

Sonoma Valley Interfaith Ministerial Association

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Wednesday, June 26, 2019

First Congregational Church of Sonoma

Present: Steve Finley, Jacey Pickens-Jones, Peadar Dalton, Jim Thomas, John Bonnoit.

Guest: Marla Rosner, CSS Social Action Committee member

Welcome and Call to Order - Jacey opens with thoughts on a story from the book of Matthew where Jesus is in a boat. We don't get to decide who gets into the boat, we just keep going through the storm and we help those in need. She relates this to current immigration issues and others in need.

Checking In With Non Profits -

- F.I.S.H. - Newsletter attached in email.
- City Council - Still unraveling the three main issues: 1) minimum wage, 2) TOT fund, 3) dispensary
- SVU School District - The high school has hired a new Principal, read more [here](#).
- Sustainable Sonoma - The number of people coming to the council meetings is shrinking. They are looking at the restructuring of the council to include more representatives from various businesses and community groups. They are continuing to develop how they represent themselves to and in the community. You will be emailed the link to the live feed for Thursday morning's discussion, **Building Public Will for Attainable Housing in Sonoma Valley**.

Upcoming Events -

- Congregation Shir Shalom is having a CPR/First Aid class on July 14th and has a few spots open. They will be following that up in the Fall with an emergency preparedness training, including active shooter response and other emergencies. If you would like more information on either please contact Rabbi Steve.
- With so many members gone in July, we will not be having a monthly meeting and will postpone our picnic/potluck until September. Let's discuss a date in August.

Information to Share -

- Peadar reads an email from the interim pastor of St. Andrew, Rev. Jan Reynolds. She is looking forward to attending the August meeting. She can be reached at reynoldsjanicek@gmail.com.
- Jacey reports that United Methodist Church is looking for ways to help with immigration and the border detention issue. If anyone has suggestions, ideas or contacts please reach out to her or Emily.
- Rabbi Steve proposes we, SVIMA, apply for a grant from Pace Funders called "Faith In/And Democracy" which funds interventions to engage people of faith in supporting the well-being of democracy, considering the ways in which faith can serve to ease divisions that plague our political processes. Read more [here](#) under "Learn More About the Exploration". Peadar motions in agreement to apply and Jacey seconds. Steve and Tricia will fill out the grant proposal. **Please contact Steve to suggest any ideas you might have for use of the funding or if you'd like to help.**

Guest - Marla Rosner

-Marla is a member of Congregation Shir Shalom and is on the CSS Social Action Committee. The Social Action Committee has been active for a year and has been looking for project ideas. They have invited guests of various congregations and community groups including Juan Hernandez, Executive Director of La Luz. He suggested they can help by: 1. raising awareness of the issue of the bifurcated communities in the town of Sonoma, i.e., the low-income Latino community and the upscale tourists and other residents. 2. raise awareness of the housing crisis and the impact on the Latino community.

-As an outgrowth of Juan's proposal and their following discussion, the CSS Social Action Committee would like to hold an event in the Fall about housing in Sonoma, inviting the various congregations represented by The Sonoma Valley Interfaith Ministerial Association, plus the general public, to join us in learning about:

1. The agencies and decision-making groups involved in housing planning in Sonoma County and the town of Sonoma as well as whether and how the Springs can or cannot have an impact on decision making.
2. The current initiatives underway to expand affordable housing and rentals in Sonoma.
3. Obstacles to expanding affordable housing.
4. The opportunities to influencing the expansion of affordable housing.

They see Supervisor Gorin being the right person to conduct a presentation and would potentially want to involve a panel as well including the City Council. They believe the right group to win her attention and garner the best attendance is The Sonoma Valley Interfaith Ministerial Association.

-If your community/congregation has a Social Action group or other members who are working on affordable housing, please contact Marla in order to join forces and share ideas. She can be reached at mrosner@instillleadership.com

-Jacey reports that UM has a Social Action Team working on the same issue and she will send contact information to Marla.

-Jim reports that Trinity has tried in the past to propose tiny homes on their property but has received push back from the planning dept.

-Steve believes that FCC is also considering using their property for some type of housing.

-John previously worked for the city and offered much insight to the road blocks involved in building and maintaining affordable housing of any kind.

-Peadar suggests once we come up with a plan or forum date we can choose one weekend to share the event and encourage attendance from all of our congregations during services. Peadar also suggests we try defining "affordable housing", can someone give us an accurate definition of what that means for the community?

-Steve suggests the Pace grant could help support the housing event.

Things to consider -

- No meeting in July.
- Please email Steve with any thoughts/ideas on the Pace grant.
- We're still collecting membership dues of \$20 from some and any donations for Tricia, our admin./ secretary, salary support: payable to CSS, with "SVIMA" in the memo.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, August 28th, 12:15pm sharp - Please send a representative if you are unable to attend.

Meeting Adjourned - 1:35pm