



Fresno Metro Ministry

News and Views

November 2002

“One Song, Many Voices” Theme of Sunday, November 24 Metro Thanksgiving Concert

Choirs and other musical groups from twelve congregations will share their giving of thanks in Fresno Metro Ministry’s 29th Annual Thanksgiving Concert. The concert and reception will be held at Hope Lutheran Church from 3:00 p.m. through 5:00 p.m.

In lieu of tickets, an offering will be received. In addition, we hope to increase the number of “Friends of the Concert” from persons and congregations who will contribute \$25.00 or more in support of the concert. Please consider being a “Friend” and notify Gail Kennerson at the Metro office at 485-1416, or e-mail gail@fresnetmin.org

Choirs or other musical groups participating at the time of this writing include St. Mary of Magdala Orthodox, Hope Lutheran, College Community Congregational, Second Baptist, Wesley United Methodist, Gospel Music Workshop, Lao First Baptist, Temple Beth Israel, Unitarian-Universalist, Muslim, Christ Fellowship (Hmong).

If you can donate a pie for the reception please call the Reverend Lu Parks at 435-2690.

We hope you and others from your family and congregation will participate in this day of thanksgiving involving our multi-cultural and multi-religious community of Fresno.

METRO 32ND ANNIVERSARY DINNER PROGRAM SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, DEC. 5, 6PM-9PM

In addition to celebrating 32 years of social justice ministry in Fresno, Metro Ministry will honor three individuals and one congregation that represent Metro’s values in their lives. Ghassan Haabib will be recognized for his tireless efforts in building bridges of understanding and dialogue to non-Moslems in the community. Lucille Wheaton is honored for her life-long pursuit of social justice and equality, and for her tutoring efforts with children. County Supervisor Juan Arambula will be noted for applying both his mind and his heart for all the people of Fresno County. The Fresno Unitarian-Universalist Church will be honored for its leadership in social justice in the community.

Tickets are \$35 each, or a table of 8 for \$280. We encourage persons to reserve a table and then invite their friends to sit with them for the event. Sponsorships for the event are also available. Please contact the Metro office at 485-1416 or e-mail metromin@fresnetmin.org for more information.

Inside this issue: Metro Board statements on Ballot Measure C and the impact of war to our local community.

METRO MINISTRY BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADDRESS BALLOT MEASURE C AND DIVERTING FUNDS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY FOR POTENTIAL WAR

In its October 24 Board meeting, the Metro Ministry Board of Directors approved statements on two local issues. Of those Board members in attendance, all voted to oppose this coming Nov. 5 Measure C ballot measure in the hope that a better measure can be crafted and approved within the next two years. Regarding the statement of the impact of a war with Iraq on our local community, it was approved on a 11 to 1 vote of Board members in attendance.

BALLOT MEASURE C

“The Board of Fresno Metro Ministry regrets that this year’s Measure C proposal on the November 5 ballot includes elements that for thirty years will likely increase air pollution, promote urban sprawl, fail to solve the County’s public transportation needs, and provide too little long-term accountability. A broad cross-section of the community that will be affected was not engaged in the planning. It is likely that the ill/adverse health effects of additional pollution will disproportionately impact low-income residents because of where they live.

The Board therefore opposes this year’s ballot Measure C. We hope that a more effective ballot measure will be crafted with widespread civic participation and support within the next two years. Our unhealthy air and inadequate public transportation systems demand that we no longer do business as usual in the Central Valley.”

WAR WITH IRAQ WILL BE COSTLY TO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

“The financial and moral cost to our local community will be devastating if our President decides to engage in a “first-strike” war against Iraq or against other nations he determines to be our enemies. For thirty-two years in our local community Fresno Metro Ministry has been fighting our local enemies of poverty, hunger, hatred, lack of access to health care, and lack of helping services and healthy relationships for all our people. This local fight will be dealt a crushing blow if needed resources are further siphoned from meeting the needs of our own people and to killing and destroying other people and other communities far away from home.

Our local community is already threatened by a collapse of health care for thousands of our neighbors as federal and state funds have been diverted. Too many of our children do not get the food they need for appropriate brain development and relationship building. Many seniors this very day in the Fresno area have to decide between food and medicine. We have more, not fewer, families in poverty. High federal government leaders appear to be in collusion with utility companies to jack up the price of basic utilities even more — beyond the reach of many families and small businesses. Retirement accounts are empty.

A first strike against any nation and potential use of our nuclear arsenals will make our community, our nation, and our world a much worse place to either live or die.”

Full-Time County Public Health Officer Closer to Reality

Twelve recommendations. That what the community Public Health Officer Expanded Task Force convened by Metro and the Local Health Care Coalition produced. At the time of this writing the County is considering these recommendations for inclusion in its Job Announcement for a full-time Public Health Officer. The twelve recommendations were in response to the first draft presented by the County.

The Expanded Task Force recommended that:

- Masters of Public Health or Board certification be required,
- Preferred but not required that Board certification be in a public health specialty,
- 3 or more years public health experience,
- Policy role be included,
- Leadership in needs assessment and community public-private health care planning,
- Advisor to Board of Supervisors,
- Be advocate for community health,
- Free to state “good public health”,
- Experience in and commitment to understanding health issues of diverse cultural populations and poverty communities,
- Omit task of reviewing County employee medical exams,
- Salary expansion,
- Nation-wide search.

The full Powerpoint presentation of the recommendations is available on www.fresnometroministry.org

METRO CROSS-CULTURAL CLUSTERS HELD AT VARIOUS SITES

Sunnyside High School is engaged in a Cross-Cultural Cluster using Metro’s curriculum. Another cluster is currently being facilitated by Metro’s Rev. Ken Smiley with the Women’s Resource Center at California State University, Fresno. In addition, Rev. Smiley is facilitating another cluster in Southwest Fresno with representatives of the Oaxacan community and their new African-American and Southeast Asian neighbors.

The Fresno Metro Ministry copyrighted Cross-Cultural Clusters curriculum is based upon six two-hour sessions with persons of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. It builds relationships, and helps persons better understand not only the cultures of others, but their own as well.

Community Hunger & Nutrition Project

Forum: Nov. 13

Food Stamp EBT Card Coming to Fresno

Action Teams:

Food Stamp Advocacy Group 11/21

Community Food Assessment 11/19

Senior Nutrition Task Force 11/26

EBT Action Team 11/12 & 11/26

The need in Fresno for a Low barrier Food Pantry, accessible 7 days/week, with culturally appropriate food, and resource referral is huge.

**Peace Begins When
The Hungry are Fed**

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