterly trainings for property managers and owners held in Seattle. For more information on training contact Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound (FHCSPPS) at (253) 272-9523 or toll free at (888) 766-8800.

If you or someone you know feels they have been discriminated against in hous-

ing, there's help. The Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound (FHCSPPS) can provide assistance. The FHCSPPS is a non-profit agency, designed to provide education and advocacy to individuals in cases of possible housing discrimination. The

staff can assist with filing formal complaints through HUD and lend support throughout the entire complaint process. Though based out of Pierce County, the FHCSPPS serves all of Western Washington and parts of Central Washington.

She gives everyone a chance... so should you.



Housing discrimination goes against everything this country stands for. It's against the law, yet it occurs *all* across the nation. You can help protect everyone's right to live in the neighborhood of their choice.

Everyone deserves a fair chance to own a home. If you suspect unfair lending, insurance or housing practices, contact HUD or your local Fair Housing Center:

FAIR HOUSING IS THE LAW!



**Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound:
253-274-9523 or 888-766-8800**

Local artist finds inspiration in nature and in found objects

BY SALLY ALGER

When she was visiting Ghana in 1987 artist Marita Dingus had an experience of claustrophobia.

"I visited Castle Elmina. It had been built in the 1400s to store ivory and gold.



Artist Marita Dingus

In the 1600s it became a slave factory and stored Africans. I went into a tiny room in the castle in which 200 women had been kept before being shipped west for sale. I felt that I simply could not breathe in that

room. I had to run outside. There were only 5 other people in the room with me at the time. Imagine 200 African women held there!"

She responded by creating a powerful work of art "200 Women of African Descent". It consists of 200 tiny female dolls made of scraps of cloth and found objects. The dolls are headless. Each is different from all the others. Yet they share a delicate presence.

Each one is a sort of tribute to the individuals whose lives were cut short by slavery.

"I was raised a Roman Catholic," Marita says. "Making the dolls was rather like saying a rosary—an example of repetition as a healing process."

Fabric scraps, bits of metal, wine corks, plastic, wire—these have been Dingus' art supplies for many years. Those who go to the show of her work to be held at the

Museum of Glass will see how these small, throwaway objects are "recycled" through her creative hands into large magnificent sculptures

of the human figure, trees, and masks. They float and glitter; they seem to change expression and grow as the light catches them. For this show Marita, working as a visiting hot shop artist at the museum, created over 60 glass "faces" and other shapes which she has combined with her found objects. "I take things that I find and things that other people give me and go into my studio and make something with them."

Marita was born in 1956 in Auburn, Wash. She had a large family and a happy childhood. Her parents both made things—her dad was an engineer at Boeing and worked with metals and welding. Her mother made quilts. Everyone in the family knew how to sew, and, as Marita notes, no one in the family liked to waste a lot of time in front of the TV. There were very few other African American families living in Auburn at the time. Her older brother-in-law was first responsible for raising her consciousness about her ethnicity. He noticed that she loved to do drawings of people, but she always drew white people. "Why are you doing that—are you white?" he asked. After this she began to draw pictures of Nubians that she found in a book and to be interested in what it meant to her to be African American. When it was time to go to high school Marita and her family decided that Immaculate Con-

UPCOMING EXHIBIT
Marita Dingus: About Face
Museum of Glass
May 1 - Sept. 5, 2004

ception High School in Seattle, rather than Auburn, was the place for her. In this more diverse environment Marita met Filipino students and

other African Americans.

Religious life was important to her as she was growing up. "I sometimes think that I became an artist because of the church. The Catholics have a lot of art in their churches, and I found it very entertaining to look at the beautiful sculptures of Mary and the Saints." Later when she did research on African religion she found many correspondences between Catholic saints and the Yoruban (African) deities.

After high school she attended the University of Washington in Seattle for

two years, but again decided that she needed a different kind of education than she could receive in her home community. She decided to finish her degree at the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. She has lived and worked in many far off places since then—California, Louisiana, Panama, Ghana.

As her linked interests in art, in the care of the environment, in teaching, and in African American history have evolved she has moved. One senses in Marita Dingus an easy adaptability, a comfortable acceptance of all sorts of people. She now lives and works in Auburn in the home where she grew up and plans to stay there. "I have never hesitated to change when I needed to. But I think I have been on a slow reversal back home."



Marita Dingus, *200 Women of African Descent* (detail), 1994-97 Mixed media.

BOOK REVIEW: Reconnecting Christian worship to the world

Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology
by Gordon W. Lathrop
(Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003)

REVIEWED BY DR. PETER J. ZOGRAFOS

Today's popular culture is engaged and seemingly immersed in a cult of trilogies. Witness the "Lord of the Rings" phenomenon, with legions of readers and moviegoers poring over the minutest signs and symbols in Tolkein's richly-imagined universe. At the same time many churches have suffered a lost generation to whom Christian signs, symbols and rites no longer speak. Lutheran pastor and liturgical theologian Gordon Lathrop begins the latest installment of his own trilogy by addressing these churches with a basic yet profound question, "What does Christian liturgy have to do with cosmology?" He challenges the Christian imagination to reconnect worship and the world.

While the reference to cosmology might imply to some that this book is "new age," it is not. Lathrop attempts to recover a sacramental and liturgical understanding at a time when our actions and symbols seem to have lost their meaning.

Lathrop who has eloquently written of ritual and ecclesiology in his two previous works (*Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* and *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology*) now has addressed in *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* the church's need to discover, recover and celebrate in our worship the completeness of the Triune God.

He attempts to ground *Holy Things* for *Holy People* to *Holy Ground*. He reminds us that liturgy is not only connected to the cosmos, but grounded in it because liturgy is about "world-making." His previous works were all about juxtaposition; this book is about the need to recover the fullness of the Trinity in our worship.

This new work is truly a gift to the whole church whether clergy or lay, leader or assembly. It is a trilogy within a trilogy which explores the centrality of Christian worship to the world: a liturgy of the world. Worship is not where we go to avoid the world or retreat from the mundane. He mines new meaning from liturgical action and symbols to attend to a renewed cosmology and respect for all creation. This awareness has the power to renew our worship and transform communities into a Holy People who worship on Holy Ground.

Lathrop divides the book into three parts. In part one, "Cosmos: Liturgical Worldmaking," he finds in scripture a reconnection to the cosmos. He writes of the geography of the Liturgy as it reorients its participants in the world. He eloquently describes ordinary holiness in the connection of liturgy and life in a Trinitarian manner.

We may come expecting centered holiness, and we are given a direction away from here. We may come looking for God-in-the-distance, and we are given God-in-our-midst. We may come for us, and we are given them. We may come for them, and we are given ourselves, our selves truly, in community, before God, not cut off from them. We come to a cultic event, and the cult gives us the radical critique of cult.

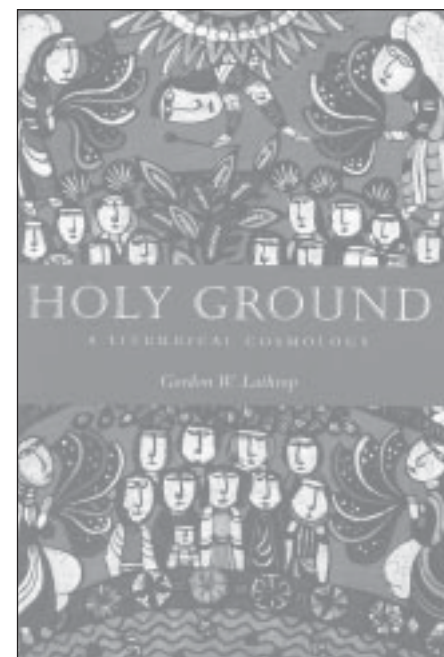
We are given insight in part two, "Maps: Liturgical Ethics," into the ambiguities and dangers inherent in maps. The paradoxes of Baptism and Eucharist, anchored in Jesus Christ, are skillfully emphasized as well as the danger that exists when communities lose the christological and liturgical tensions held within the sacraments. Churches are encouraged to

celebrate the weekly meal; Eucharist has the power to "re-orient us again and again to a lively love and care for the conditions of the earth" (152). Lathrop writes of the importance of the assembly marking sacred time thus enacting salvation history "stretched from Israel's expectation through the life of Christ, from the gift of the Spirit and the birth of the church to eschatology" (163). He treats us to three of his homilies in part three: "One is Holy: Liturgical Poetics." He concludes that the Bath,

Table, Prayer, and Word communally enacted can transform communities and thus the world because of the power in their symbolic meaning.

As I read Lathrop's book I could not help but be reminded of theologian Karl Rahner's "liturgy of the world," in which the church celebrates sacraments not as God intervening from the outside, but as a divine outpouring into what already exists in our world.¹ Lathrop like Rahner pushes the notion that the worship of the church ought to be liberating precisely because to praise God is to be drawn out of ourselves and into the stories and narratives of God. God summons us to be a part of the ongoing story of God that has come to us through Israel and Jesus.

Lathrop's approach gives voice to a reflective interpretation and strategic practice that calls for the community to discover that it is more than a passive recipient of the Gospel. Thus we must claim that our lives are given as a project so that we have an obligation to cooperate in the process of becoming. Therefore, experience is not passive, but transformative and illuminative of the process of conversion. His wisdom shines through in this well written book in the use of the Triune



God to recover liturgical meaning in this pluralistic age. Loss of meaning in sacred ritual and symbol and thus loss of their connection to everyday life is a challenge for the church in these post-modern times. Liturgy is more than entertainment.

Holy Ground alone will not give the firm foundation it can and does provide as part of Lathrop's trilogy. This latest installment from Gordon Lathrop is a delicious dessert to the meal that preceded it. I highly recommend all three books for reading, study, and reflection so that the Christian community comes to fullness on Holy Ground.

¹ See Karl Rahner, S.J., *Foundations of Christian Faith* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1998).

Dr. Peter J. Zografos is a liturgical theologian, spiritual director, and community builder. He received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Barry University in Miami, earned a Master of Divinity degree from the School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University, and holds a degree in Organizational Behavior from the University of San Francisco.

BOOK REVIEW: Is the ecumenical movement in crisis? Noted theologian calls for new clarity of vision

The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement and How It Has Been Impoverished
by Its Friends
by Michael Kinnamon
(St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003)

REVIEWED BY REV. DAVID T. ALGER

In my years of ecumenical work I have had the opportunity to meet many extraordinary Christian leaders. They have ranged from ecclesiastical leaders at the Vatican and World Council of Churches to local pastors and lay leaders serving in this community and around the Globe.

When it comes to critical thinking around ecumenism, none surpasses Dr. Michael Kinnamon. Dr. Kinnamon joined the faculty at Eden Theological Seminary in July 2000, and is the first Allen and Dottie Miller Professor of Mission and Peace. Before coming to Eden, Dr. Kinnamon served for 12 years at Lexington Theological Seminary in capacities including Professor of Theology and Ecumenical Studies and Dean of the Seminary. He has also taught on the faculty of Christian Theological Seminary and served as visiting professor at United Theological College and South Asian Theological Research Institute in Bangalore, India. He also served as General Secretary of the Consultation on Church Union.

Kinnamon has published numerous books and articles. He is a highly sought after speaker because of his ability to convey even the most complex theological insights in a way that all of us can understand. His recent publication of this book is a further illustration of his ability

to communicate these insights clearly.

First of all we need to be clear about what we are talking about. This book, while it addresses briefly the issue of interfaith relations, is about Christian ecumenism. He makes it very clear that interfaith relations is of paramount importance, but it is a totally different agenda than ecumenical relations.

At the very heart of Kinnamon's book is the issue of collaboration vs. ecumenism:

"Cooperation aimed, for example, at building houses is usually undermined when other concerns are introduced into the picture. A concern to grow in common understanding of baptism would likely sink a Habitat project.

Conversations that take place at Habitat for Humanity, at Paint Tacoma/Pierce Beautiful or while loading bags of food at area food banks often lead people further down the road to ecumenical relations.

An aggressive justice agenda can scuttle efforts at cooperative service. Ecumenism, however, lives deliberately with tensions – unity and justice, freedom and reconciliation – that advocates of cooperative ventures seek to avoid.

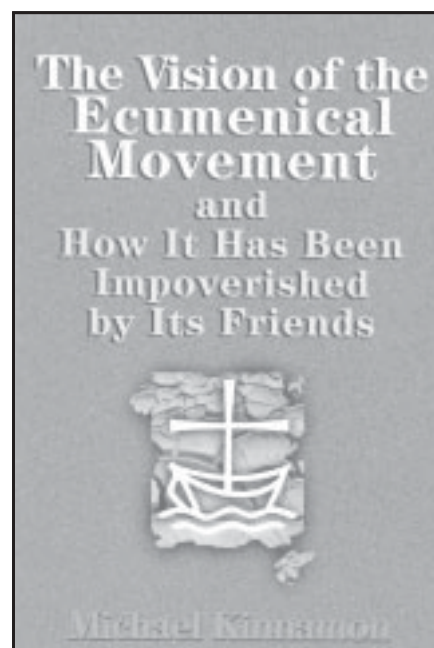
Most importantly, churches can cooperate without being changed, and the cooperation of unrenewed churches is, quite simply, not the ecumenical goal. The point is not that Christians ought to get along, but that Christians need one another and are given one another in order to be the Church."

Kinnamon makes a strong argument that collaboration is in many ways an obstacle to ecumenism. This hard line position is one I cannot accept. All too often I have found that collaboration can

lead to a deeper understanding of ecumenism and interfaith relations as well. Conversations that take place at Habitat for Humanity, at Paint Tacoma/Pierce Beautiful or while loading bags of food at area food banks often lead people further down the road to ecumenical relations. The problem, as Kinnamon so clearly points out, is that most often we do not go any further.

He further challenges us to move beyond our "if...then" form of logic. This form of conditional logic keeps us at the collaborative level. If you do such and such, then I will participate. If you have this understanding of baptism, eucharist or whatever, then I will enter into relationship with you. He calls us to a fuller understanding of the Church by fostering "because...therefore." Because the Church is a gift of God, therefore we are one. This is clearly seen in the following paragraph from his book:

"Our shared identity as Christians should take precedence over all other labels and loyalties. We are black Christians and white Christians and are, therefore related at a level deeper than race. We are U.S. Christians and Cuban Christians and are, therefore, related at a level deeper than nationality. We are Protestant Christians and Catholic Christian



and are, therefore, related at a level deeper than church tradition. We are liberal Christians and conservative Christians and are, therefore, related at a level deeper than ideology."

If you care about ecumenism and the unity of the Church or if you simply want a better understanding of what the ecumenical movement within the Church is all about, this book is a must read. Dr. Michael Kinnamon is simply the most engaging writer in this field today.

Rev. David T. Alger is executive director of Associated Ministries.



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pictured from top are:
Samuel Torvend; Gail
Ramshaw; Edward
Foley OFM, Capuchin;
Marty Haugen.

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Needs & Wants

POSITION AVAILABLE: YOUTH DIRECTOR — Grace Baptist Church, Tacoma, seeks a part-time Youth Director. Hours and salary depending on education and experience. For information contact Phil Strother at (253) 752-6643 or gracebaptist@harbornet.com.

POSITION AVAILABLE: PROGRAM COORDINATOR — YWCA of Pierce County seeks Insights Domestic Violence Prevention Program Coordinator. Plans and coordinates outreach program that provides education and advocacy and support groups for domestic violence victims/survivors. F/T non-exempt, \$13.00/hr., excellent benefits. Bachelor's degree from four-year college or university and one to two years' related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience; requires commitment to women and girls. To apply, send resume and cover letter attention: Vazaskia Caldwell, Director of Community Education, YWCA of Pierce County, 405 Broadway, Tacoma, WA 98402. For more information please call (253) 272-4181.

AVAILABLE: OFFICE SPACE — Catholic Community Services' Tahoma Center has small office space to rent or lease to nonprofit. 514 total square feet. Includes one enclosed office or conference room and 388 square feet of open office space. Wired for computers and telephone. Full service lease includes utilities, janitorial, walk-in reception and security. ADA compliant and includes private parking. Located at 1323 South Yakima Ave. \$700.00 a month. Call (253) 383-3697.

AVAILABLE: OFFICE EQUIPMENT — Emmanuel Lutheran Church has a Risograph GR270 and Ricoh Aficio color copier for sale; asking \$800.00 each. If interested, please call Elaine at (253) 752-3571.

Items for *Needs & Wants* are due by the 15th of the month preceding publication. Each must include a contact name and phone number. Fax information to (253) 383-2672 or email to channel@associatedministries.org. Items will be published as space permits.

IN BRIEF

Clothing and school supplies needed

The Tone Transitional Center is in need of new or gently used clothing, size 4 to adult, to assist homeless school children from Head Start through high school. School supplies are also needed. Donations can be dropped off at the Tone Transitional Center, 3110 South 43rd St., Tacoma, between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. For information, call (253) 571-3221.

Save the dates: PLU to host May lectures

The Pacific Lutheran University Office of Church Relations has announced two free public lectures by prominent German scholars. On Tuesday, May 11 at 7:00 p.m. in the Scandinavian Cultural Center, Bonhoeffer scholar Renate Wind, professor of theology at the Evangelical University in Nürnberg, will present "A Spoke in the Wheel," exploring Dietrich Bonhoeffer's role in the Confessing Church and resistance movement against Hitler, with its contemporary implications. On Thursday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. in Xavier 201, Hildegund Kravets, professor of law and political science at the Evangelical University in Nürnberg, will speak on "The Legal Subject of Gay and Lesbian Marriage in Germany." For more information, contact the PLU Office of Church Relations at (253) 535-7423 or crel@plu.edu.

Help shape future of Tacoma's parks

Metro Parks Tacoma is hosting a series of public meetings, seeking comments on improvement projects that could be funded by a potential future bond measure. The meetings are part of a planning process that will map out the next 20 years for Tacoma's park system. The April meeting schedule is as follows:

- Tues., April 6, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Titlow Lodge, 8425 6th Ave.
- Wed., Apr. 7, 7:30-9:00 a.m., Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 S. Tyler
- Thurs., Apr. 8, 2:00-3:30 p.m., People's Center, 1602 MLK Jr. Way
- Sat., Apr. 10, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 S. Tyler
- Tues., Apr. 13, 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Centre at Norpoint, 4818 Nassau Ave. NE.
- Thurs., April 15, 5:30-7:00 p.m., South Park Community Ctr., 4851 S. Tacoma Way

For more information, please call Lois Stark at (253) 305-1077 or visit www.metroparkstacoma.org.

Yoga classes offered

Experience the many benefits of Hatha Yoga through gentle stretching, Yoga postures, breathing and relaxation. Classes are held Mondays, 5:30-7:00 p.m. at the Center for Spiritual Living, 206 North J, Tacoma, and Tuesdays, 12-1:30 p.m. at Catherine Place, 923 South 8th, Tacoma.

Classes are offered on a drop-in basis and by donation. For more information call (253) 383-5325.

Healing Touch for End of Life Care

A new class will be offered on a monthly basis for individuals caring for a seriously/terminally ill loved one. Healing Touch for End of Life Care will teach basic energy healing techniques to assist with relaxation, pain relief and provide gentle support for the dying process. Classes meet the first three Tuesdays of each month from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The fee for the three-session class is \$75. On the fourth Tuesday of each month from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. there will be a support group for anyone who has taken the class. Fee is \$10 per group meeting. The April class runs on the 6th, 13th and 20th. The May class runs on 4th, 11th and 18th. Registration is required. Call Kim Carter, M.A., CHTP at (253) 549-5342 or (253) 851-2601.

Meditation offerings at Catherine Place

Catherine Place will offer two spring and summer meditation classes Wednesdays from 6:30-8:00 p.m.: The Christian-Buddhist Connection: Benedict's Dharma; Thomas Merton and Thich Nhat Hanh (April 7-28) and Women in Buddhism: Historical and Contemporary (May 5-

Aug. 11). Each session will include a discussion of material on those topics and a guided meditation session in which to cultivate lovingkindness and compassion. You are welcome to come from time to time or to attend all the sessions, which are offered by donation. Catherine Place is located at 923 S. 8th Street, Tacoma (corner of S. 8th & J). To register, please call Jude at (253) 756-1139 or Catherine Place at (253) 572-3647.

Literacy council seeks volunteer tutors

Imagine not being able to read street signs, use the telephone book, fill out an application, or read your child a bedtime story. Twenty-four percent of Pierce County residents need basic literacy education. The Tacoma Area Literacy Council, which provides free basic literacy and English as a second language assistance through the use of volunteer tutors, is seeking volunteers for its next tutor training. Potential tutors need not be professional teachers, just have a desire to help others learn to read. Training in the Laubach phonics method and ongoing support are provided. Next training dates are Tuesday, April 27 and Thursday, April 29 from 6:00-9:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 1, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. For ESL additional training is required on Tuesday, May 4 and Thursday, May 6. For information or to register please call (253) 272-2471.



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- May 20th—Landmark Theater, 5:30-9 p.m.: Dinner, a keynote speaker, entertainment
- May 21st—LaQuinta Inn., 8:30 a.m.—5:30 p.m.: African-American, Asian Pacific Islander, GLBTQ, Latino/Hispanic, Low-Income, and Native American Workshops
- May 22nd—Eastside Boys & Girls Club, 10 a.m. -2 p.m.: Youth Forum

For more information on the conference and to register call
253-798-4709

Training Event for Pastors and Youth Leaders in the beautiful Pacific Northwest

SUMMER CONFERENCE 2004

"Is There Faith in Our Future? Nurturing Leaders, Youth, and Families for Purposeful Living"

Led by co-authors of the new book
**Frogs Without Legs Can't Hear:
Nurturing Disciples in Home and Congregation**

♦

Paul Hill
Director, Center for Youth Ministry
Wartburg Seminary

♦

David Anderson
Director for Leadership Youth and Family Institute

July 19-24, 2004
Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA

**Servant Youth Event:
July 16-18, 2004 at PLU**

Offered by the Institute for Clergy and Congregational Renewal and Lutheran Educational Network and Support (LENS)

For information or to register check out our website at
www.plu.edu/~crel/events/
or email us at crel@plu.edu or call 253-535-7423

Pierce County Happenings - April 2004

4/1 Thursday

A **public witness to abolish the death penalty** will be held from 12:45-1:45 p.m. in front of the County-City Building on Tacoma Ave. S between 9th and 11th. This display takes place on the first Thursday of each month. For more information call John Boylan, Criminal Justice Ministry, at (253) 627-2720.

4/2 Friday

Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 901 North J Street, Tacoma, will host a first Friday **Taizé** service at 7:00 p.m. For more information call (253) 627-8371.

4/3 Saturday

Pierce County will host its second **Livable Communities Fair** from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at Pacific Lutheran University. Learn ways to help make the community a safer, healthier and better place to live. Events will be available for the entire family. Admission and parking are free, and a special service route will be provided by Pierce Transit from the parking lots of PLU to the fair entrance. For Fair information, directions and speakers' schedules, call (253) 798-6691 or see www.livablepiercecounty.org.

4/3 Saturday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer a one-day program, **Compassion and Forgiveness: The Deepening Well of Relationship**, from 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. This retreat will be a day to explore the "well of compassion and forgiveness" needed in our lives. The day will include short talks, poetry and music, with time for meditation and journaling. There will be optional small group sharing and a closing ritual of healing. Please bring a symbol that expresses the area(s) where you need compassion and forgiveness. Facilitated by Cynthia Fisher Rose, MA, a Pastoral Psychotherapist and Spiritual Director. Registration is \$50; please register by March 26. For information or registration call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

4/3 Saturday

St. Luke's Memorial Episcopal Church, 3615 N. Gove St, Tacoma, will host a **Lenten labyrinth walk** from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in the Bell Parish Hall. The labyrinth will be part of a Lenten Quiet Day in the parish; the church will be open for quiet prayer and meditation. The event is free and all are welcome. For directions or more information, call the church office at (253) 759-3534 or see www.stlukestacoma.org.

4/3 Saturday

The public is invited to join the Emergency Food Network's **Mother Earth Farm** in celebrating the beginning of spring from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Teams of drivers and plow horses will plow the fields and L'Arche will hold a plant sale. Bring a dish to share for potluck, your camera and the whole family. For information, contact the Emergency Food Network at (253) 584-1040 or see www.efoodnet.org.

4/4 Sunday

In the Christian tradition, **Palm Sunday** commemorates the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and marks the beginning of Holy Week.

4/4 Sunday

Seattle Jazz Vespers will feature Pearl Django at 6:00 p.m. at Seattle First Baptist Church on First Hill at the corner of Seneca and Harvard streets. Jazz Vespers are free and open to the public on the first Sunday of each month. A free-will offering will be taken. For informa-

tion call (206) 325-6051 or see www.seattlefirstbaptist.org.

4/4 Sunday

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive SW, Lakewood, will host a **Community Compline Service**, directed by Dr. Richard Nance and sung by Men's Compline Choir, at 9:00 p.m. For information call (253) 588-6621.

4/5 Monday

The Jewish holiday of Pesah, or **Passover**, begins at sundown. Passover, celebrated for eight days, commemorates the departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

4/8 Thursday

In Christianity, **Holy Thursday**, or Maundy Thursday, celebrates Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper.

4/8-11 Thursday-Sunday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer **Journey to Easter: Triduum Retreat**, from 3:00 p.m. Thursday to 12:00 p.m. Sunday. Travel the familiar yet ever new path, letting the liturgies for each day lead us deeper into the journey to Easter. Celebrate new life with 8:00 a.m. Eucharist on Easter Sunday followed by a simple breakfast with the Sisters. Registration is \$165; with spiritual direction - \$190; please register by March 22. For information call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

4/9 Friday

In the Christian traditions, **Good Friday** commemorates the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

4/11 Sunday

Celebrated as **Easter Sunday** in the Western tradition and **Pascha** in the Eastern tradition, this is the day on which Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It begins the fifty-day Easter season which culminates in Pentecost.

4/12-14 Monday-Wednesday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer **Recuperating from the Triduum**, from 10:00 a.m. Monday to 10:00 a.m. Wednesday. After all the highlights of the Triduum, recoup by basking in the resurrection call to eternal being. The opening session will involve prayer, relaxation and preparation; the retreat will close with group prayer and sharing. Registration is \$130; with spiritual direction - \$165; please register by April 9. For information or registration call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

4/12 Monday

The Greater Lakes Mental Healthcare **Mental Health Mondays** series will present "Depression in the Elderly" at 6:30 p.m. at the Lakewood Library, 6300 Wildaire Road, Lakewood. Facilitator Jeff Tingelstad, MA, LMHC, will help participants examine the biological, psychological and social causes of depression in older adults, along with current treatment strategies. The program is free of charge and reservations are not necessary. For information call (253) 581-7020.

4/12 Monday

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Tacoma, 1115 South 56th St., will host an open discussion titled "**What have been your experience and beliefs about Jesus?**" at 7:00 p.m. All are invited to participate in this discussion, in the wake of recent controversies about Jesus of Nazareth as set forth in the movie *The Passion of the Christ* and the best selling book *The DaVinci Code*.

4/15 Thursday

Deadline for May-June CHANNEL

4/15 Thursday

Exodus Housing is hosting an informational luncheon for local ministers to come and break bread together, fellowship and learn more about the agency's work with homeless families. The luncheon will be held at First Christian Church in Sumner, 432 Wood Avenue, from 12:00-1:30 p.m.. Speakers will include Pastor Bill Robey of First Christian Church and other Exodus Housing volunteers from local churches. For more information and to RSVP (*required*) please contact Wendy Sonnemann at (253) 862-6808 or wendy@exodushousing.org.

4/16-18 Friday-Sunday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer **Earth and Water, Wind and Flame: Practicing the Prayer of Creation**, from 7:30 p.m. Friday to 3:00 p.m. Sunday. Discover and celebrate an incarnational spirituality. Meet the One who is always accessible and ever blessing us in and through the created world. Learn about Kything, a way to include creatures in your daily prayer. Registration is \$160; please register by April 9. For information call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

4/16 Friday

All are welcome to join the **Dances of Universal Peace** from 7:30-9:30 p.m. at the Center for Spiritual Living, 206 North J St, Tacoma. Learn simple dances using sacred chants celebrating many of the world's religious traditions. No previous experience necessary—newcomers always welcome. Movements and music will all be taught. Suggested donation \$7-10. For more information contact Farishta Karen Lindsay at (253) 396-9656 or tacomadup@yahoo.com.

4/17 Saturday

The Interfaith Council of Washington will present the fourth of six classes in its 2004 **World Religions series** from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at Seattle University. The topic will be "Christian Eco-Spirituality," presented by Alexandra Kovats, CSJP, Ph.D., of Seattle University, in Wyckoff Auditorium, Engineering Bldg. Classes are \$120 for the series; \$25 per class. For more information please call (206) 522-7052 or email eisengn@aol.com.

4/17 Saturday

Associated Ministries' **Spring Celebration and Silent Auction** will be held at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Parish, 7112 South 12th St., Tacoma. The evening will celebrate Associated Ministries' 35th anniversary and honor the recipients of the Ecumenical Service Awards. Social and silent auction bidding begin at 6:30 p.m.; dinner will be served at 7:15 p.m. Reservations are \$40 per person. For more information call (253) 383-3056, ext. 119 or email ginab@associatedministries.org.

4/18 Sunday

The observance of **Yom HaShoah** honors the memory of the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust of World War II.

4/18 Sunday

Westminster Presbyterian Church, East 54th and B Street, Tacoma, will host a **Blues Vespers** service at 5:00 p.m. For more information, contact Rev. Dave Brown at (253) 472-4795.

4/22 Thursday

Earth Day

4/22 Thursday

Pacific Lutheran University's Center for Religion, Cultures, and Society in the Western United States will sponsor a symposium and conversation, **Religion in the Pacific Northwest**, from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. The program will include a panel presentation by contributors to the newly-

published *Religion and Public Life in the Pacific Northwest* (AltaMira Press, 2004). The registration fee is \$15.00 and includes lunch. For information and registration, contact Patricia O'Connell Killen, Department of Religion, at (253) 535-7776 or killenpo@plu.edu.

4/24 Saturday

L'Arche Farm & Gardens will host its first ever Spring Fling from 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. at 11716 Vickery Ave. E., Tacoma. This is a garden event for those who are young and those young at heart. Learn about L'Arche Farm & Gardens and check out the selection of perennials, herbs, veggie starts, annuals and hanging baskets. There will be a petting zoo, hot-dogs, children's games, paper crafts and tours, along with a drawing for garden / craft prizes and a chance to win a garden makeover. This event will help support services for people with developmental disabilities. For directions or more information, contact L'Arche Farm & Gardens at (253) 537-7871 or Larchegardens@juno.com or see www.larchethc.org.

4/24 Saturday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer a one-day workshop, **Gregorian Chant as Spiritual Practice** from 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Learn to sing and pray in the deep contemplative tradition of Gregorian chant, singing the Psalms, hymns and other melodies of a traditional Gregorian Vespers service dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Both singers and those just discovering their voices are encouraged to join in. Registration is \$50; please register by April 16. Leader Joseph Anderson is a founding member of Peregrine Medieval Vocal Ensemble (Artists-in-Residence at St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle), and Associate Director of the Center for Sacred Art. His particular interest is in traditional sacred music as a form of spiritual practice. For information please call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

4/24 Saturday

The 2004 Grace Lutheran Church **SDG (Soli Deo Gloria) Concert Series** continues with a classical concert featuring Michael Nicoletta at 7:30 p.m. The church is located at 6202 S. Tyler St. Tacoma. Admission is free; donation requested. For information please contact Grace Lutheran Church at (253) 472-7105.

4/27 Tuesday

Associated Ministries' Mental Health Chaplaincy hosts **Soul Care**, an open room, participatory worship and prayer service shared with friends who are living with mental illnesses. Now meets every fourth Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, 8211 112th Street SW, Lakewood. For information call (253) 383-5755.

4/29 Thursday

More than 55 restaurants in Pierce and Thurston Counties will participate in **Dining Out for Life South Sound**, donating 25 percent of the day's sales toward AIDS prevention and care in the South Sound. For participating restaurants see www.diningoutforlife.com or call (253) 383-2565.

If you have an upcoming workshop or event for *The CHANNEL* calendar, please submit it by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Items must include a contact name and phone number. Fax information to (253) 383-2672 or email to channel@associatedministries.org. Items will be published as space permits, and may be edited for space and clarity.