

# PRESS RELEASE

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2 photos attached (see below)



## “Share the Love – Be The Foundation”

*Westside United Church of Christ Partnership Celebrates A New Chapter in Local Family’s Life*

**Hillsboro, OR** (March 2009) - Even with a few snow flakes falling from the sky, 75 members of local United Church of Christ (UCC) Congregations made their way to Aloha on a recent Saturday to show their support for with Joel Lopez and his children.

Members of the Westside United Church of Christ Partnership (which includes Bethel Congregational UCC, Cedar Hills UCC, First Congregational Church - UCC, and Lake Oswego UCC), have spent a year raising money to help build a home in Willamette West Habitat for Humanity’s newest neighborhood: Vance Place, on SW 160th and Farmington Road.

The hole for the foundation has been dug, and the cement truck will be arriving shortly, but first Church members wanted to get together to celebrate their accomplishments, share their enthusiasm, and meet the family who will be living in the home they build. They picked February 14th – Valentine’s Day – for their “Share the Love, Be the Foundation” event.

The program began with an Invocation and Benediction by Pastor David Randall-Bodman from Bethel UCC. “We have raised a little over \$31,000 so far,” said Bob Leitner of Bethel UCC, who serves as coordinator for the UCC/Habitat partnership, “which pays for the foundation and the first floor, so let’s show Joel our commitment to building his second story with a show of hands.” With that 75 people hopped down into the hole where the foundation will go, stood shoulder-to-shoulder, raised their arms and symbolically formed the walls of the second floor. The group will need to raise an additional \$19,000 for materials, and show up in person to actually build the home.

Stephen Galvan, Director of ISING Community Choir, lead the group in “Blessed Be The Ties That Binds\*.” ISING did three benefit concerts, raising nearly \$5,000 for the project.

Joel must do his part as well. He and his family have put in 500 hours of sweat equity building other Habitat homes in Washington County and now he gets to help build his own. By December, Joel and his two young children will be able to celebrate Christmas in their own home.

**Photo Attached:**

**DSC06565 - Photo of group raising hands**

**\*DSC06557 - LtoR: Eusebio Vega Arroyo & Rosa Vega Cruz, holding Iker Lopez’s hand (they are a current Habitat family mentoring Joel); Joel Lopez, holding Chelsea Lopez, and Jennifer DeVoe from Cedar Hills UCC.**

### **About Willamette West Habitat for Humanity**

Willamette West Habitat for Humanity is dedicated to generating homeownership and benefiting our community by building simple, decent, affordable housing with an emphasis on building neighborhoods. Since 1988, we have build 51 homes in Washington County, and look to complete five more in 2009. Habitat works in partnership with low-income families, volunteers, donors, and organizations to receive donated materials, volunteer labor and generous financial gifts. Qualifying family’s receive a zero-percent interest rate and monthly payments structured to their income. Mortgage payments go into a fund which is then recycled back in to the community to build additional houses. For more information, visit us at [wwhfh.org](http://wwhfh.org)

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