

CHANN^CEL

Celebrating 35 years: 1969-2004

Building community that is humane, compassionate and just

A PUBLICATION OF ASSOCIATED MINISTRIES

March 2004

www.associatedministries.org

Vol. 35, No. 3

Responding to Gibson's
"The Passion of the Christ"
... see page 5

Election 2004: Making your voice heard

Agency announces voter registration campaign

By GINA BREUKELMAN & JOSH LYSTRA

Associated Ministries has partnered with Working Assets to register voters for the 2004 election. The agency is urging congregations and human service providers to encourage their members and clients to register. Associated Ministries will offer resource materials including tips on how to get out the vote, local issues in the national election, access to local polls and how to register through the Associated Ministries web site.

Sometimes we tend to forget that ultimately the rulers of our democracy are not the President, senators, congressmen and

other government officials, but rather the voters of this country. Our government is "of the people, by the people, for the people." As active participants in government, the single most powerful instrument we have in creating change and having our voice heard is our vote.

We often view national elections as remote affairs, immune to the influence of an individual vote. But consider this: the 2000 presidential election was decided by a mere 537 votes—the margin of victory in the decisive Florida election. The final margin in New Mexico was a mere 366 votes.

The 2004 presidential race is shaping up to be just as close—and just as critical. With issues like funding for education, social assistance programs and healthcare

in the national spotlight, each and every vote will be vital.

In Pierce County only 69 percent (355,171) of the 510,251 residents are registered to vote. And only 39.94 percent of Pierce County registered voters (141,870) voted in the 2003 elections.

If you want to help determine the future and have your voice be heard, then you must register. And vote.

To register immediately just go to www.associatedministries.org. There you can register to vote or change your registration address. Just fill out the form, print and mail. It's quick and easy. If you are already registered, please forward the link to friends and family. For further information please contact Gina Breukelman at (253)383-3056 ext. 119.

Looking back: 35 years of ecumenical work in Pierce County

by Rev. David T. Alger

During this 35th anniversary year we believe it is important to reflect on the history of the ecumenical movement in Pierce County. The roots of Associated Ministries actually go back to the old Tacoma Council of Churches formed in February of 1936, 68 years ago. In upcoming issues of the CHANN^CEL we will share stories from that rich past. We are beginning with a story from the pages of the *News Tribune* on April 7, 1959.

Jason Lee First of Area Missionaries

A history of churches in the Tacoma area begins in 1838 when Jason Lee, a Methodist missionary, visited Fort Nisqually with the intention of locating a mission school—the first made by white men in the area.

The site selected was about a half-mile to the east. The mission house, 18 x 32 feet, was erected under the direction of W. H. Wilson and the Rev. David Leslie, who arrived in the spring of 1839.

The Rev. John P. Richmond and his wife, America, were placed in charge of the establishment. Wilson was made director of the secular department and Miss Chloe A. Clark was the teacher.

Romance bloomed and Wilson and Miss Clark were married by Dr. Richmond. It was the first wedding of American citizens in the Puget Sound area.

In August of 1853 the Rev. John F. DeVore arrived off Alki Point bound for Olympia. But Steilacoom settlers waylaid him and urged him to come with them.

Continued on page 6

Concert will benefit Mental Health Chaplaincy

Misty River, a nationally known all-female Americana band, will bring their compelling harmonies and blend of folk, bluegrass and country music to Tacoma in a benefit concert for the Mental Health Chaplaincy. The band's four musicians hail from Vancouver and Portland. They have performed sold-out shows in the Pacific Northwest for the past several years and toured across the nation.

Seattle's Canote Brothers will serve as emcees for the benefit. As renowned for their humor as they are for their music, the Canote Brothers perform vintage styles from old-time fiddle and country tunes to swing and original songs. For 13 years they were featured on Seattle's National Public Radio show, "Sandy Bradley's Potluck."

The concert will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 3 at Mason United



Misty River and the Canote Brothers will perform for Mental Health Chaplaincy.

Methodist Church, 2710 N. Madison, Tacoma. Tickets are \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. For information or tickets call the Mental Health Chaplaincy at (253) 383-5755, ext. 305.

The Mental Health Chaplaincy, a program of Associated Ministries,

provides spiritual and community support for people living with mental illness and their families. The Chaplaincy offers pastoral care, educational presentations, advocacy support, and Compeer friendships throughout Pierce County.

City of Destiny Faith & Film Festival at Museum Of Glass

By Rev. Dave Brown

The City of Destiny Faith & Film Festival will begin on March 3 at 7:30 p.m. in the Museum of Glass auditorium with a presentation by Whitworth College professor Dr. Leonard Oakland. Oakland teaches faith and film at the college. He also has firsthand experience of film-making assisting director Ron Shelton on the movie *Bull Durham* and having a cameo role in Shelton's film, *White Men Can't Jump*. Oakland will share the role of movies in his life and the way secular movies address themes of faith. This opening event will be followed by a time of conversation and fellowship at a downtown Tacoma location to be announced.

At 7:00 p.m. on the following four

Wednesdays the festival will feature films that are stories of transformation. Each film will be introduced by a community member and followed by a time for reflection and discussion. The films are: March 10, Sherman Alexie's *Smoke Signals*; March 17, *The Straight Story* starring Richard Farnsworth; March 24, *The Apostle* with Robert Duvall; March 31, *Chocolat*.

Contemporary movies raise many themes central to living a life of faith in our time. The City of Destiny Faith & Film Festival will provide a chance for folks from varied faith backgrounds or congregations to gather in downtown Tacoma to view a quality movie and reflect together

about what the movie might be saying about the lives we share. Please join us for this unique Lenten opportunity.

Tad Monroe of Trinity Presbyterian and Rev. Dave Brown from Westminster Presbyterian have co-chaired the planning team. For more information call Dave at (253)472-4795. This effort is sponsored by several Tacoma Presbyterian congregations, Northwest Leadership Foundation and Whitworth College. A donation will be received for expenses. The Museum of Glass is located at 1901 E. Dock Street, Tacoma. Parking will be available on the street or in the garage under the museum. Posters and bulletin inserts are available from Tad or Dave.

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Associated Ministries' annual membership meeting honors outstanding volunteers

BY GINA BREUKELMAN

Associated Ministries held its Annual Meeting and Membership Luncheon on Wednesday, Feb. 18, at Skyline Presbyterian Church in Tacoma. Approximately 69 people attended the meeting, representing 30 member congregations in Pierce County.

Outgoing President John Williams opened the meeting with a prayer and a reading from John Milton Moore.

"It seems that Moore captures splendidly the spirit of Associated Ministries," Williams said. "This spirit is reflected in the many facets that make up the life of Associated Ministries. It has been a rich privilege to serve as President of the board this past year and to witness first hand the ministries of this organization."

Williams highlighted the accomplishments of the Associated Ministries Board of Directors during 2003, which included beginning the strategic planning process, revising the agency mission statement, and welcoming the Cambodian Buddhist Temple, New Connections and Faith in Action - A Wellspring Project as affiliate members.

Williams also cited the important accomplishments of Associated Ministries' direct service programs during 2003. Among those accomplishments were: Project Interdependence celebrated its 5th anniversary and served 616 families transitioning from welfare to work; over 280 people received care from the Mental Health Chaplaincy; Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful painted 115 homes of low-income seniors and disabled residents; blankets and sleeping bags were collected and distributed to the area's homeless; and the Pierce County Hunger Walk raised over \$210,000 for hunger relief locally and internationally.

"One could go on and on about the ministries of this organization," Williams said. "May we simply say, Associated Ministries and all its ties are seeking to be the Church in a world that is in desperate need of the Church."

During the meeting, programs of Associated Ministries recognized individuals or groups that made a significant impact on the individuals and families the program served during 2003. Each of these volunteers received a glass paperweight made by the Hilltop Artists in Residence at Jason Lee Middle School. Honorees included: Holy Disciples Catholic Church (the Pierce County Hunger Walk), the Exchange Club of Tacoma and Jim Ofelt (Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful), James Collins (Hilltop Action Coalition), and the Gig Harbor Basket Brigade (Project Interdependence Program). Additionally, Associated Ministries honored Bethany Presbyterian Church in Tacoma for its support of the core operations of the agency through stewardship and service.

Business at the meeting included membership approval of the 2004 operating budget and the election and installation of new board members and officers. New Associated Ministries board members include: Rev. Dave Brown from Westminster Presbyterian Church in Tacoma, Mar Corpuz from Holy Disciples Catholic Church in Puyallup, David Hillis from the Northwest Leadership Foundation in Tacoma, Connie Robey from First Christian Church in Sumner and Susan Smith from Fox Island United Church of Christ.

New officers installed for 2004 are: President Julia Price (United Methodist Church at Lakewood), Vice-President Arne Bergland (Spanaway Lutheran Church), Secretary Karen Davey (Immanuel Lutheran Church in Puyallup) and Treasurer Jeff Cunningham (St. Luke's Memorial Episcopal Church in Tacoma).

Lastly, David Alger and President Julia Price recognized outgoing board member Jim Freisheim for his generous service to the ecumenical work of Associated Ministries in Pierce County. Freisheim, of Abundant Life Fellowship in Tacoma, was honored for his dedicated service as a 6-year member of the board of Associated Ministries and for his commitment to the ongoing work of the agency.



Among those honored at Associated Ministries' annual membership meeting were representatives of Bethany Presbyterian Church (above) and the Exchange Club of Tacoma (below). Accepting the award for Bethany Presbyterian Church were (L-R) Bernie Cooper, Margaret Cooper, Linda Gaines and Rev. Brian Heath. Accepting the award for the Exchange Club were (L-R) Dorothy Foster, Chuck Foster, Jim Ofelt and in front, Jan Runbeck.



"This is the church of my dreams; the church of the warm heart, of the open mind, of the adventurous spirit; the church that cares, that heals hurt lives, that comforts old people, that challenges youth' that knows no divisions of culture or class, no frontiers, geographical or social; the church that inquires as well as answers, that looks forward as well as backward; the church of the Master, the church of the people, high as the ideals of Jesus, low as the humblest human; a working church, a worshipping church, a winsome church, a church that interprets the truth in terms of truth, that inspires courage for this life and hope for the life to come; a church of courage, a church of all good people; a church of the living God..."

John Milton Moore, cited in remarks by outgoing board president Rev. John Williams

What will you be doing this summer? It's not too soon to plan

BY SALLIE SHAWL, DIRECTOR, PAINT TACOMA-PIERCE BEAUTIFUL

Yesterday we sent out more than 2000 applications for free house painting to low-income seniors and disabled people in our community. Over the last week, we have taken another 2000+ applications to a variety of agencies and organizations that will distribute them for us (including Meals on Wheels, Safe Streets, TACID, Aging & Long-term Care, etc.)

Now we need the volunteer crews to do the painting.

How about your congregation, your service club, your workplace, your book club or bowling league? Groups that volunteer have two options: they can volunteer as a full crew and adopt a house, or they can volunteer as a partial crew in order to join with a full crew that could use some extra help. We recommend 15-20 volunteers for a full crew.

The homes will be painted in July and

August. Because it generally takes a while for a congregational committee to decide on a project of this sort, now is the time to begin the conversation with folks in your congregation. Likewise for your service club, workplace, and most other groups.

Painting a home generally requires 3-4 work parties, because prior to being painted a home must in most cases be pressure-washed, scraped and primed. Such a project can take two or three people all summer, but when a good-sized group of people show up, it can be done much quicker. When 'many hands make light work,' the project that would have been grueling for two or three people can turn into fun. Fun AND feelings of accomplishment at having significantly helped someone in need.

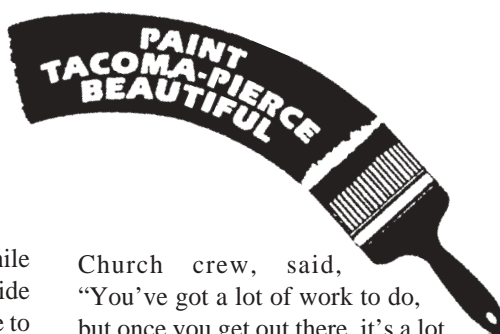
Past volunteers say it best:

Mac Oliver, from last year's Allen AME

Church crew, said, "You've got a lot of work to do, but once you get out there, it's a lot of fun. Whenever you're doing something good, people stop and say they appreciate it. One disabled man stopped and said he wished he could help, and he commended us on volunteering. Another man on a bicycle stopped and took our picture!"

Norma Zink, of the RSM McGladrey Crew, said, "I think the best story is that not only are we making his house much more attractive, but we've brought life back into his life...He's appreciating the company as much as he's appreciating the work!"

For more information and a registration form, visit www.paintbeautiful.org or call Sallie Shawl at (253) 383-3056, ext 105.



Rally and march to mark anniversary of Iraq invasion

BY SALLIE SHAWL

Saturday, March 20 is the first anniversary of the (continuing) US war on and invasion of Iraq. United for Peace of Pierce County (UFPPC) is sponsoring a rally and march that day titled, "The World Still Says NO to War."

Last year on Feb. 15 under the banner of "The World Says NO to War," more than 10 million people around the planet demonstrated their opposition to a unilateral military strike in Iraq.

The same groups that organized those worldwide demonstrations are doing it again, because they feel now more than ever that the war was ill-conceived.

This year's event begins at McKinley Park, just across I-5 from the Tacoma Dome. The rally will begin at 1:00 p.m. with music and a few speakers, followed by a walk to the Federal Building. This will be a family-friendly event.

For further information, call (253) 238-2292 or visit www.ufppc.org.

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 spotlights St. Mark's Lutheran Church by the Narrows in Tacoma. To suggest a candidate for a Stewards in the Spotlight profile, please contact *The CHANNEL* at (253) 383-3056, ext. 120.



Church Name: Saint Mark's Lutheran Church by The Narrows

Location: 6730 N 17th St.; Tacoma, 98406 • **Phone:** (253) 752-4966

Web site: www.smlutheran.org • **Email:** jruud@smlutheran.org

Pastors:

Jan Ruud has served at St. Mark's since August 2001. Before coming to St. Mark's, he served as a pastor and teacher in Cameroon, Madagascar, Taiwan, France, and here in the Pacific Northwest. In addition to his role as lead pastor at St. Mark's, he is also serving as Dean of the Tacoma Narrows Conference in this synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Bernt Hillesland has served at St. Mark's since February 2002. Before coming to St. Mark's in 2002, he was a seminarian at Yale Divinity School and the Lutheran seminary in Berkeley. Before that he served as a Jesuit Volunteer at Nativity House here in Tacoma. Areas of focus include Tacoma community and ecumenical relations, social ministry, small groups and young adults – and his twin one-year-old boys, Joseph and Samuel.

Otto Tollefson, who serves part-time in pastoral visitation and Christian education with adults, served eighteen years with the Lutheran Church in Brazil. His former parishes include First Lutheran in Poulsbo, and Christ the Servant Lutheran in Lacey. He is active in International Lutheran Marriage Encounter.

Staff: Ingelaurie Lisher, Director of Youth and Family Ministry; Danielle LeMieux, Director of Music Ministry; Kathy Merchant, Church Secretary; Lindsay O'Neal, Worship Team Director, Piano Player, and Vocalist; Ann Bettger, Preschool Director; Phyllis Bachman, Organist; Judy Whitley, Sunday School Director; Tom Geary, Treasurer; Ann Hruza, Bookkeeper; Tammy Droubay, Custodian; John and Kari Fricke, missionaries in Namibia.

Worship: Sunday morning with Holy Communion at all services. 8:30 a.m.: Blended service with music and liturgy representing a variety of cultures and traditions; 9:45 a.m.: Contemporary service with music and liturgy led by worship team band; 11:00 a.m.: Traditional service with music and liturgy led by adult choir. Special music at worship includes three bell choirs, two children's choirs, and a youth music and drama group. A youth dance ensemble, led by students from PLU, also offers liturgical dance on special occasions. Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.: candlelit contemplative worship. (During Lent, Compline set to music by composer Richard Nance, sung in a cappella style by a male quartet - an opportunity to listen, to contemplate, to just be. After Lent, simple songs, prayer, and silences in the tradition of Taizé, featuring readings from faithful women and men throughout history.

Number of members: 912

History / Creed / Mission: We're celebrating our 50th anniversary as "a people and a place for God's grace." People who come to St. Mark's find it to be a welcoming place. In the midst of the overwhelming demands and anxieties, broken relationships and injustices, even religion can burden us with rules and questions of "who's in and who's out," "who's right and who's wrong." We offer space to begin again and live and breathe together in God - to celebrate and live our lives from God's freeing promises.

What special programs does your congregation offer? In addition to other programs mentioned, we offer Christian education, Bible study, an extensive music ministry, dramatic opportunities, Vacation Bible School, St. Mark's Preschool, a mom's group, mission trips to Mexico and Yakima, Global Mission in Mexico and Namibia, programs for young adults, Care Team (including Stephen Ministers, wonderful concerts, and a special program for newcomers called "Faith Journey."

With what other organizations is your congregation involved? We have strong relationships with Peace Community Center, Habitat for Humanity, the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Lutheran Community Services and Kairos Prison Ministry. We offer a Bible study at Nativity House and worship at a local retirement community. We also work with Paint Tacoma Pierce Beautiful, Bread for the World, Global Health Ministries, Lutheran World Relief, and the Division for Global Mission of our Lutheran denomination. We worship annually with Grace Baptist Church and Skyline Presbyterian Church. With St. Luke's Episcopal Church, we'll be hosting a viewing of the recent Dietrich Bonhoeffer documentary, with discussion led by Bonhoeffer scholar Renate Wind.

How does your faith call you to action? As God lives for us, we find ourselves called wherever we are to live for others. Recently we've struggled for discernment together in forums around such topics as war, sexuality, globalism, the crisis of care, incarceration - and in focus groups for educators, parents, health care professionals and retirees.

What is your biggest hope for the world/ community? The people of St. Mark's see the world from diverse perspectives – our common hope is for God's promised peace.

What is your message to the Associated Ministries community? We treasure the role you play in forging relationships within the various faith communities of our town, your efforts to organize ecumenical worship and prayer, and the important task of helping us all work together to meet the needs of the whole person.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



We are entering the season of Lent as the *CHANNEL* is going to press. This is a very special time of the year for the Christian

churches. It is a time of reflection on the central issues of our faith. Lent commences with Ash Wednesday. Many of us will participate in the solemn rituals held at congregations throughout our county. But the fact of the matter is that a great deal of attention around this country is going to be focused this Ash Wednesday on the opening of Mel Gibson's movie, "The Passion of the Christ." None of us at Associated Ministries have had the opportunity to attend any pre-screenings of the film. We have basically seen and read the same materials as you.

In this *CHANNEL* are two pieces that should be helpful to local congregations responding to the film's release. The first is information from a study guide prepared by the National Council of Churches. We would hope that there will be many groups coming together during this Lenten season to study and reflect upon this movie, the Passion narratives and the Resurrection. The second piece is by Rabbi Michael Lerner, editor of the respected *Tikkun Magazine*. Rabbi Lerner's reflections as a member of the Jewish tradition offer a helpful context for the Christian community to discuss the film.

I remember when I was living in Guatemala I was astounded at the numbers of people who turned out for the Good Friday processions. The churches were full. The people of Guatemala fully identified with the suffering Christ. When Easter Sunday arrived, many of the faithful had departed. The journey was not completed for me at Good Friday, but for the Guatemalans and most particularly those of Mayan descent, it was. For them there was and is tremendous power in knowing that Jesus Christ suffered as they suffer.

But there is more to the story. It is a story that we of the Christian faith are asked, indeed required, to participate in. There are the three years of Christ's life that lead up to Holy Week, and there is the Sunday that follows the cross. Strangely enough as I have been thinking about all the hoopla surrounding the release of "The Passion of the Christ," I have been thinking of "Joan of Arcadia," a delightful television series that began this season. It is a drama about a family of two parents and three children facing atypical situations, not the least of which is the conversations that Joan, the teenage daughter, has with God. The Holy One appears in many different human forms, as an old man, a cafeteria worker, a mail carrier and even a small child. What is wonderful about this show is how it gets at the message that was central to the life of Christ. Lerner refers to this as our "most humane and caring instinct." I think of it as the divine call to participate in a life of love and justice. Joan, in all of her human frailty, participates in this life and demonstrates just how powerful simple acts of kindness and honesty can be.

For me, as a Christian, I must journey through the life and death of Christ to the everlasting reality of the resurrection. It's the whole picture that is important. It's the whole story that we must experience to understand the significance of such wonderful words as, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son...", and "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Take my advice. If you go to see "The Passion of the Christ," take time to spend a few weeks with "Joan of Arcadia."* Heck, even if you skip the movie, turn on the TV on Friday night and see Joan.

Grace and peace,

Rev. David T. Alger
Executive Director, Associated Ministries

*The Presbyterian Church (USA) has produced a study guide for Joan of Arcadia. For more information, see www.pcusa.org.



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.

CHANNEL

Channel is published ten times each year (monthly except June and August) by:

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Judith Jones - Editor

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.

Give your child a great start with these Early Childhood Educational Options

HEAD START, EARLY HEAD START & ECEAP PROGRAMS IN PIERCE COUNTY

Serving over 2200 families at over 50 sites in Pierce County

What are Head Start and ECEAP?

Head Start and ECEAP are programs that offer a comprehensive, FREE pre-school experience to eligible children. In addition to the educational services each child receives, programs also provide hot meals and snacks and comprehensive health screenings. In many areas transportation is also provided. The programs also offer many other FREE family support services to enrolled families including information and referrals to community resources, opportunities for parent groups and classes, employment programs and job support. Early Head Start programs for pregnant women and their children, birth to 3, are located at select sites in Pierce County.

Who is Eligible?

Families receiving TANF grants and children in foster care are eligible, as are many parents with limited incomes who are working or in school. The majority of children enrolled in Head Start and ECEAP are 4 years old by August 31; however, younger children can be enrolled on a space-available basis. Early Head Start serves children from birth to 3 years of age.

How to Apply?

Programs welcome applications year-round and most programs start enrolling for the upcoming year in the early spring. You can phone the Head Start, Early Head Start or ECEAP center nearest you for more information.

Pierce County Head Start and ECEAP programs

Bates Technical College (in Fife, Puyallup & Tacoma)	(E) 253-680-7324† (E) 253-840-3257	First Place for Children Parkland	(H) 253-531-2009†	Pierce County Community Services(H/E)	253-798-7379 or 1-800-562-0336 x 7379
Bethel School District	(H) 253-683-6927 (E) 253-683-5852 (E) 253-683-5250 (E) 253-683-8950 (E) 253-538-3513	Puyallup Tacoma Franklin Pierce School District	(H) 253-841-4115† (H) 253-572-0905† (H) 253-535-8825	(serving Buckley, Carbonado, Dieringer, Eatonville, Orting, Puyallup, Sumner-Bonney Lake, University Place)	
Chief Leschi School	(E) 253-445-6000, x3050 or 3182	Metropolitan Development Council (serving Tacoma)	(E) 253-593-6641†	Spanaway Hugs, Tugs, Luvs, Inc.	(H) 253-846-7206†
Clover Park School District	(E) 253-583-5155 (H) 253-583-5154	Midland Kiddie Korral Peninsula School District	(H) 253-531-1902† (E) 253-265-8839	Steilacoom School District	(E) 253-983-2565
Clover Park Tech. College	(H) 253-589-5721† Or 253-589-5531			Sunrise Early Education Center (serving Tacoma)	(E) 253-383-7741†
				Tacoma School District	(E) 253-571-3217
				Tacoma Community College	(E) 253-566-5180†

Early Head Start programs for pregnant women and their children, Birth to 3, are located at these sites in Pierce County. For information about Early Head Start call 253-926-6815, ext. 5000.

Bethel School District		Peninsula School District	
Elk Plain	253-846-9278	Henderson Bay*	253-858-5582
Challenger*	253-683-6808	Tacoma School District	
Clover Park School District		Oakland*	253-571-2511
Oakwood	253-583-5345	*Teen parents only	
Tillicum	253-583-5376		



400 SW 152nd St., Burien, WA 98166
Information: 253-596-6917

Tacoma Public Schools HEAD START PROGRAM

HEAD START is a free preschool program for low income families living within the Tacoma School District boundaries.

Head Start offers:

- ◆ Early Childhood Education
- ◆ Parent Involvement
- ◆ Parent Training & Education
- ◆ Health & Social Services
- ◆ Services for children with special needs



HEAD START is a program that provides high-quality preschool learning experiences and also offers nutritional, medical, dental and family services to children and their families.

We will be enrolling for the 2004-2005 School year for children born between September 1, 1999 - March 31, 2001.

For registration information call: 571-1948

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- Parent Education / Support
 - Specialized Instruction
 - Occupational Therapy / Speech / Language Consultation
 - Developmental Evaluation.

For information about TLC please call (253) 565-4887.

SAVE THE DATE

Associated Ministries will mark 35th Anniversary at annual Spring Celebration Dinner and Auction

The Spring Celebration Dinner and Auction is a wonderful evening of great food, fun and friends. The evening is also an opportunity to honor amazing people in our community while raising money for Associated Ministries and its many programs that reach out to low-income families. The 2004 Spring Celebration, marking Associated Ministries' 35th year of service to the communities of Pierce County, is guaranteed to offer some special surprises.

The Spring Celebration will be held on April 17 at St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 7112 South 12th Street in Tacoma. The evening will begin with a social at 6:30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7:15 p.m. The evening will be filled with silent and live auction opportunities, along with time to honor the 2004 Ecumenical Service Award recipient. Tickets are \$40 per person (\$20 tax-deductible).

The seating is limited and this event has sold out for the past three years, so reservations are required. Auction items have included exotic vacations, airline tickets, unique experiences, gourmet dinners and restaurants, and lovely gift baskets. If you would like to help by donating an auction item or by volunteering, your help is gratefully appreciated. If you are interested in attending the Spring Celebration, please call Gina Breukelman at (253) 383-3056, x119.

Bates Technical College Cooperative Preschools

Serving families with children 2-5 years of age

An education program for parents and children:

“Parents and children learning together”

19 sites located in
Bounty Lake, Burien,
Federal Way, Gig Harbor,
Key Peninsula, Puyallup,
Fife/Milton, University Place,
Tacoma

For information call
Bates Technical College
680-7500

Metropolitan Development Council
Early Childhood Center
2021 S 19th St. ~ Tacoma, WA 98418

Free ECEAP Preschool
(transportation provided for qualifying 3 1/2 and 4 year olds)

NOW ENROLLING FOR:

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- Infant Care
- Toddler Care
- Preschool Care
- School-Age Care

593-6641

A Gospel of Love and Hope: Responding to Mel Gibson's "Passion"

BY RABBI MICHAEL LERNER
EDITOR, TIKKUN MAGAZINE

Mel Gibson unlocked the secret of why Americans have never confronted anti-Semitism in the way that we did with the other great systems of hatred (racism, sexism, homophobia) when he told a national TV audience on February 16 that "the Jews' real complaint isn't with my film (The Passion) but with the Gospels." Few Christians today know the history of anti-Semitism and the way that the Passion stories were central to rekindling hatred of Jews from generation to generation. Many are embracing Gibson's movie and not understanding why Jews seem to be so threatened. Gibson knows that for many Americans it is simply unimaginable to question the Gospels.

Those who wanted to purge hatred of Jews from the collective unconscious of Western societies after the defeat of Nazism in 1945 faced an impossible dilemma. The dominant religious tradition of the West was based on a set of four accounts of Jesus, each of which to some extent is riddled with anger at or even hatred of the Jews. The Gospels were written, many historians tell us, some fifty years after Jesus' death at a time when early Christians (most of whom considered themselves still Jewish) were engaged in a fierce competition with a newly emerging rabbinic Judaism to win the hearts and minds of their fellow Jews (some of whom were becoming Jewish Christians, retaining their Jewish practice but adding to it a belief in Jesus as messiah) and the minds of the disaffected masses of the Roman empire (some Christians already having given up on converting Jews and beginning to think that the real audience for their outreach should be the wider world of the Roman Empire).

The Gospels sought to play down the antagonism that Jews of Jesus' time felt toward Rome, so they displaced the anger at his crucifixion instead onto those Jews who remembered Jesus as an inspiring and revolutionary teacher but not much more (not a messiah, not God). The result: an account that portrays Jews as willfully calling on the Romans to kill Jesus, rejecting the supposed compassion of the Romans, and thereby earning the hatred of humanity for the Jews' supposed collective responsibility for this act of deicide. Conversely, Jesus' Judaism, his viewing the world through the frame of his Jewish spiritual practice and Torah-based thinking, is played-down or at times completely obscured, so that the message of these professional "convert the non-Jews" thinkers would not be undermined by a covert message (still advocated by some of the Jewish Christians at the time of the writing of the Gospel) that to be a Christian one should also become a Jew.

When Christianity gained state power in Rome in the 4th century of the common era, it quickly began to pass legislation restricting Jewish rights. And as Christianity conquered Europe in the ensuing centuries, spreading its story that the Jews were responsible for killing Jesus, the Jews became the primary demeaned other of Europe for the next 1700 years. Jews came to fear Easter—because the retelling of the Crucifixion story often led to mob attacks on defenseless Jews who were blamed for having caused the suffering of Jesus.

In the aftermath of WWII, many principled Christians recognized that the Holocaust was possible in part because Hitler was able to draw upon the cultural legacy of hatred toward Jews nurtured by this kind of Christian teaching. The Catholic

Church and some Protestant denominations have sought to distance themselves from this long history of demeaning the Jews. But although anti-Semitism became unfashionable, only a few Christians were willing to take responsibility for the devastating impact of the hateful representations of Jews that suffused the Gospels and culminated in its historically doubtful account of the Roman imperialists, who ruled with an iron fist and crucified thousands of Jews, bowing to the will of a hateful Jewish mob determined to kill Jesus.

Even when the Catholic Church officially banned teaching hatred of Jews, it never ordered its dioceses to teach about the role the church itself had played in creating and sustaining those negative stereotypes.

Liberals and progressives in the late 20th century did an impressive job of confronting and educating the public about the literary, intellectual, and cultural sources of racism, sexism and homophobia. But they tended to shy away from anti-Semitism, both because of the mistaken assumption that it was no longer a real problem (after all, Jews were economically and politically flourishing in post-WWII America) and because such a confrontation would have forced a challenge to the dominant Western religion at

the core of its most dramatic story: the crucifixion.

Nevertheless, ever since the 1960s there have been thousands of sensitive Christians, who, to their credit, have created a Christian spiritual renewal movement

which rejects the teaching of hatred in the Gospel by allegorizing the story and giving greater focus to the Resurrection than to the Crucifixion. Returning to Jesus' Jewish roots, and refocusing attention on the bulk of the Gospel, with its stories portraying a Jewish Jesus who builds on and elaborates the ancient Torah commandments to "love your neighbor as yourself" and "love the stranger," the Christian renewalists tended to see the two-thousand-year history of Christian anti-Semitism as a distortion of the deeper truth of the Gospel. Easter became a holiday to celebrate the rebirth of an ancient Jewish hope—that the forces of hatred and cruelty manifested in the Crucifixion could be overcome by a triumph of the forces of love, generosity and kindness whose Resurrection and ultimate victory were celebrated at Easter.

Yet that renewal movement is now being effectively challenged by a Christian fundamentalist movement with deep ties to right-wing politics. In post 9/11 America, many people have given up on the hopeful vision of social change movements. They have turned to a deep pessimism in which the idea of a world based on love, cooperation and generosity to the Other is alternately ridiculed and disdained as unrealistic and dangerous. A cynical realism holds sway in the media and mainstream American culture and political institutions, placing American progressive and visionary thinkers on the defensive. No wonder, then, that many Christians are attracted to interpretations of their religious tradition which emphasize the danger and cruelty in the world while sidelining aspects of the Gospel which teach compassion and solidarity with the oppressed.

I've written about this struggle in another context (see my book *Jewish Renewal: A Path to Healing and Transformation*). Inside the Jewish tradition there

... continued on page 6



A Reflection Guide to the Movie "The Passion of the Christ"

On Ash Wednesday, 2004, the movie "The Passion of the Christ" opens to rave reviews and controversy. Many Christian and Jewish leaders are concerned that this movie might set back decades of Jewish-Christian relations.

Even though we have not yet seen the movie, we are aware that dramatic depictions of the passion story have a tragic history. Inflamed by such depictions, some Christians have labeled Jews "Christ-killers," which, in turn, has sometimes led to acts of violence against Jews. The Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches USA, both concerned about the possible rise in anti-semitism and seeking to foster genuine and constructive dialogue with Jews, is providing this reflection guide to serve as a launching pad for reflection among Christians.

If you decide to watch this movie we hope you will consider carefully how it depicts Judaism and how it will impact our relationship with our Jewish brothers and sisters. To that end we offer the following background and questions for your individual and group reflection.

BACKGROUND

1. The story powerfully impacts our faith.

This story is deeply meaningful to us. An opportunity to enter the pathos of the last 12 hours of our Lord's life on earth can be a powerful experience of faith. It can also have a significant evangelistic impact.

2. Jesus was born a Jew and lived as a Jew to the end.

Although Christians seldom recognize its significance, Jesus was a Jew. In his criticisms of his contemporary Judaism, he stood squarely in the tradition of the Hebrew prophets, calling his own people and religious institutions to their noblest essence. One of the hallmarks of his ministry was proclaiming the good news of God's love to the poor, the sick, tax collectors and sinners. This special calling to love the "other," to which he calls us as well (for instance, in the commandment "Love your neighbor as yourself"), Jesus received from his Jewish tradition.

3. Who killed Jesus?

The Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, seeing him as a threat to the peace of Jerusalem, condemned Jesus to be killed by Roman soldiers under his authority. Some among the Jewish priestly establishment called for Jesus' death, though the vast majority of Jews did not. At the same time his disciples abandoned him.

No one today will pick a fight with a Christian (descending from the disciples) because they abandoned him. The Roman Empire does not exist anymore. But sometimes Jews who are our neighbors today are recipients of violence because they are seen as descendants of those who were against Jesus.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP REFLECTIONS

1. Read at least two Gospel accounts of the Passion.

Be attentive to your own emotional response to the story. What responses is each Biblical author seeking to evoke in the reader?

2. Read a reputable introduction or commentary to the Passion stories to locate the religious and political context of the Gospel writers.

What do you learn from these readings about:

- How the early Christians related to Jewish communities?
- How the Gospel writers portray the relation of Jews to Jesus' suffering and death?
- 3. Consider Jesus' agonized petition from the cross, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do?" Did he mean....
 - Roman authorities?
 - Jewish religious leaders?
 - Disciples who fled?
 - All humanity?

How does your answer impact your relationship with those who are "other"?

4. Discuss in your group how the movie "The Passion" portrays Jews.

What would Jesus, who called us to love our neighbor as ourselves, say about the movie's portrayal?

Many Christian and Jewish leaders are concerned that decades of constructive Jewish-Christian relations will suffer a setback as a result of this movie. Do you agree?

5. Consider concrete and constructive steps you might take in your church and community to build or strengthen relationships with Jewish people and institutions.

RESOURCES

A list of resources, including links to many internet-based materials, can be found at: <http://www.nccusa.org>. Scroll down and click 'Interfaith Relations' on the left frame. You may also go directly to the resources by entering the following link in your web browser: <http://www.nccusa.org/interfaith/ifrhome.html>

For the National Council of Churches Interfaith Relations Commission:
Rev. Dr. Shanta Premawardhana, Associate General Secretary for Interfaith Relations, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 880, New York, NY 10115 USA

Please let us know your questions, comments and suggestions:
shanta@nccusa.org.

[Ed. Note: The CHANNEL also invites your comments, observations, reflections and reviews of the film, "The Passion of the Christ." Send comments to channel@associatedministries.org.]

continued from page 5 ... Responding to "The Passion"

has always been a struggle between those who have heard God's voice as the voice of accumulated pain and cruelty of the universe passed on from generation to generation, and those who have heard God's voice as a voice of love, compassion, generosity and transcendence. Even in our Torah there are moments when the people hearing God's voice are hearing it through the frame of their own accumulated pain and hence hear a voice that talks a language of power, domination and cruelty, and other moments when the people hearing God's voice are hearing it through the frame of their own capacity to respond to God's revelation of love and generosity. And so it is through history that we find in virtually every religious tradition the people who distort the message of love of their own traditions and instead portray God as the voice legitimating domination, power over others, cruelty and violence. The George W's, the Osama Bin Ladins, the Ariel Sharons are found in every tradition. And they don't even need the frame of religion (some people like to blame these distortions—but the truth is that the Nazis, Stalinists, and Vietnam-war mongers of the US did not need religion to act out the legacy of pain and cruelty in the world). There is no religious tradition, no ideology of liberation (including Marxism, psychoanalysis, feminism, etc.) that cannot be appropriated by a distorted consciousness and transformed into its opposite, that is, into a

mechanism or a justificatory ideology to dominate and act out of cruelty.

So let's understand that the attempt to revive Christian enthusiasm around the part of the story that is focused on cruelty and pain is not only (or even primarily) a threat to the Jews, but rather a threat to all those decent, loving, and generous Christians who have found in the Jesus story a foundation for their most humane and caring instincts. It is these Christians who are under assault by Mel Gibson's movie, and by the particular form of Christian evangelicalism that it is meant to stimulate. Yet, in a deeper way, the Gibson movie is likely to stimulate a broader assault on all of us who seek to build a world based on caring and love, cooperation and generosity, by giving strength to the part within each of us that despairs, the voice within each of us that tells us that cruelty is what is "really how the other is, really how the world is," the voice inside each of us that feels that there is no point in struggling to transform the world because it is too hopeless and too dominated by craziness (and that is the point of the Jews in the Gospel calling for Jesus to be killed, because it is

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because it is here now, we can make it happen right away by the way that we live our lives). And it is this voice of Jesus that The Passion movie seeks to marginalize or make invisible.

saying "even the Jews, his own people" do this, because evil is dominant in the world and always will be, and the only way out is to believe in Jesus and find salvation in another world, and despair of changing this one). So, part of the struggle is to reclaim and reaffirm the Jewish Jesus, the Jesus who retains hope for building love right here, the Jesus who unabashedly proclaims that the Kingdom of Heaven has arrived (which is to say, that it is here on earth, that the world right now can be based on love and kindness, and that we don't have to wait for some future time or "the end of days" as described by Isaiah, be-

cause it is here now, we can make it happen right away by the way that we live our lives). And it is this voice of Jesus that The Passion movie seeks to marginalize or make invisible.

I hope Christians will take the lead in organizing people of all faiths to leaflet every public showing of Gibson's film with a message that runs counter to the anger at Jews that this film is likely to produce in at least some viewers. I hope that every morally sensitive Christian minister and priest will use the weeks ahead to preach about the history of Christian anti-

Semitism until most parishioners can understand why Jews would feel worried about the popularizing of the Gospel story. But I hope also that the discussion isn't reduced to that—that Christians take on the underlying challenge and affirm their commitment to the Jewish Jesus, the Jesus that preaches that a world of love is possible right now, right here, through our actions.

The best hope to avoid a new surge of anti-Semitism will not come only from decoding the anti-Semitic themes in Mel Gibson's film, or the Gospel on which it was based, but rather by re-crediting the ancient Jewish vision of Jesus—that in place of the Old Bottom Line of money and power, a New Bottom Line of Love and Generosity is possible. People of all faiths need to shape a political and social movement that reaffirms the most generous, peace-oriented, social justice-committed, and loving truths of the spiritual heritage of the human race. It is only this resurrection of hope that can save us from a new wave of global hatred.

Rabbi Michael Lerner is editor of *Tikkun*, national chair of the interfaith peace and justice organization *The Tikkun Community* (www.tikkun.org) and rabbi of *Beyt Tikkun* synagogue in San Francisco. Reprinted with permission from *TikkunMail*.

[Ed. Note: Opinions expressed by CHANNEL guest columnists do not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of Associated Ministries.]

Looking Back ... continued from page 1

So, on August 28, 1853, services were conducted in Steilacoom. A congregation was organized and construction of a Methodist Episcopal Church began.

The building was finished in 1854—the first church erected north of the Columbia River. It still stands in Steilacoom today, known now as Oberlin Congregational Community Church.

DeVore rode "the circuit" through the area, preaching in Old Tacoma as well.

The first Methodist Church was built in Tacoma in 1878 at what is now South 7th and Broadway under the leadership of the Rev. Martin Judy, who was also riding the Tacoma-Steilacoom-Nisqually circuit.

Mr. DeVore, the original pioneer, later moved to Tacoma in 1881, then on to Olympia and Salem with his pioneering Methodist Episcopal denomination.

The first church in Tacoma was old St. Peter's, the Episcopal Church which still stands in Old Tacoma. It was built in the summer of 1873 and services were held in it in August.

Facts on the first vicar of St. Peter's are incomplete. But he was believed to have been a Rev. Atkinson, who came here in January of 1874.

In New Tacoma, the first Episcopal priest was the Rev. Alfred M. Abel who held services in a brick building at what is now 9th and Pacific on May 12, 1878.

The parish was known as St. Luke's and later St. Luke's Church was built in 1883 in the North End. Portions of that church still stand.

Roman Catholic history is largely the story of the colorful Rev. Peter Francis Hylebos, who came to the Cowlitz Mission in 1870 from his native Belgium.

Father Hylebos made frequent trips to Tacoma and among the Puyallup Indians. He organized the original St. Leo's Church, a 24 by 40 foot building at the site of where the present First Presbyterian Church now stands.

The first Mass was said on January

1, 1880. A second St. Leo's was built at South 9th and Market in 1883.

The First Presbyterian Church in New Tacoma was built in 1881 at 11th and Broadway. Another colorful clergyman, the Rev. W. D. McFarland was the pastor.

During the Chinese controversy of 1885, Mr. McFarland stood fast against the abridgement of the Oriental's rights in his sermons—and he wasn't always popular.

Several prominent members of his congregation walked out on him and for weeks he wore a brace of revolvers on his hips everywhere he went.

Father Hylebos, on the other had, became a member of the radical groups seeking to rid the area of the Chinese and attended the innermost council meetings—urging caution and actually talking the bitter radicals out of their beliefs.

The Chinese had flooded the Puget Sound labor market after completing railroad work, specifically on the Canadian Pacific lines. The settlers on the Puget Sound, where they migrated, were bitter because the Chinese laborers worked for less.

On the day of the ouster by the radical groups, Father Hylebos made himself a deputy sheriff and stationed himself in the middle of the Chinese homes and met the mob, which had nearly done in Rev. McFarland, head on.

Not a torch was lifted to fire the Chinese homes.

The first Baptist Church was organized here in February of 1883, the same year a German Methodist Church was established.

A Swedish Lutheran Church was built here in 1889 and a Christian Church in 1887. Temple Beth Israel was organized in 1892.

Today? There are about 350 churches in the Greater Tacoma area. And it all began here more than 120 years ago. - Tacoma News Tribune, 1959



Do you too have some interesting information on the history of the faith communities in Pierce County? We invite you to share with us copies of your stories and documents.

MARCH IS WOMEN'S HEALTH MONTH

The Surgeon General and other studies report that:

- Women have twice the risk of developing lung cancer from using tobacco that men have.
- Lung cancer has overtaken breast cancer as the leading cause of death among women.
- Women who smoke during pregnancy risk health complications, premature birth, low-birth-weight infants, stillbirth, and infant mortality.

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For more information on smoking and women call:
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IN BRIEF

Volunteers needed for Shiba Helpline

SHIBA (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) has an exciting volunteer opportunity. If you are interested in health insurance issues, want to learn new skills and enjoy helping people, please consider becoming a trained Shiba volunteer. For further information please contact Cindy Evans at United Way of Pierce County, (253) 572-4357 ext 2.

Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS

The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS is March 7-13, 2004. This year will mark Allen A.M.E. Church's 15th year recognizing this national effort to stop the transmission of HIV/AIDS and provide compassion for people affected by the disease. Highlighted events during the week include: Senator Rosa Franklin will address the issue of HIV/AIDS at Allen AME's 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday, March 7 and Evangelist Charlzetta Nixon will lead a two-day revival on "Hope

and Healing" beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 8. For more information about the Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS or to be involved, contact Lynda Thomas at (253) 460-1552 or Sonya Arnold at (253) 383-2565.

Public invited to Lenten labyrinth walk

A labyrinth walk will be held Saturday, April 3 at St. Luke's Memorial Episcopal Church. The labyrinth will be open from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in the Bell Parish Hall as part of a Lenten Quiet Day, sponsored by the Daughters of the King at St. Luke's. The church will also be open for quiet prayer and meditation. The labyrinth for this event, purchased by St. Luke's in memory of Kate Monroe, is a replica of the pattern installed during the 13th century in the floor of Chartres Cathedral. This event is free and everyone is welcome. St. Luke's Memorial Episcopal Church is located at 3615 N. Gove St., Tacoma. For directions, call the church office at (253) 759-3534 or see www.stlukestacoma.org.

Training course for parish nurses

Pacific Lutheran University Continuing Nursing Education will offer the Basic Preparation Course for Parish Nurses on Tuesday - Thursday, March 23-25, and Thursday - Friday, April 22-23 from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. at PLU. Parish nursing offers opportunities to care for people in a unique and significant way. The parish nurse roles of health promotion, risk reduction and disease prevention focus on the whole person, holding the spiritual dimensions to be central to the practice. This course is an experience-based program that consists of presentations, small group experiences, interactive work and play, meditation and creative worship. It is designed to help the parish nurse learn to model health as well as to promote health and healing. Pacific Lutheran University in cooperation with Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries of Portland, Ore. offers the nationally endorsed curriculum from the International Parish Nurse Resource Center. For more information about the course call (253) 535-7683, or see www.plu.edu/~ccnl/courses/parish2.html.

Deadline approaches for Ecumenical Service Award nominations

The board of directors of Associated Ministries is seeking nominations for the 2004 Ecumenical Service Awards, which recognize individuals, groups, congregations or agencies who have significantly improved the quality of life in Pierce County. Closing date for nominations is March 10. Mail nominations to Maureen Fife at 1224 South I St., Tacoma, WA 98405, fax to (253) 383-2672 or email to maureenf@associatedministries.org. For further information, please call (253) 383-3056 ext. 107.

Blood bank announces new operating hours

To make blood donations more convenient for its donors, Cascade Regional Blood Services will begin new hours of operation at all three locations on March 1. The new hours are as follows: Tacoma Main Office, 220 South I St., (253) 383-2553: M, T, W 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Th-F 7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Sat 7:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; Puyallup Office, 205 15th Ave., (253) 841-4236: M, T, W, F 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Th 10:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m., Sat 7:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; Federal Way Office, 33505 13th Pls, (253) 945-7974: T, F 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Th 10:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m., Sat 7:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. For more information please call toll free (877)-24BLOOD or see the website at www.cascadebloodcenters.org.

Spring returns to Mother Earth Farm

The public is invited to come and join the Emergency Food Network's Mother Earth Farm in celebrating the beginning of spring on Saturday, April 3 from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Teams of drivers and plow horses from Hames & Tugs Draft Horse Club 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. To get to Mother Earth Farm, follow Hwy 410 E to the second Sumner exit (Valley Ave/Orting Hwy 162), turn right (towards Orting) at the light and continue 1.9 miles past Alderton and Spooner Farms. Mother Earth Farm will be on the right. For more information please call (253) 584-1040, or see www.efoodnet.org.

Marriage Preparation/Exploration Workshop

A Marriage Preparation/Exploration Workshop will be offered by Pastor Joanna Robinson and her husband Tim Neuberger on Saturday, April 17 at United Lutheran Church in Tacoma. The Marriage Preparation/Exploration Workshop was designed to complement pastors' premarital counseling for couples. This full-day workshop will cover topics such as communication, conflict resolution, couple spirituality, families of origin, sexuality, caring for each other, and marital growth and development—all within a framework of Christian faith. Using a variety of teaching tools, film clips, exercises, and discussion, the presenters help couples explore their relationships in creative ways, offering simple tools to help them grow and flourish. The workshop is appropriate for people from any denominational background. For further information or a registration form contact Joanna at (253) 566-2829, ext. #2 or see www.lutheranssw.org.

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Needs & Wants

POSITION AVAILABLE: BOOKKEEPER — FISH Food Banks seeks experienced bookkeeper/financial manager for part-time position, flexible hours. Team-centered workplace supports the mission of providing food to needy families in Pierce County. Fax resume to (253) 383-0964 or email to fishfoodbanks@harbornet.com.

POSITION AVAILABLE: PRESCHOOL TEACHER — The Little Church on the Prairie Christian Preschool is presently hiring for the three year old class which meets Tuesday and Thursday a.m. If interested in more details, please contact Mrs. Alice Amblad


at (253) 584-3440 or the church office at (253) 588-6631.

POSITION AVAILABLE: YOUTH DIRECTOR — Grace Baptist Church is seeking a part-time Youth Director. Salary and hours depending on experience. For information contact Phil Strother at (253) 752-6643.


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.

Nonprofits After Hours
....first Thursday of every month
Kickoff event Thursday, March 4, 2004, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
The Vault Restaurant, 1025 Pacific Avenue, Downtown Tacoma
What's it all about? Making connections!
Who's invited? EVERYONE!
Guest speaker: Kathleen Merryman, TNT Columnist
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 **FAIR HOUSING IS THE LAW!**
 The only way to stop discrimination is to report it.
 If you suspect unfair housing practices, contact HUD or your local Fair Housing Center.

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

Pierce County Happenings - March 2004

3/4 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.

3/4-7 Thursday-Sunday

In celebration of the congregation's 25th anniversary, Creator Lutheran Church, 3106 Sumner Tapps Hwy E, Sumner, will present the musical play "**Fiddler on the Roof.**" Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Sunday, with additional afternoon performances at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$10; all proceeds will go toward construction of a Habitat for Humanity house. For more information call (253) 862-7700.

3/5-6 Friday-Saturday

Mediation workshops for clergy and lay leaders will be held at Pacific Lutheran University. The workshops will be led by trained coach and facilitator Rev. Timothy Wolbrecht of Mediation Training Institute International (MTII). Workshops will include mediation skills for enhancing personal and professional relationships as well as conflict resolution for congregations and organizations. For information contact the Church Relations office at (253) 535-7423 or crel@plu.edu.

3/5 Friday

St. James Cathedral, Seattle, will host "**In Faith, Women Shape the Future,**" a candlelight prayer service featuring the music of Taizé, at 6:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Archdiocesan Office of the Delegate for Ecumenism and Interfaith, in observance of the Church Women United World Day of Prayer 2004. For information please contact Sister Joyce Cox, BVM, (206) 382-4829.

3/5 Friday

Christ Episcopal Church, 310 North K Street, Tacoma, will host a first Friday **Taizé** service at 7:00 p.m. For more information call (253) 383-1569.

3/6-7 Saturday-Sunday

Associated Ministries will present **CommUniversity 2004** at the University of Puget Sound. Classes will be held from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Saturday and from 2:00-4:30 p.m. Sunday. For information contact (253) 383-3056, ext. 120 or channel@associatedministries.org.

3/7 Sunday

The Altrusa Club of So. Pierce County will hold a **spaghetti dinner** from 12:00-5:00 p.m. at Marymount, 324 152nd St E., Tacoma. The event is a fundraiser for Skateboard Park at Sprinker Field. Admission: adults \$5, children \$2.50. For information call (253) 537-3615.

3/7 Sunday

At 1:00 p.m. at Hillside Community Church, 2508 S. 39th Street, Tacoma, Terese Jackson will speak on the women incarcerated at Purdy who are caring for their babies. For more information, please call (253) 230-8948.

3/7 Sunday

Craig Cramer, Professor of Organ at the University of Notre Dame, will be featured in the **Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series** at 3:00 p.m. at Pacific Lutheran University's Lagerquist Hall. Tickets are \$15 general admission or \$10 for senior citizens and students. For information, visit www.plu.edu/~music.

3/7 Sunday

Seattle Jazz Vespers will feature Bluestreet Jazz Voices 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 information call (206) 325-6051 or see www.seattlefirstbaptist.org.

3/7 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.

3/8 Monday

The Greater Lakes Mental Healthcare **Mental Health Mondays** series will present "What Makes a Marriage Happy and Long-Lasting?" at 6:30 p.m. at the Lakewood Library, 6300 Wildaire Road, Lakewood. Facilitator Mark McNeil, MA, LMHC, will help participants identify the key strategies that successful couples use for improving communication and sustaining intimacy. The program is free of charge and reservations are not necessary. For information call (253) 581-7020.

3/12-14 Friday-Sunday

The YWCA RAGS Guild will present the 10th annual RAGS Wearable Art Sale at Mercedes-Benz of Tacoma, 4001 East 20th in Fife, from 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Sunday. Proceeds benefit the domestic violence and intervention programs of the YWCA of Pierce County. For information call (253) 272-4181, ext. 352 or see www.ywcapiercecounty.org.

3/12 Friday

The Tacoma South Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints will present an Easter program, "**God So Loved The World**" at 7:00 p.m. at the Stake Center, 2455 South 79th, Tacoma. The program will feature special music and choral group; there will also be a display of children's art work. Admission is free; refreshments will be served.

3/13 Saturday

The Interfaith Council of Washington will present the third 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 "Buddhism," presented by Gen Kelsang Jangsem of the Vajralama Buddhist Center, 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.

3/13 Saturday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer a one-day program, **Entering the Heart of Lent**, from 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. This Lenten day of retreat will focus on the Ash Wednesday invitation to "Return to me with your whole heart" and on other biblical texts which invite a transformation of the heart of stone to a heart of flesh. Facilitator Christine Valters Paintner, PhD in Christian Spirituality, teaches theology and religious studies at Seattle University. Registration is \$50; please register by Feb. 5. For information call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

3/14 Sunday

Hillside Community Church, 2508 S. 39th Street, Tacoma, will host a talk by Karin Tautfest at 1:00 p.m. Ms. Tautfest, from the YWCA Women's Shelter, will speak on the cycle of domestic abuse. For more information, please call (253) 230-8948.

3/15 Monday

Washington Citizen Action will host a community forum, **Medicare and the Prescription Drug Benefit**, from 10:00 a.m.-

12:00 p.m. at King Oscar Convention Center, 8820 South Hosmer, Tacoma. This will be an opportunity to communicate with congressional representatives about the recently passed prescription drug legislation. For more information contact Elisa Dry at (206) 389-0050 ext. 107 or elisadry_wca@yahoo.com.

3/15 Monday

Deadline for April CHANNEL

3/16-18 Tuesday-Thursday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer a midweek retreat, **Prayer Tools: Practice of Recollection**, from 1:00 p.m. Tuesday - 2:00 p.m. Thursday. Teresa of Avila recommends the practice of active and passive recollection. Participants will learn how Teresa herself taught recollection and share their own practice of recollection. A spiritual director will be available for those who wish. Registration is \$150, \$185 with spiritual direction; please register by Mar. 9. For information call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

3/19 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.

3/19-21 Friday-Sunday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer a weekend retreat, **The Wilderness Speaks: Lenten Journey**, from 7:30 p.m. Friday - 1:30 p.m. Sunday. Jesus invites us into the wilderness for greater solitude. Take time to deepen your spiritual journey in silence during Lent. The opening session will involve prayer, relaxation and preparation. The retreat will close with group prayer and sharing. A spiritual director will be available for those who wish. Registration is \$130, \$165 with spiritual direction; please register by Mar. 12. For information or registration call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

3/20 Saturday

United for Peace of Pierce County (UFPPC) will sponsor "**The World Still Says NO to War,**" a rally and march marking the first anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, beginning at 1:00 p.m. at McKinley Park (McKinley and South 32nd St). Participants will walk to the Federal Building on Pacific Avenue. For more information, call (253) 238-2292 or visit www.ufppc.org.

3/20 Saturday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer a one-day workshop, **Hospitality and the Prophetic**, from 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Early Desert Ascetics and Monastics lived in times as challenging as our own. Their spirituality and wisdom were molded in the fire of conflict and pain, in the midst of global upheaval, famine and disease. Participants will look at the wisdom and example of these prophetic mentors in light of our contemporary call and concerns. Registration is \$50; please register by Mar. 12. For information call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

3/21 Sunday

Hillside Community Church, 2508 S. 39th Street, Tacoma, will host a talk by Cynthia Iall at 1:00 p.m. Ms. Iall will speak on the exoneration of Chief Leschi. For more information, please call (253) 230-8948.

3/21 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.

3/23 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 St. SW, Lakewood. For information call (253) 383-5755.

3/26 Friday

All are welcome to join the **Dances of Universal Peace** from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at St. Leo Parish, 710 South 13th 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.

3/26-28 Friday-Sunday

The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College Street NE, Lacey, will offer a silent weekend retreat, **Lectio: Praying with Scripture**, from 7:30 p.m. Friday - 1:30 p.m. Sunday. Deepen your experience of praying with Scripture during this silent retreat centered around *Lectio Divina* (sacred reading). There will be five sessions: introduction to *lectio*, reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. *Lectio* is a foundational piece in Benedictine spirituality. This retreat is appropriate both for those exploring this prayer form and for those who know it well. Registration is \$145; please register by Mar. 19. For information or registration call (360) 438-2595 or email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org.

3/27 Saturday

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Tacoma, 1115 South 56th Street, Tacoma will host an **Introduction to Nonviolent Communication** from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The workshop for adults and youth 16 and older is free of charge. Childcare will be available; however, please register your child by March 21 by calling (253) 761-2896.

3/27-28 Saturday-Sunday

Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, 1311 South I St, Tacoma, will host the 10th anniversary celebration of the **Family of Faith Gospel Singers**, at 6:00 p.m. Saturday and 3:30 p.m. Sunday. Musical guests will include the Sons of Thunder, the Electrifying Mighty Warriors, Latter Rain, Evangelist Charlene "Lil Mama" Lacey, the Tabernacle Men's Chorus, Heavenly Scent, and more.

3/28 Sunday

Hillside Community Church, 2508 S. 39th Street, Tacoma, will host a talk by psychologist Gene Harvey at 1:00 p.m. on the calming effects of music used in hospice care. For more information, please call (253) 230-8948.

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