

# INTERFAITH EXPLORER

SAN FRANCISCO INTERFAITH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

February 2008

OUR MONTHLY GATHERING - ALL ARE WELCOME

THURSDAY, February 14, 2008, 8:00-9:30 A.M.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Franklin & O'Farrell

Parking at St. Mary's Cathedral across the street

Continental Breakfast hosted by Marilyn Saner

SPEAKER: Mai Ling Garcia, Iraq Veteran Policy Associate,  
SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES

War causes wounds and suffering that last beyond the battlefield. *Swords to Plowshares'* mission is to heal the wounds, to restore dignity, hope and self-sufficiency to all veterans in need, and to significantly reduce homelessness and poverty among veterans. Realizing the invaluable role congregations can play in assisting veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan to San Francisco, the SFIC is working with *Swords to Plowshares* to explore, develop and implement a local faith-based assistance program.

At the most recent meeting of the SFIC Board of Directors, the decision was made to partner with *Swords to Plowshares* in sponsoring a sensitivity training seminar for San Francisco clergy to the complex and multifaceted needs of returning veterans. More information to follow.

Please visit: <http://swords-to-plowshares.org/> to learn more about the important work being undertaken by *Swords to Plowshares*. A *Swords to Plowshares* YouTube segment can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qpdfOZgVnTI>

*Swords to Plowshares* recommends viewing a recent Christian Science Monitor six part series featuring military chaplains from a variety of faith backgrounds: <http://www.csmonitor.com/specials/chaplains/>

FAITH JOURNEY: Donna Wood, Park Presidio United Methodist Church

SFIC TO HOST FOLLOW-UP DISASTER PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 9, 2008 / SAINT MARY'S CATHEDRAL

Since the devastating Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989, the San Francisco Interfaith Council (SFIC) has been an instrumental stakeholder in the City's disaster preparedness equation. SFIC

Chair Jim DeLange and Executive Director Michael Pappas regularly attend and represent the SFIC at meetings related to Disaster Preparedness. The City's Office of Emergency Management, the Red Cross, CARD, the Fritz Institute and the San Francisco Foundation are all involved in a coordinated response on the part of the City and non-profits in the event of a disaster.

Thanks to the generosity of the Walter and Elise Haas Foundation, in May of 2006, the SFIC was able to host a highly successful Disaster Preparedness Workshop for congregations. Over 100 congregations were represented. In the past two years much progress and many developments have been made in this critical area.

The SFIC, at its February 2008 Board of Directors meeting decided to sponsor a follow-up half-day workshop on May 9, 2008. The purpose of the seminar is to bring congregations up-to-date on mechanisms in place in the event of a disaster. St. Mary's Cathedral has once again graciously agreed to host this workshop.

The workshop, entitled: "CREATING A CULTURE OF PREPAREDNESS," will be comprised of five elements: self-preparation; staff preparation; facility preparation; managing the immediate aftermath; and managing the long-term aftermath.

The Red Cross and CARD will appraise the participants of progress and developments in their effort to train and prepare congregations. In addition, participants will be introduced to a myriad of new resource contacts able to explain and provide practical strategies for congregations to employ.

There is no cost for the workshop. Congregation clergy, staff and lay leadership are urged to attend. More information to follow. PLEASE PUT THE DATE ON YOUR CALENDARS.

**SFIC LISTENING TOUR UNDERWAY:** In an effort to further build relationships with member congregations, SFIC Executive Director Michael Pappas, along with members of the Board of Directors have embarked upon a *Listening Tour*. The aim of these visitations is to learn directly from clergy and lay leaders how the Interfaith Council might better serve the needs of their congregations and the larger city community. In addition, these gatherings offer the occasion to apprise congregations of the many SFIC activities and services being offered. If your congregation would like to be included in the *Listening Tour*, please contact Michael Pappas at [michael@sf-interfaith.org](mailto:michael@sf-interfaith.org).

**WINTER SHELTER PROGRAM:** The San Francisco Interfaith Council has, for 20 years, co-coordinated winter shelter for 60-90 men from mid November to the end of February. Special thanks are extended to those congregations that offer their facilities as shelter sites, as well as to the many faith communities and agencies that provide and serve meals.

**INTERFAITH FAIR TRADE COFFEE UPDATE:** In partnership with Thanksgiving Coffee Co., and the 705 Jewish, Christian, and Muslim farmers of the Peace Kawomera Cooperative in

Uganda, the new Interfaith Youth Group held its first meeting at Café Gratitude, in San Francisco, on Sunday, February 3, 2008. This meeting brought together twenty young people and youth advisors from San Francisco's many faith communities to interact and gain a better understanding of each other's faiths. Guided by facilitators from the Interfaith Youth Core, visiting from Chicago, the youth explored issues of social justice, as they relate to the story of Mirembe Kawomera "Delicious Peace" Coffee. A goal of the newly formed Interfaith Youth Group is to plan and participate in a fact-finding/service trip to Uganda in the summer of 2009.

The Interfaith Youth Core was recently featured on Good Morning America in a segment titled: Many Faces of Faith. The segment focused on some of the young people who have been involved with IFYC's programs, and also featured Executive Director, Dr. Eboo Patel. The two segments, which aired on 1/23 and 1/24, are now available on GMA's website:

· <http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=4176595&affil=wls> <<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=4176595&affil=wls>> (part 1)

· <http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=4181092&affil=wls> <<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=4181092&affil=wls>> (part 2)

Four Ugandan farmers (Jewish, Muslim and Christian) from the cooperative, will be touring San Francisco from March 19-23, and meeting with the San Francisco Interfaith Council, the Interfaith Youth Group, and congregations.

To learn more about the good works being undertaken by THANKSGIVING COFFEE point your browser to: <http://www.mirembekawomera.com/blog/2008/01/03/interfaith-youth-group-launches-in-sf/>

Or view an informative YouTube segment at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rw4QcFtWio>

## ANNOUNCING THE NEXT IN THE ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS SERIES

Join us on Sunday, April 6, 2008 from 4:30 - 7:00 pm at the Islamic Society of San Francisco (20 Jones Street), for an enlightening and inspirational evening of dialogue and dinner about "Fractures Within The Abrahamic Faiths: Can We Heal Our Own Families?" Confirmed speakers are Jim Donahue, President of the Graduate Theological Union, and Rabbi Marvin Goodman, Director of the Board of Rabbis of Northern California. Muslim speaker TBA. Following the speakers' presentation, we'll engage in facilitated dialogue and enjoy a delicious vegetarian dinner. Tickets are \$20 per person. More info: Abby Porth at [aporth@jcr.org](mailto:aporth@jcr.org)

## PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT IN BAYVIEW HUNTER'S POINT

Wednesday, September 10, 2008

Partnering with the San Francisco Interfaith Council

Join the faith-based community and Project Homeless Connect in providing access to needed services for people experiencing homelessness in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood. The

community of congregations will provide much needed volunteers, choirs for entertainment, staff for the spiritual area, and bible donations for the Book Area. Services offered at PHC include medical and dental, employment, legal assistance, DMV IDs, and much more. PHC clients can access, in one day, what may otherwise take eight months to achieve.

Location is along Keith Street between Armstrong and Carroll Streets, including: SF Community Health Center, BVHP Foundation & Bayview Playground.

To volunteer, please register at: "<http://www.ProjectHomelessConnect.com>> or call 415.255.3674

*"I've been homeless for five years, and I've never seen anything like this in my life...Project Homeless Connect must be serious."* Red B, PHC Client

#### PROGRESS ON FUNDRAISING GOAL FOR THE SFIC:

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Interfaith Council has set a goal of raising \$100,000 in each of the next three years to support the Executive Director position and other costs of the organization. Since beginning the effort in November, \$40,000 has been raised for 2008. We urge congregations and agencies to include the SFIC in their 2008 budgets. Individual contributions are welcome!

#### COMMUNITY EVENTS:

##### 43rd ANNUAL FOUR CHAPLAINS INTERFAITH SERVICE

February 9, 2008 2:00 p.m

Sponsored by the American Legion Department of California

Early on the morning of February 3, 1943, the U.S. Troop Transport Dorchester was steaming through the icy seas off Greenland. Most of the 900 troops were asleep in their bunks. Suddenly, a torpedo smashed into the ship's flank. Frantically pounding up the ladders, the troops milled in confusion on the decks.

In the moments of panic, the coolest men aboard were four U.S. Army Chaplains: 1st Lts. Clark V. Poling; Alexander D. Goode; John P. Washington; and George L. Fox.

The four chaplains led the men to boxes of life jackets and passed them out to the soldiers. When the boxes were empty, they slipped off their own precious life preservers and put them on four young G.I.'s. The Dorchester went down 25 minutes later in a rumble of steam. Some 600 men were lost, but the heroic chaplains had helped save over 200. The last any saw of them, they were standing on the slanting deck, with their arms linked in prayer to the one God they all served.

The Inter-faith Service is open to the public and you are cordially invited to attend.

An exquisite stained glass rendition of a commemorative stamp honoring the Four Chaplains hangs at the SFIC Office. Dr. Henry and Renee Baer, in memory of US Army Chaplain Fr. Albert D. Hull, donated the work. Noted artist Atelier Armelle Le Roux created it.

## **GRACE CATHEDRAL HOSTS A PEACE VIGIL TO MARK THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE WAR IN IRAQ, MARCH 19:**

Grace Cathedral will host *A Prayer for Peace*, a remembrance of all the dead on the 5th anniversary of the war in Iraq, Wed., March 19, 6-7 p.m. Members of San Francisco's interfaith community will read the names of both U.S. military and Iraqi civilian war dead at this peace vigil. Pairs of shoes will line the Cathedral's Great Steps in remembrance of all those who have died in the conflict. Inside the cathedral, "Eyes Wide Open," an exhibit on the human cost of the Iraq War, featuring dozens of pairs of army boots signifying fallen California soldiers, will be on display on the labyrinth. All are welcome to attend this special service of lamentation, which expresses sorrow over the brokenness of the world. The event is free of charge. A traditional Ten-brae service follows immediately at 7 p.m. in Grace Cathedral.

For more information, please contact: Heidi K. Zuhl, Manager of Public and Media Relations, 415-749-6364 / [heidiz@gracecathedral.org](mailto:heidiz@gracecathedral.org) / [www.GraceCathedral.org](http://www.GraceCathedral.org), 1100 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94108

**THE NONVIOLENT VIGIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE:** Every Thursday, Noon-1:00 p.m. at the Federal Building, Larkin and Golden Gate. The vigil is sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and the San Francisco Friends (Quaker) Meeting. This group has held vigil for nonviolence every Thursday since September 11, 2001. [INFOSFVIGIL@mac.com](mailto:INFOSFVIGIL@mac.com). All are welcome to join them.

THE VOLUNTEER CENTER of San Francisco is hosting **We Connect** on Tuesday, February 12th from 3:00-7:00 pm at the Louis B. Mayer Lounge, UC Hastings (198 McAllister Street, SF/CA 94102). Maria Shriver and Mayor Newsom are bringing together hundreds of volunteers committed to helping provide vital resources to those families most in need. This San Francisco event is part of a larger statewide effort to connect Californians to available resources such as free tax preparation, 529 savings plan, food stamps, lifeline, CARE, low cost auto insurance, medical coverage, financial planning and job services. The one-stop-shop will require volunteers to assist clients in several ways. You may help get clients registered, oriented to the services available, to navigate service areas and you may monitor service areas to facilitate service delivery and ease of access for clients. All types of volunteers are needed with all types of skill – there is a job for everyone. Whatever your role may be, it is guaranteed to be a lot of fun and an opportunity to change the lives of families in need!

For more information, visit The Volunteer Center website: [http://www.thevolunteercenter2.net/user/events/one.tcl?event\\_id=10260989367](http://www.thevolunteercenter2.net/user/events/one.tcl?event_id=10260989367)

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT  
CHALLENGES AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIETY, CHURCH AND ACADEMY  
February 29, 2008 / 12:00 noon / Xavier Hall, Fromm Institute, USF  
Free parking at the Koret Center parking lot (Turk & Parker).

Kurt M. Denk, SJ, is a Jesuit priest from the Maryland Province of Jesuits. He is currently a law student at the University of California, Berkeley and associate chaplain at San Quentin State Prison where he has worked since 2004. During this time he helped the Interfaith Restorative Justice Roundtable at San Quentin write a document titled "Responsibility, Rehabilitation and Restoration: A Response and Implementation Plan" in response to the US Bishops' document on restorative justice. This paper was adopted by the California Catholic Conference as a model for restorative justice programs throughout the state. Fr. Denk has a master's degree in divinity from the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, a master's degree in philosophy from Fordham and a bachelor's degree in history from Georgetown. As part of his Jesuit training, he has also served as a hospital chaplain, college teacher and administrator, and retreat and spiritual director.

More information: [www.usfca.edu/lanecenter](http://www.usfca.edu/lanecenter) or (415) 422-5200.

USF campus map & directions here: <http://www.usfca.edu/directions>.

RED CROSS OFFERS FREE CPR TRAINING  
Saturday, March 8 – 15 Locations in the Bay Area

The American Red Cross Bay Area is partnering with sister chapters in northern California to provide free CPR training to 3,000 people in the Bay Area on March 8, making it one of the largest single-day trainings in the state. The event is designed specifically to provide life-saving training to members of vulnerable communities, including low-income individuals and speakers of languages other than English. More information and registration is online at [www.redcrosscprsatursday.org](http://www.redcrosscprsatursday.org). If you're interested in promoting this event within your community or would like to be considered as a site for next year's event, please contact Emily Seidel at (415) 427-8044 or [seidele@usa.redcross.org](mailto:seidele@usa.redcross.org).

CINEMA VITA FILM FESTIVAL: Friday, March 7, 2008, Delancy Street Theater, 600 Embarcadero, San Francisco, from 6:00pm-10pm. <http://www.wignatius.com/cinemavita/>

#### CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES/HOMILIES OF NOTE:

The Rev. James DeLange, Chair of the San Francisco Interfaith Council, offered an informative and inspiring sermon on the occasion of the Week of Prayer For Christian Unity. This observance took place on January 20, 2008, at Old St. Mary's in Chinatown. The sermon can be accessed at: <http://www.st-francis-lutheran.org/delangesermon01202008.pdf> Special Thanks are extended to St. Francis Lutheran Church Pastor, Rev. Robert Goldstein, for posting the sermon on the parish website.

An Open Forum, on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, offered by The Rev. Alan Jones, Dean of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, was published in the San Francisco Chronicle on January 21, 2008. The timely opinion, entitled: Presidential Race Brings A New Spirit To The Day, can be accessed at:

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/01/21/EDFDUHURK.DTL>

LOCAL/REGIONAL INTERFAITH WEBSITES:

Interfaith Center at the Presidio: <http://www.interfaith-presidio.org/>

Marin Interfaith Council: <http://www.marinifc.org/>

Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County: <http://www.interfaithcouncilofccc.net/>

Jewish Community Center, SF: *INTERFAITH CONNECTION* [http://www.jccsf.org/content\\_main.aspx?catid=212](http://www.jccsf.org/content_main.aspx?catid=212)

(Please note: SFIC Website: [sf-interfaith.org](http://sf-interfaith.org), is currently under construction)

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

The INTERFAITH EXPLORER, the monthly newsletter of the SFIC, keeps over 500 members on our email list informed of interfaith activities in San Francisco. Please include any of the information found in the INTERFAITH EXPLORER in your congregation's weekly bulletin or monthly newsletter. You are encouraged to forward this newsletter to interested persons on your email list. Feel free to forward the email addresses of prospective readers and noteworthy news items to my attention at: [michael@sf-interfaith.org](mailto:michael@sf-interfaith.org). Deadline for submission is the first day of each month.

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