

Sonoma Valley Interfaith Ministerial Association

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

Wednesday, August 22, 2018

First Congregational Church of Sonoma

Present: Steve Finley, Manette Fairmont, Peadar Dalton, Nick Dalton, Jim Thomas, Margaret Hale and Susie Perry (representing Sonoma Valley Community Church), Kathryn Stark, Donna Thomas, Matt Mattzela, Rich Gantenbein.

Guests: Carol Appel - Jewish Concierge of Sonoma County, Mayor Madolyn Agrimonti

Welcome and Call to Order - Steve Finley opened with the Jewish word “hineni” which means “here I am” and a book by John Shelby Spong titled, “Here I Stand” encouraging us to be present in mind and body and to be ready to listen and make ourselves available spiritually. Welcome to our new members Matt Mattzela of Seventh Day Adventist and Margaret Hale and Susie Perry temporarily representing Sonoma Valley Community Church. *New members not in attendance: Stephen Brenlinger, Latter-Day Saints.

Checking In With Non Profits -

- F.I.S.H. - Please consider attending their volunteer picnic on Sunday, Sept. 23rd at 4:00pm at Faith Lutheran Church. It would be nice to show them and their volunteers our support and presence especially following this past year.
- City Council - See report by Mayor Agrimonti below.
- SVUSD - School began this week with a lot of new staff at the district level and on school sites. Nick will reach out to the new superintendent and invite her to one of our meetings in October or November.
- Hanna Institute - Nick reported that we are invited to attend the Thurs., Sept. 13th Breakfast Series from 7:30-9:00am “Unmasking: Healthy Connections with Complex Communities” with Ashanti Branch. Click [here](#) for more information. A few seats will be held for our members so please contact Nick if you would like to go. Also, coming up on Wednesday, December 5th they will have the Rev. Gregory Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, the largest gang intervention, rehabilitation and re-entry program in the world. More details to come.

Guest Speakers -

- **Carol Appel**, the Jewish Concierge for Sonoma County works on behalf of area congregations in outreach and collaboration with community volunteer projects. Habitat for Humanity has three days available for volunteers in our regional congregations to build townhouses in West Santa Rosa. These dates are: September 30, October 7, and October 28. Volunteers are being fed and no skills are required, there is work for everyone. If you or your community would like to help on one of these days please contact Carol at carola@sfjcf.org or by phone at 415-847-2992 (mobile) or 415-512-6217 (office). Fire rebuilds are not ready yet but the current needs of Habitat for Humanity are pressing and ongoing. If your community would like information on Faith Builds for Habitat for Humanity please contact David Irvine, Faith Relations Liaison, at d.irvine@habitatsoco.org.
- **Mayor Madolyn Agrimonti** added that Habitat for Humanity will be coming to South Sonoma County. She also noted the Sonoma Wildfire Cottage Initiative will be under way soon. Medtronic in Santa Rosa is donating the land and \$100,000 for 8-10 temporary cottages for fire victims. See the article [here](#).
- The mayor also reported on city information and that county funds of \$250,000 are set aside for a task force to do a gaps analysis in Sonoma to determine needs for things like transportation, housing and shelters and any other needs. The task force is already familiar with many of the City's needs so they may not be using all of the funds. One area to look at will be transportation by means of a free local shuttle, similar to Cotati and Sebastopol, that is desired here in town and to Glen Ellen for visitors and locals who don't have transportation. The mayor expressed her concern for our city to get our fair share of county funds and services. She is hoping the task force will bring our community needs to light.
- The city is hoping to get more businesses using compostables by next year. There is the proposal to put in a water dispenser in the plaza to encourage refillable water bottle use.
- A recent study on water rate structure showed that the tier system is not effective in encouraging water conservation and water agencies need to find new ways of encouraging conservation. Read more about it [here](#).
- The 48 unit Altamira affordable housing complex on Broadway across from Train Town was approved. Read more [here](#).
- The council will delay the vote on the cannabis dispensing until November 2020, mostly due to concerns over strict policies such as allowing an unlimited number of dispensaries. The mayor noted that at this time there is some free delivery of medicinal cannabis available for those in need who don't have transportation. Read about it [here](#).
- The city will be contracting the services of non-profit groups to manage Recreation and Community Services. See [here](#) for more information.

- Rich asked what the city has done to learn from the needs and mistakes we encountered during the fires to prepare us for the next disaster. There were many areas that were not organized and it is not a question of if but when. There was much discussion on how the city should be more prepared and a better plan be set in place. Donna suggested a community website set up specifically for disaster preparedness in our town and what to do and where to go, perhaps something the community can look to before a disaster hits as by then there will be no internet. Margaret suggested the fire victims and community members affected by the fire be involved in suggestions for making the emergency plan, asking them what would have been helpful to have in place that wasn't already.
- Unfortunately the mayor could not answer any questions about an emergency plan or what has been done since the fires to be better prepared but promised to look into this and get back to us.
- Jim offered himself, our association and congregations as support to the city council on any needs.
- Nick asked if the city council could nudge John Gurny at the community center to get the 600 emergency volunteer applications put into a computer system.
- Steve reinforced that he hopes the Mayor will address the need to get an emergency service plan in place that the whole community can be aware of before the next disaster hits.

Thanksgiving - We need to find a location for our Interfaith Thanksgiving service, 10:00-11:00am Thanksgiving morning. St. Francis was suggested and Nick will look into the Hanna Boy's Center as an option.

Good and Welfare - Nick and his wife are expecting their second child in March 2019, congratulations! Jim invited all to come see the beautiful improvements to their property. Peadar will be celebrating his 18th wedding anniversary next month, congratulations!

Our next meeting is Wednesday, September 26th, 12:15pm sharp - Please send a representative if you are unable to attend. (We need to put together a Thanksgiving volunteer committee.)

Meeting Adjourned - 1:30pm