



Peace & Justice Journalism - Media Responsibility

To stretch people's thinking beyond the either-or way most media frame discussions, Fig Tree media seek to create a culture of peace, justice, stewardship and respect that empowers people, as individuals and in congregations, nonprofits and communities of the region. The hope we share inspires action and helps people see issues in new ways. opening them to explore nonviolent solutions. We both model credible communication through our print, online and digital media, and we speak at congregations and groups to teach how media can present solid content.

We have gained the respect of local to national journalists and faith leaders.

Through our monthly ecumenical/ interfaith newspaper, website, video and directory of congregations and community resources, we connect the faith and nonprofit communities in the Inland Northwest building dialogue, awareness and understanding.

Because media fill our lives, each person in media, faiths and society must know how to use media responsibly. Part of our role in editorial content, modeling and through teaching groups is media literacy. Many media still dwell on sensational coverage of sex, conflict, violence and what's broken, to foster addictive consumption of entertaining news. They believe that's the way to keep readers, viewers or listeners coming back hungry, hoping for substantive information. Imagine what a different society we would have if media taught people to believe they can make a difference by being involved in improving

their relationships, communities, society, nation and world! Peace journalism covers multiple perspectives in depth, rather than reducing issues to two polarized perspectives.

To enhance values of our nation, society and faiths, we need models of media that help us overcome divisions and isolation; that help us respect diverse opinions and people; that treat us as thinkers not consumers; that urge us to identify and resolve social problems and injustices, and that help us overcome gender, racial and economic bias and violence.

Access to news is no longer limited to mass media. New media are sources of information, providing inspiration so people become involved in making society and the world more just, peaceful and healthy. It is possible to address sensitive subjects like religion and justice, and to move people from indifference and hostility to respect, caring and action.

Media can reinforce human rights, dignity, diversity and respect through building understanding the context of people's lives and their perspectives beneath surface differences, beliefs and opinions. The Fig Tree breaks through either/or thinking and fears that lead to intolerance, exploitation, and hopelessness. It helps fill the communications gap left when mass media downplay crucial parts of our lives.

The Fig Tree began in 1984 as the communication ministry of the Spokane Council of Ecumenical Ministries to cover religion news in the region. Most ecumenical publications focus on public relations, so The Fig Tree is unique.

In 2001, it became an independent nonprofit organization, providing regional religion and nonprofit news. Articles about people acting on their faith inspires more people in churches to walk their faith.

We print 8,000 copies which reach an estimated 22,000 readers for the newspaper, print 10,000 directories and have about 67,000 hits on our website each month.

Our editor brings expertise as a professional journalist and sensitivity from local-to-global ecumenical experience. She coordinates work of a contract and volunteer team of more than 50, which we continue to expand. We offer regular training for writers, service learning for students and the community connections that build on our editorial approach.

We model media responsibility 1) by the example of our approach to news and features in our newspaper, website and other media; 2) by partnering with the Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media and the World Association of Christian Communicators for resources, 3) in our editorial commentaries, 4) by training writers for our media and journalism students at local universities; 5) through our rural-urban connections project addressing the intersection of issues affecting people's lives and faith, and 6) in our Faith in Action Dialogue that brings speakers to discuss how media shape lives, communities, congregations and our world. Our commitment to media literacy expands our capacity and our staff to reach more people, and provide more coverage for a wider region through our mix of print, online and digital media options.

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Fig Tree stories bear fruit, build relationships, model coverage



When we look at the evolution of journalism, the advocacy journalism The Fig Tree does is perhaps the most authentic type of journalism, because it gets to the heart of who we are as a people and a culture, to the heart of what news is and what reality is.
– *Steve Blewett, journalism professor emeritus at Eastern Washington University*

The Fig Tree reminds us that life is about relationships. It has stepped up to the plate and been a model of how to be in relationship. There is power in grassroots stories, The Fig Tree's trademark. Church and faith have power when we put our beliefs into action for the sake of truth and justice.
– *Bob Bartlett - teaching diversity at Eastern Washington University*



The Fig Tree beckons us to be part of a larger community. At times, religious life can feel lonely. Reading The Fig Tree reminds me I am not alone. I am part of a broader community working together to heal the world. There are risks to being alone—out of touch with the world, thinking there is only one point of view.
– *Adie Goldberg, restoring medical system in Rwanda*

The Fig Tree promotes understanding and helps us become more familiar with one another and more tolerant. We are not just hearers of the word, but doers of the word. There is complexity in the world in these times, and it helps to read about other people who are finding their way through the complexities of life.
– *Mary Ann McCurdy, community activist*



I learned from a horrible experience of prejudice that when we create awareness and understanding, hate and fear go away. I love how The Fig Tree takes a proactive role trying to create awareness and understanding.
– *Shahrokh Nikfar, Persian Hour KYRS*

Stories in The Fig Tree inspire us to reach out to each other and connect. They inspire us to be proactive and intentional, and to live the peace and justice ideals we have in our daily lives. I thank The Fig Tree for all the stories of hope and action that you bring to us.
– *Kim Harmson of Kizuri, a fair trade store*



When I think of The Fig Tree, I think of the woman who came up with a dream to start a newspaper about faith people in action. As the first Psalm says, a fig tree is like a tree planted by the rivers of waters that brings forth its fruits in the season. Its leaves shall not wither and whatever the fig tree does shall prosper. We need to make a difference until making a difference doesn't make a difference any more.
– *The Rev. Happy Watkins, New Hope Baptist*



The Fig Tree captures and shares sacred stories that build relationships. It allows the community to communicate with itself and to promote social justice.
– *Raymond Reyes - vice president of mission for intercultural relations at Gonzaga University*

The Fig Tree has been about peace journalism long before the term existed. Since its small beginning, the dream of opening doors, windows and tiny spaces, allowing communication, understanding and compassion has been its business.
– *Deidre Jacobson, social worker Miryam's House*



To expand coverage of the breadth and complexity of the faith community, the Spokesman-Review reprints one Fig Tree feature a month. It is a relevant voice for the community.
– *Rick Bonino, Spokesman-Review features editor*

The Fig Tree is part of God's plan to restore peace in communities so streams of different theologies, perspectives and ideologies come together into a growing tide that translates into transformation.
– *Rodney McAuley, parent involvement specialist Spokane Public Schools*



The Fig Tree empowers people, giving credibility to and building understanding of efforts to make a difference. It helps us network with people working on similar issues.
– *Twa-le Abrahamson, youth communications coordinator for SHAWL*

It is crucial that we surprise people with what faith can actually do. Fig Tree stories are about you and me. They transmit what it is to belong to a community that inclines to the common good. We will rarely know the fruits of the stories. Inspiration can lie dormant many years before sparking new growth.
– *Scott Cooper, Parish Social Ministries of Catholic Charities*

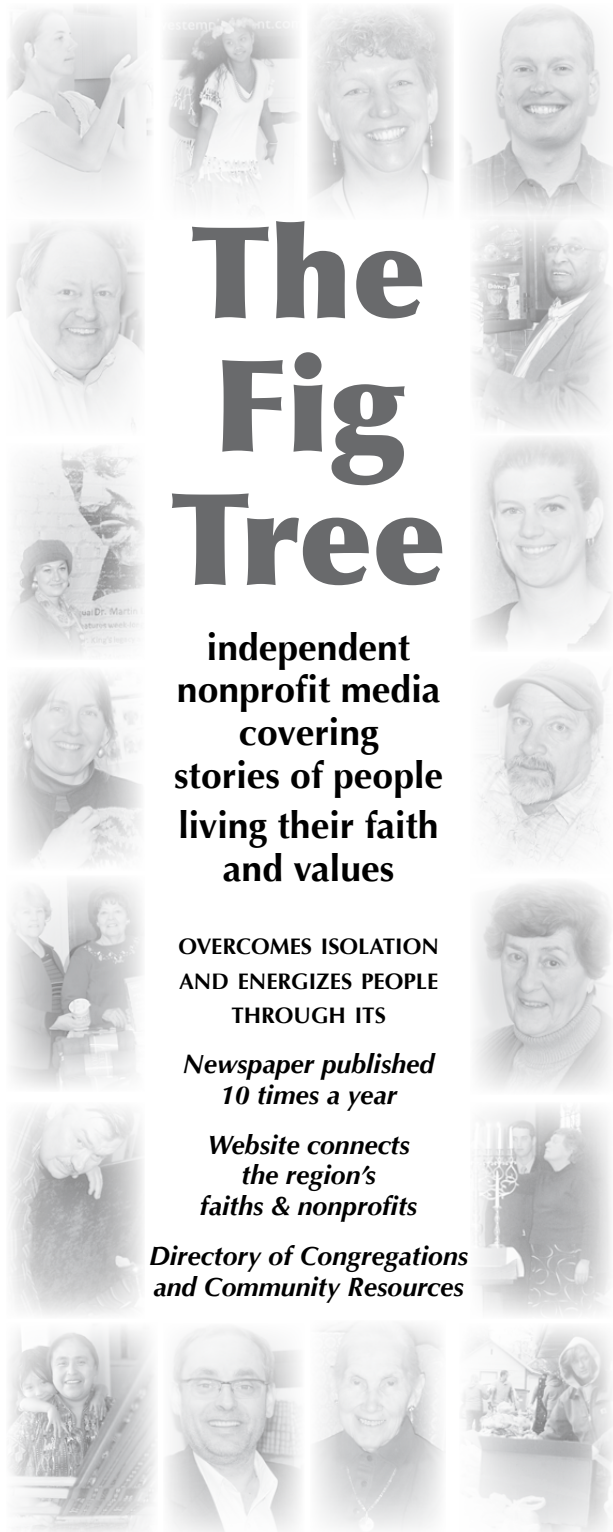


Sometimes reading news, and especially gathering it, can be paralyzing, because solutions aren't always present. World problems feel so enormous. I feel too little, too weak, too insignificant to make a change. That's where The Fig Tree can make a big difference. It connects people, shares ideas, stirs compassion, fosters respect, opens dialogue and seeks solutions.
– *Virginia de Leon, freelance writer for The Fig Tree*



The Fig Tree's impact on the community and on me has been both constant and changing. It's constant in its commitment to tell stories of ordinary people who, out of their faith, do extraordinary things to create a more holy and just world for all.
– *Mary Rathert, director of the Women's Hearth*





The Fig Tree

independent nonprofit media covering stories of people living their faith and values

OVERCOMES ISOLATION AND ENERGIZES PEOPLE THROUGH ITS

Newspaper published 10 times a year

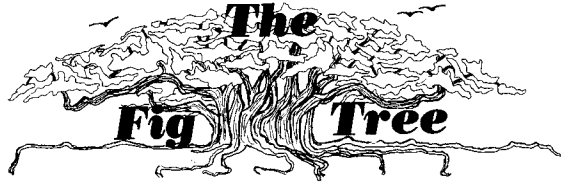
Website connects the region's faiths & nonprofits

Directory of Congregations and Community Resources

- **Connects diverse people** to encourage respect and listening
- **Shares stories** of people who put their values and faith into action
- **Explores issues** of justice, ethics and faith to find common ground
- **Offers reflection** and dialogue to foster understanding
- **Networks groups** and individuals to pool ideas and resources
- **Inspires people** to join in common action locally to globally

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**Like Public Broadcasting,
The Fig Tree is**
available free in print and online
and its work

**IS SUPPORTED
BY DONATIONS OF SPONSORS:**

**individuals
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regional churches
national churches
ecumenical organizations
interfaith organizations
area universities
nonprofits**

& BY ADVERTISERS/UNDERWRITERS

The newspaper reaches
22,000 readers through 8,000 copies
distributed by mail and in bulk
on first Wednesdays
of September through June

Print Page Specifications

8 to 16 tabloid-size pages
5 columns - 16 inches deep
column width 1.85 inches wide
(2 col=3.85", 3 col=5.85", 4 col=7.85")

Ad Rates

\$14 per column inch
three issues - \$12.50/col. inch
six issues - \$11.50/col. inch
10 issues - \$10/col. inch

Online Ad Rate

\$20 per 1,000 visits to web page

**Editorial Copy deadline - 3rd Thursdays
Ad deadline - 3rd Fridays**

**The Fig Tree • 1323 S. Perry St. • Spokane, WA 99202
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