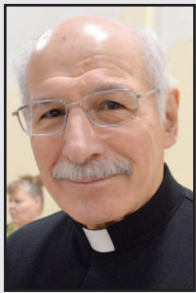


WHEN FAITH AND LABOR MEET

For 15 years, the workers' rights group Portland Jobs with Justice has organized an annual "Faith Labor breakfast" to strengthen ties between church activists and labor activists. They're often the same individuals. Jobs with Justice's Faith and Labor Committee is one of the reasons that local clergy are frequently seen on Portland-area picket lines and union rallies. At this year's breakfast, 140 participants gathered around 22 tables at a dining hall in St. Andrews Catholic Church to share fellowship and trade stories. The Labor Press brought a camera, a notepad and a question for believers and faith leaders: "What does your faith have to say about justice for working people?"

"A laborer deserves his wages. . . . The worker has only his hands, his mind and his body to give, to make enough to take care for their family and themselves. And if that is not respected then you've taken away their dignity. . . ."



In *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII talks about labor justice. It continued with Pope John Paul and our current pope. So we have a strong tradition of supporting labor and workers in the Catholic Church."

— Father Jack Mosbrucher, now retired, served as a parish priest at St. Charles and St. Therese parishes in Portland



"I'm a person who really believes that following Jesus means both being in touch with what heaven does as well as what heaven does here on earth. The faith that we're called to is a faith that engages the marginalized, the poor."

— Howard Kenyon, a member of Mosaic evangelical church, spent 20 years as a Pentecostal missionary in China, and now is chief finance and operations officer at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

"In what we Christians call the Old Testament, the prophets — Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, in particular — have a lot to say about work and about the sanctity of labor and economic justice. Isaiah talks about wages that have been withheld crying out to heaven against those who withhold them. . . . The apostle Paul said that the laborer is worthy of their wages. In other words, if you work, you deserve the proceeds of your work."

— David Wheeler is the senior pastor of First Baptist Church in downtown Portland



State of Washington legislative update

Feb. 24 was the cutoff deadline for bills in the Washington Legislature to pass out of committees in their houses of origin. That means that hundreds of bills — good and bad — are now considered "dead" and can only become undead via extraordinary procedural means. The bills that have survived now have until March 8 to pass a floor vote in their house of origin.

Following is the status of some working family bills that the Washington State Labor Council has taken a position on:

DEAD (Opposed by the WSLC)
RIGHT-TO-WORK — SB 5692 (prime sponsor Sen. Michael Baumgartner; co-sponsor Sen. John Braun) making Washington a so-called "right-to-work" state, dramatically weakening union rights and bargaining power. At its public hearing, more than 1,100 people signed in as opposing the bill, while just one supported it. The bill died in Labor committee (chaired by the sponsor) without a vote.

DEAD (Supported by the WSLC)
WAGE THEFT: MISCLASSIFICATION — HB 1300 (Rep. Marcus Riccelli) discouraging deliberate misclassification of workers as independent contractors. Passed Labor committee but died in Appropriations.

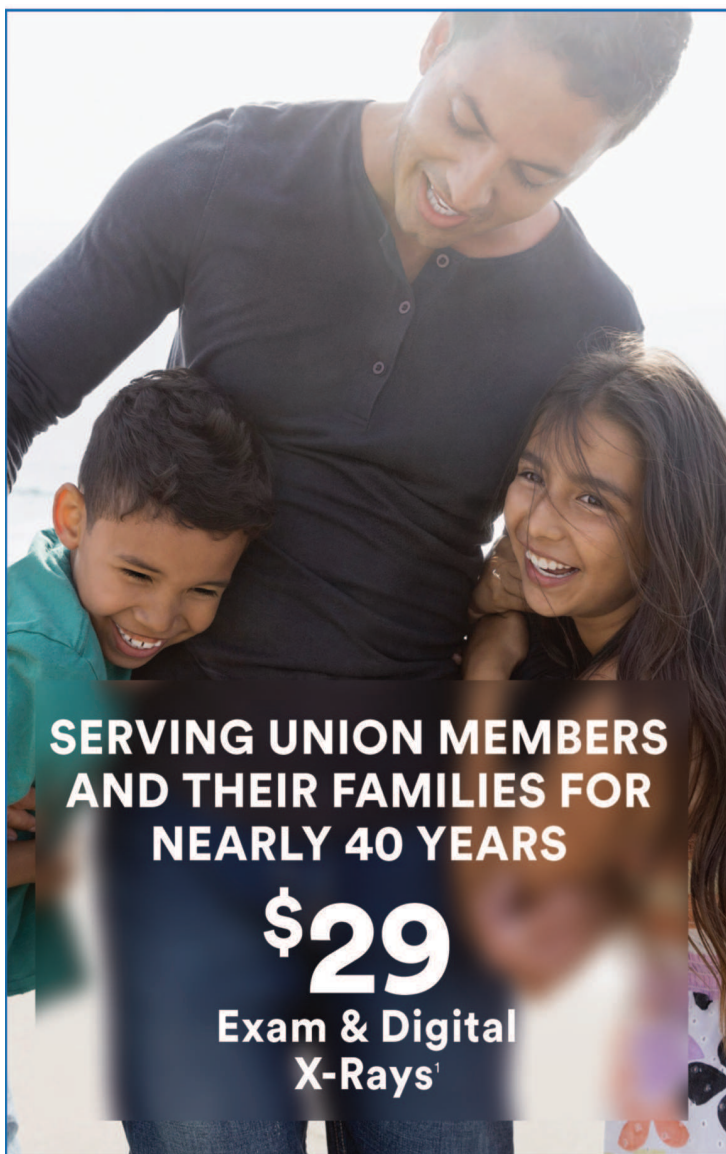
WAGE THEFT: RETALIATION — HB 1301 (Rep. Cindy Ryu) discouraging employers from retaliating against workers who report wage theft. Passed Labor committee, but died in Appropriations.

ALIVE (Supported by the WSLC)
APPRENTICESHIP UTILIZATION — HB 1849 (prime sponsor: Rep. Mike Sells) strengthening compliance with existing apprenticeship utilization standards. Passed Capital Budget committee, now in Rules.

COLLEGE FACULTY PAY — HB 1237 (Rep. Mike Sells) allowing full-scope collective bargaining so colleges can use local funds in negotiating faculty/staff wages. Passed Labor and Appropriations committees, now in Rules.

ELECTRICAL LAW ENFORCEMENT — SHB 1952 (Rep. Brian Blake) improving enforcement of state electrical laws. Passed Labor committee, now in Rules.

WORKERS' COMP: HANFORD — SHB 1723 (Rep. Larry Halder) would remove barriers that prevent seriously ill Hanford workers from getting workers' compensation benefits. Passed Labor committee, now in Rules.



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