# RELIGION

## Church Connects Religion to Activism

Pastor leads sermon on maintaining spirit in protest

(AP)—Rev. Margaret Marcuson stepped up to the pulpit and politely introduced herself. Then she screamed.

"How," she yelled into the crowd. 'How can you be an activist without wearing yourself out, without burning yourself out?"

Marcuson became silent, and for a moment it seemed as though she had nothing more to say. People sltting in the pews became still. A baby in the eighth row stopped sucking his thumb and looked up at his mom, confused.

Marcuson finally spoke, using a slow, deliberate voice: "The lessons I'm teaching you today can extend to all areas of life, so I want you to pay attention."

Marcuson spoke at the Ainsworth United Church of Christ, whose congregation members last fall voted against a preemptive strike against Iraq.

Since then, congregation members have helped organize anti-war protests, marched in them, orchestrated vigils and letter-writing cam-

Portland, OR 97219

FAX: (503) 227-8757

Pastor and First

Lady Roy G. Maxie

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Church-goers seemed to need little encouragement.

Congregation members say they see activism as part of their spiritual

"Religion is conscience," said Ashley Cooper, a member of the congregation. "It gives you the moral basis to respond to war."

Cooper, who flew helicopters in combat missions during the Vietnam War, said he knew what war

"You have to have a good reason to fight, and I'm not convinced we have one," he said.

The Ainsworth church is sym-The purpose of Marcuson's ser-bolic of a tradition of activism that a mix of hymns and gospels, which mon was to offer spiritual advice on has been part of Portland's person- were sung in both Spanish and maintaining this pace of activism. ality for decades. President Bush's

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Michael E. Harper, Sr.

Cooper rubs his eyes while praying at Ainsworth United

Church of Christ in northeast Portland on Sunday. (AP photo)

father, former President George Bush, called the city "Little Beirut" because of the hostile reception he got here from protesters.

The Ainsworth church wears its activism like a badge of honor.

On the entrance walls are posters about poverty, prejudice, disease and war

The church began about 20 years ago when two congregations, one white the other black, merged. The congregation's now roughly one third white, one third black and on third Hispanic, said president Linda Jaramillo said

The Sunday service began with

After the music, Marcuson began her sermon. Her theme was "How do you become a healthy activist?"

Marcuson said activists need clarity - they must "know their convictions and know whom they

People can gain this clarity through prayer, by listening to themselves, by "being the change you wish to see.

She urged members to gain this clarity by praying every day this week.

Marcuson said activists must connect to others, especially those with whom they disagree.

"You can't love humanity and not love people.'

She urged the congregation to get to know people they disagree with and offer to help them out.

Finally, she said activists must continue working. When they get tired, they should take the long

"Yes, things look dark today, but God's perspective is eternal,"

"Children laugh 200 times a day," she said. "Guess how many times a day adults laugh?"

"Four," someone called out. Marcuson chuckled. "No, but sometimes it seems like that. It's more like 15. ... So why don't we make it more like 200?

She said activists who keep their sense of humor also keep their drive.

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### **A Biblical** Perspective on **Health and Healing**

BY DR. RICK LEE

FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The greatest medical book ever written is the Bible - God's basic instructions before leaving earth to his children (Matt. 18:13,

Much of the sickness and disease I see on a daily basis sad- of healing. Do you have the dens and frustrates me because most of it is preventable.

This sad fact has prompted me to write.

The problem, as I see it began early in the 19th century when the church separated itself from the health work and message. There is a connecting like between the "Fruits of the Spirit" and God's "Health Laws" and its the characteristic of temperance! See Galatians 5:22,23 and Genesis 2:16,17 KJV.

When it comes to health, disease and sickness, does God still heal? If you think not, then consider "For I am the Lord, I change not ... " Malachi 3:6. Also, Paul the same yesterday, today, and for ever" (He-

us "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it ...."

God has given us many examples of His mighty healing powers, including II Kings 20:1commissioned His disciples, to among other things, heal the sick, Matt. 10:8, Luke 9:1-6, 10:9. Are you a disciple of Christ? Or was Jesus partial and gave those special powers to the disciples of His day only?

has He changed His methods of eryone of us. healing. It is the church that has changed. Today the church is adequately preaching the message of salvation but has relinquished the task of meeting the state and federal agencies, in- rleeohwc@juno.com

cluding health care. This I believe is a serious mistake as the world's way is directly opposed to God's way (James 4:4).

In the weeks to come, I hope to draw a line of distinction between man's science (1 Tim 6:20) and God's true ways and means perspective of your value and



Next to your Salvation, health is the greatest blessing reminds us "Jesus Christ God has for you.

brews 13:8). Finally, Ecc. 3:14 tells self worth to God? Consider these three very important facts. These facts are of such vital importance to God that He does them Himself, eliminating the possibility for error and mis-

First, the book of Genesis tells 7, and John 9:6-7. Christ even us, "God formed mankind from the dust of the ground" (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:7). Secondly, He wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger, not once but twice (Exodus 31:18, 34:1). Finally, God, Himself in the person of Jesus Christ came to this No, God has not changed, nor earth to redeem each and ev-

> Next to your Salvation, health is the greatest blessing God has for you (III John 2).

Dr. Rick Lee is a practicing traditional naturopath in Portneeds of humanity to county, land. You can contact him at

### **Muslims Voice Anti-War Sentiments**

the first day of war, several of America, the Islamic Association America's largest Islamic organizations outlined their view of the war on Iraq. The joint statement was signed by The Muslim American Society, Islamic Society of North

In a joint statement released on America, the Islamic Circle of North of Palestine and the United Association for Studies and Research:

"We receive with sadness the news of the invasion of Iraq. We reiterate our position, and that of the great majority of religious leaders and the international community that this invasion is not justified and is not in the interest of the United States and world peace, security and the rule of law.

"We ask the American administration, the US Congress, and all peace-loving people to do all they can to end this violence and minimize human suffering.

"We express our grave concern about the expected fallout of this invasion, especially the loss of human life on all sides, the destruction of the infrastructure of Iraq and chaos and instability in the coun-

"We exhort all our fellow Americans, regardless of their position, to express their views vigorously but peacefully and lawfully.

"We call on law enforcement authorities to take all possible measures to prevent and discourage hate crimes and hate speech and to protect people's First Amendment right to dissent."

For more information on the Muslim American Society, call 703-998-6525 or visit www.masnet.org.

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