

Sonoma Valley Interfaith Ministerial Association

Website: sonomavalleyinterfaithma.org Email: sonomavalleyinterfaithma@gmail.com

Wednesday, August 28, 2019

First Congregational Church of Sonoma

Present: Steve Finley, Donna Thomas, Jan Reynolds, Jim Thomas, Manette Fairmont, Peadar Dalton, Father Sudhakar, Larry Frakes, Curran Reichert.

Guest: Priscilla Call Essert, Vintage House

Welcome and Call to Order - Steve opens, *Tikkun Olam* often translated as “repair”, doing something with the world that will fix and/or make it better. When someone is struggling within themselves it is often good to get out of ones self and help someone else. Repairing the world helps us repair ourselves. Curran shares how she implements this with cancer patients. Getting someone to go out and focus on helping others takes their mind off their own struggles and helps them feel better.

New member welcome to Jan Reynolds, interim pastor at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church. She was previously on the Marin Interfaith Council and happy to be joining us. She will be with St. Andrew until they choose a permanent pastor which could be as long as two years.

Checking In With Non Profits -

- F.I.S.H. - Newsletter attached in email.
- City Council - Peadar reports: 1) Council voted to adopt a resolution supporting the disbanding of internment camps for asylum-seeking refugees, see the resolution [here](#). 2) A Ting, a small traditional style Chinese-style pavilion, will be placed in Sonoma’s historic Depot Park. The council voted against the use of recognition bricks, see more [here](#). 3) The city is currently seeking to hire a Part-Time Sustainability Coordinator to perform work in the field of climate change and sustainability. Job info [here](#).
- SVU School District - Many new staff this year, Superintendent Shields will be updating us this Fall.
- Sustainable Sonoma - Jacey to update at our next meeting.
- S.O.S. - Curran reports that they are dealing with how to provide restrooms for the homeless. Since S.O.S. is only providing day services many homeless are staying in the parking lot at night so they decided to provide a port-a-potty but the City is now asking them to take it down. Since the city’s public restrooms close at 6pm this leaves no facilities for the homeless. They plan to meet with the mayor to address the City providing facilities. Placing people in housing is slow as affordable housing is limited.

- Mental health services are limited as well but are an important part of helping the homeless. The issue stands that the City needs to locate a place for a shelter/transfer station for transitioning the homeless and coordinating services.
- Local Law Enforcement - Steve will be providing any updates with the police dept. as he is currently working closely with Chief Rodriguez. Shir Shalom has decided to hire off duty officers and patrol cars to provide security services for Shir Shalom's future events.

Upcoming Events -

- Forgotten Heroes event - Muslims, Jews and Christians working together during WW1, October 29th at Trinity Episcopal Church at 7:00pm.
- Service of Remembrance, November 1st, 6:00pm in FCC/CSS sanctuary
- Community Thanksgiving service, November 28th, 10am-11am here at FCC/CSS in Burlingame Hall. Steve and Curran to host. Please reach out in order to help plan and prepare.
- Hospice Tree Lighting, Sunday, December 1st, Sonoma Plaza, 6:00pm.
- Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk, December 20th, open from 6:00pm-8:00pm, instrumental music.
- Community Menorah Lighting/1st Night of Hanukkah, December 22nd, 4:00pm in front of Burlingame Hall, 252 W. Spain St.

Information to Share -

- Steve reports that owners of Shainsky Ranch, where he lives, is looking to have some of the property purchased for community use such as gardens or any ecological needs. More information to come.
- First Congregational Church will be hosting a two-part retreat, Ruah Bull- Growing in God: The Journey of the Elder, Saturday, September 21st and Saturday, September 28th from 10:00am-1:00pm. Ruah Bull is a retreat leader and Spiritual Director in Petaluma. To register contact Susan Bassett at bassettnfriends@gmail.com or 707-321-0713.
- Curran has a new CD, Rest: Songs of Comfort and Peace. Download for free at curranreichert.bandcamp.com or www.sonomaucc.org/currans-music/
- Sonoma Community Church has a new pastor, Peadar will reach out.

Guest - Priscilla Call Essert, Executive Director - Vintage House

Priscilla has been with Vintage House for about two years. February 2018 they launched a year-long research project that included the participation of more than 500 local seniors. The data collected will help inform Vintage House and the community on how to engage the 55+ population here today and in future.

- The 3 main issues of need: 1) Helping seniors age in place, 2) seniors on the verge of homelessness, 3) senior who are able need help finding work.

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- In order to support those who may be struggling financially, and those that are isolated and alone Vintage House will be able to expand their key programs thanks to funding from CSAA and Impact 100.

- They will build on the collaboration with Rotary Club Sonoma Sunrise to complete home repairs in groups of 4-5 people one Saturday every two months for seniors living on a very limited budget; (34% said they are living alone or don't have family members who visit or check-in on then regularly.)
- They are helping to address food needs and social interaction with "Soup's On", every Friday from 11:30am-1:00pm seniors can come to Vintage House to have fresh made soup and bread and share a table with others. There is also a food offering table with donated items to take home. On the 2nd and 4th Fridays during this time they will also have TED talks and discussions with the seniors on housing needs to help prevent becoming homeless.
- Vintage House is able to expand the "Soup's On" program to the Springs beginning this week and will be held on Thursdays from 11:30am-1:00pm at the Teen Services center 17440 Sonoma Highway. There is also funding for a Wednesday meal but they are still working on the logistics of how they will implement this. One idea is to have a core group of seniors come to cook the meal and then serve it to other seniors, the homeless and others in the community. More to come on this project.
- They will expand the Job-Match program that connects seniors with local work opportunities by finding employers who have up to 20 hours per week to offer a senior age 58-75.

How can we help? Share with your congregations:

- 1) If you know a senior in need of housing or if you or someone you know has rooms to share with a senior please contact Vintage House. Many seniors who live alone may have rooms they can share with another senior as well.
- 2) Please spread the word that we are looking for employers who can offer work to a senior age 58-75.
- 3) If you would like to volunteer time or make a donation please contact Priscilla at priscilla.call.esert@vintagehouse.org and encourage your community to call Vintage House at 996-0311.
- 4) Vintage House is looking to hold a community meeting focusing on seniors. Funding has been secured and they want it to be meaningful and impactful. Do you have any ideas or feedback and are you interested in being on a short-term committee to help with this?

For information on other programs at Vintage House visit their website <https://vintagehouse.org>

Things to consider -

- Jim to have Priscilla on the Thursday radio show and a mention on the Tuesday show.
- Please send Tricia any event write ups you would like added to our website.
- If you are a liaison for one of our Community groups, see below, and are unable to attend our monthly meeting, please email a brief update to share with the group to sonomavalleyinterfaithma@gmail.com

SVUSD - Jacey Pickens-Jones
Sustainable Sonoma - Jacey Pickens-Jones
S.O.S. - Curran Reichert
Police/Sheriff - Steve Finley
F.I.S.H. - Steve Finley

Our next meeting is Wednesday, September 25th, 12:15pm sharp - Please send a representative if you are unable to attend.

Meeting Adjourned - 1:35pm