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Interfaith Leaders Visit Local Mosque



Photo by Mustafa Mohamedali

On Friday, December 4 about 20 interfaith clergy and lay leaders were privileged to visit the Islamic Center of Olympia (*Masjid Al-Nur*) for *Jumah* prayers followed by informal discussions with the Imam, Sheik Sophiyan Sen, and leadership of the Islamic Center. The visit was organized by Interfaith Works.

The visit was an expression of love, friendship and solidarity to a long-time Member Faith Community of Interfaith Works, at a time of increased Islamophobia and threat of hate crimes across the nation.

The discussions focused on the impacts currently felt in the Muslim community, the need for more interfaith programs that educate the broader public about the core teachings and practices of Islam and other faiths, and the many common social concerns shared across all faiths.

The visitors were grateful for the warm hospitality of their Muslim peers and look forward to future visits and shared learning in the months ahead.

Shelter at One Year

Excerpts from presentation to Olympia City Council on Dec. 15 by Meg Martin, Program Director of Emergency Overnight Shelter

We are at 100% capacity every single night and have been turning away an average of 6 people per night.

We partner with many community agencies to provide on site support services whenever we can. One very meaningful partnership is with the Amahoro House who provide health care support through a volunteer RN/MD team on a weekly basis. We are connecting people to housing services like SideWalk and the PATH program, Veterans services, mental health support through BHR and the Capital Recovery Center, and work with Northwest Resources to support people interested in chemical dependency treatment programs. Since opening we have assisted over 35 people in their move into permanent housing.

We are fortunate to have compassionate neighbors that were patient with us as we got our bearings in the beginning and that continue to work with us when-ever issues arise. We are lucky to call First Christian Church our home and are forever grateful to the leadership and congregation of FCC for welcoming us in. We are excited to be working with Providence on a planned community care center and believe that this will be a much needed asset to our community that we have never been able to truly gauge up to this point.

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Remarks by Olympia Mayor Stephen Buxbaum, at his last meeting before stepping down from the City Council:

I want to tell Meg and Max I just can't thank you enough for what you do every single night - for everybody in Olympia. You folks and other staff at the homeless shelter - the faith community - that have stepped up in this community - you're making a difference.

A lot of times it's one person at time. I know that it often probably feels like it's never enough. But your work and your dedication has really made a difference.

I feel like things are shifting both in our downtown and our community and a lot of that is due to your hard work and just sticking to it and staying with your principles and I just can't say enough good about what you have done for all of us.

Warming Center Opens

By Max Goldsmith, Lead Support Staff

On the eve of the Thanksgiving holiday, First Christian Church, Temple Beth Hatfiloh and The United Churches of Olympia opened their doors between 7am and 1pm every day on a rotating schedule as an emergency warming center for the winter months, and plan to stay open through March of 2016. Interfaith Works has stepped in to support the effort by providing trained, experienced staff to manage it. We believe that this will ensure that the space and the neighborhood continue to stay well managed.

Overall, the warming center has been operating smoothly and quietly. During just the first two weeks of the program, we saw an average of 65 unique individuals each day, with some days exceeding well over 100. Many of the guests don't have access to shelter at night, so we are making new contacts. We're widening our network on the streets, engaging people who do not access services anywhere else. Because of limited beds the shelter is not able to connect with everyone; with the warming center we're able to broaden that reach. Many people utilizing our services come in right at 7am and sleep all the way until 1:00. They've been out all night, are wet and freezing, and just want undisturbed rest for as long as they can. During the day, guests have been making wreaths to sell at winter markets, taking respite from the elements, and using the computer and phone to be able to take care of business. We currently have outreach workers from the PATH program, CHOICE program, and Free Herbal Clinic, and are partnering for the upcoming annual homeless census. And we're also excited about engaging the greater community to bring activities for people to do like art projects and enrichment classes.

We also invite the community members to get engaged. If you'd like to donate items or want to volunteer for the Warming Center, you can email us at info@iwshelter.org



Emergency Overnight Shelter

Sheltering for the Health & Safety of All

**VISIT THE VOLUNTEER PAGE OF
OUR SHELTER WEBSITE:**

<http://www.iwshelter.org/volunteer.html>



Emergency Overnight Shelter

Sheltering for the Health & Safety of All

A FEW SHELTER HIGHLIGHTS

YEAR END REVIEW

2015



100% CURRENT SHELTER OCCUPANCY RATE

AND COUNTING

309

UNDUPLICATED GUESTS SERVED SINCE NOV 1, 2014

WITH PEOPLE TURNED AWAY EVERY NIGHT DUE TO LACK OF SPACE



100% OVERCOME ALL ODDS



ABOUT US

51 YEARS OLD ON AVERAGE
30% ARTISTS + MUSICIANS

82% WITH PERSISTENT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

60% WITH A PHYSICAL DISABILITY

60% WITH SUBSTANCE USE CHALLENGE

42% EXPERIENCE ALL 3 SETS OF CHALLENGES SIMULTANEOUSLY

AND COUNTING

33 GUESTS MOVED OUT INTO HOUSING SINCE NOVEMBER 1, 2014



WE ACTIVELY PARTNER WITH AREA AGENCIES INCLUDING SIDEWALK, THE EMMA GOLDMAN YOUTH AND HOMELESS OUTREACH PROJECT (EGYHOP), BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESOURCES, THE AMAHORO HOUSE (A LOCAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE PROGRAM), THE WASHINGTON CLIPPERS (PROVIDING COMPASSIONATE FOOT CARE), SAINT MARTIN'S UNIVERSITY NURSING PROGRAM, OLYMPIA FREE CLINIC, NORTHWEST RESOURCES CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY AND OTHERS TO BRING THEIR SERVICES TO OUR GUESTS ON SITE. THIS COORDINATION OF IN-HOUSE SERVICES IS KEY TO OUR GUESTS' SUCCESS BECAUSE NAVIGATING THE COMPLICATED WEB OF SERVICES OFTEN PROVES TOO DIFFICULT. OUR PARTNERSHIPS PROVIDE A SAFETY NET TO HELP PREVENT PEOPLE IN NEED FROM FALLING FURTHER.

Standing up to Coal and Oil Transport in Washington

by Naki Stevens, Interfaith Works Program Coordinator

The Interfaith Works Board of Directors at its December 2015 meeting decided to add IW's voice to the growing list of faith communities opposed to the many proposed coal trains, oil trains, and coal and export terminals in Washington. The article below is taken from the online newsletter of Earth Ministry, the Seattle-based non-profit leading the charge among faith communities in Washington to prevent oil and coal company plans to ply our state with dangerous and polluting trains and build coal and oil export terminals on sacred indigenous land and the shorelines of Puget Sound, the Columbia River and Grays Harbor.



For more information on the complicated story of all the proposed projects to transport through and export from our state fossil fuels developed in North Dakota, Montana and Wyoming, go to www.earthministry.org, www.sightline.org, and <http://www.foe.org/projects/oceans-and-forests/oceangoing-vessels/shipping-campaign>. These sites will also tell you how to become involved in commenting on the various proposals.

People of faith challenge oil, coal transport

Excerpts from *Earth Ministry Newsletter*, March 2015 <http://earthministry.org/people-of-faith-challenge-cut-oil-oil-transport/>

Participation from people of faith and other grassroots activists in environmental impact hearings has made a big impact on the progression of proposed coal transport and terminals in Washington. Strong grassroots participation in Department of Ecology hearings on the environmental impact of coal transport and export mean that four of six terminals proposed six years ago have been dropped. In addition to turnout at hearings, hundreds of thousands of people sent in public comments.

The terminals at Longview and Cherry Point, which are still under consideration, would export about 100 million tons of coal. If they were built, about 50 more trains a day would be added to the 40 to 60 trains—five are coal trains—a day that go through Spokane and Spokane Valley.

With tracks so close to thousands of Eastern Washingtonians, we are not safe from oil train explosions. Oil trains from Bakken Oil Fields in North Dakota and Tar Sands in Alberta come through Spokane and go along the Columbia Gorge. The oil is shipped to two refineries in Ferndale, two in Anacortes, one in Tacoma. Three exporting facilities are proposed in Grays Harbor and the biggest for Vancouver, Wash. Environmental impact statements on proposals for expansion [came] out in the spring. Faith community leaders are concerned the draft statements include major threats to God's creation, Jessie [Dye of Earth Ministry] said.

2015 Thanksgiving Celebration

On Sunday, November 22 the interfaith community gathered joyfully for Interfaith Works' 32nd Annual Thanksgiving Celebration at The United Churches in downtown Olympia. Speakers from the Christian, Baha'i, and Buddhist traditions were featured, along with the Olympia Peace Choir and a food drive by Girl Scout Daisy Troop 45298.

Our annual Thanksgiving program has become a tradition showcasing the diversity of our local community and encouraging friendship and unity among faiths and cultures.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

A listing of some of the activities and events of Interfaith Works members, and of general interest. IW does not necessarily endorse these events. More details and events at www.interfaith-works.org. Submit your event at www.interfaith-works.org/submit-an-event

Dec 22-23 Tues-Wed 9:00am-3:00pm	Jewish Art Mini-Camp. Children between the ages of 8 and 12 will learn about Jewish artists like Roy Lichtenstein and Marc Chagall and create artwork inspired by what they've learned. Participants will create both two and three dimensional work and practice with a variety of media. Cost: \$50. Temple Beth Hatfiloh 201 8th Ave SE, Olympia. Preregistration required—contact Catherine at 754-8519 or beitsefer@bethhatfiloh.org .
Nov 13 Friday 7:30-9:00pm	Playback Theatre Performance—Stories of Living Locally. Join Heartsparkle Players for an evening of stories in collaboration with Sustainable South Sound. An audience member tells a real moment from their life and the actors and musician play it back using movement, dialogue and music. Cost: \$7-12 (no one turned away). Traditions Café, 300 5th Avenue SW, Olympia 98501. Info: 943-6772, www.heartsparkle.org
Jan 1 Friday 7:00-8:30pm	1st Fridays at Unity of Olympia. Make a Vision Board with Rev. Terry Murray. Cost: free. Donations to Make A Wish Foundation, the featured local Non-Profit this month. Unity of Olympia 1335 Fern St. SW, Olympia, WA 98502. Info: 943-5757.
Jan 9 Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm	Giving Voice to Our Hearts. We will look at various prayer forms, grouped as: Petition- that foundational human movement where we come in our need before a God who can provide; Praise and Thanksgiving- our natural response to God's gracious action in our lives; and Peace Making- right relationship with God, ourselves and one another. Cost: \$50. The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College St NE, Lacey 98516, 438-2595
Jan 15-17 Fri. 7:15 pm thru Sun. 1:30pm	Beginners Silent Retreat. Take the plunge into a silent retreat. Learn firsthand new ways of being and resting in God by praying, using scripture, journaling, and art. We will begin with an introduction to a silent retreat, make a silent retreat, and have a closing with opportunities to share what happened in the silence. Cost: \$160 or with spiritual direction \$195. The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College St NE, Lacey 98516, 438-2595
Jan 16 Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm	Music and Imagination to Encourage Spiritual Growth. Music frees the imagination—the main path for sensing spirit. Powered by music, we will cultivate journeys in the realm of imagination towards deeper spiritual experience. We will listen to selections of evocative music, track the free flow of our imagination and share our experiences. Cost: \$50. Bring sack lunch, pen & paper. The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College St NE, Lacey, 438-2595
Jan 18 Monday Time TBA	Olympia Ad Hoc Committee on Police and Community Relations. Fourth in a series of community forums to develop opportunities for broad-based and inclusive engagement with the community about criminal justice issues. Cost: free. Location: TBA. Info: http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/advisory-committees/police-relations-committee.aspx
Jan 22-24 Fri. 7:15pm thru Sun. 12:00 noon	Discerning Life Choices for Women. In silence and stillness, allow yourself to become soft clay in the Hands of the Potter asking what is God's plan for your life. We'll open with prayer and guided meditation and close with group sharing and a closing prayer and ritual. Cost: \$160, with spiritual direction \$195. The Priory Spirituality Center, 500 College St NE, Lacey 98516, 438-2595
Jan 31 Sunday 1:30pm	This Changes Everything. The Climate Action Team of the Fellowship of Reconciliation is going to show Naomi Kline's new movie at North Thurston HS. The movie will be followed by a one hour community conversation. Interfaith Works is co-sponsoring. 600 Sleater Kinney Rd NE, Olympia, WA 98506
Feb 5 Friday 7:00-8:30pm	1st Fridays at Unity of Olympia. Film showing: <i>A Course in Miracles</i> movie. Cost: free. Donations benefit Interfaith Works, the featured local Non-Profit this month. Unity of Olympia 1335 Fern St. SW, Olympia, WA 98502. Info: 943-5757.
Feb 13 Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm	Meditation for Beginners. We will learn basic traditional and contemporary meditation techniques as practiced in Christianity and other major world spiritual traditions. There will be time for practice, discussion, journaling, and sharing. No meditation experience necessary. Cost: \$50. Bring a sack lunch, journal and prayer shawls, prayer benches, and/or cushion if you have any.



PO Box 1221
 Olympia WA 98507
www.interfaith-works.org



SOS! We need a donation of a new refrigerator at the Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter

The donation of new refrigeration for the shelter will be most appreciated. We hope that some individual(s) or group may find this a perfect, practical gift to give. Contact Meg Martin, (360) 545-3176.

**2016 CROP Hunger Walk is May 1st
 Time to Start Organizing!**

People from every faith tradition and walk of life are concerned about hunger. Interfaith Works co-sponsors the **Thurston County CROP Hunger Walk** each year on the first Sunday of May.



Volunteer walkers raise funds for local hunger-relief organizations and to fund humanitarian projects around the world. Last May, the walk raised more than \$35,000! We hope to exceed that on May 1, 2016, and with your help we will. If you can help with recruiting walkers, helping secure sponsors, selling T-shirts, and a myriad of other things, please let us know.

You can find out more on the CROP page on our website at <http://interfaith-works.org/about-iw/programs-projects/crop-hunger-walk/>.

Patti Logan is Interfaith Works' liaison to the CROP committee and can be reached at patti_logan@juno.com.

Thanks for your help. **We can't do it without you.**

Consider making a donation to Interfaith Works. Your tax-deductible gift will help us meet our 2016 budget needs and support the work we do each day on so many fronts. For forty one years, we have always depended on the support of our members—a truly local organization with local priorities. You can print, clip & use the donation form below. Thank you.

Make checks payable to Interfaith Works; PO Box 1221; Olympia, WA 98507

Or, use your credit card on **PayPal**.

You can link from our website: www.interfaith-works.org

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

ENCLOSED \$1200 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____
"Bridgebuilder"

PLEDGE for a total gift of \$ _____ Monthly Quarterly Other _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____



Your gift to Interfaith Works, a 501 (c)(3) organization, is deductible as allowed under federal tax law.