



News and Views

Inside this issue:

Food Insecurity in Fresno and Tulare Counties	2, 3
Environmental Health Pages	4, 5
Notes from Rev. Walt Parry, Executive Director	6
Coming Soon! New Edition of Making Connections	7
University Presbyterian Church — Ministry of Mission	8

FRESNO'S UNINSURED CHILDREN WILL RECEIVE HEALTH COVERAGE AND CARE

The latest on the Children's Health Initiative by Laurie Primavera

First 5 Fresno County and its numerous community partners are making progress in their mission to ensure that all children in the county will have health coverage. For more than a year, Fresno Metro Ministry led the Steering Committee that has been the head and the heart of the Children's Health Initiative (CHI). The planning phase ended December 2004. Fresno Metro Ministry received a California Health Care Foundation implementation grant for \$145,000 to support Fresno's CHI program. The Steering Committee completed its work and has been replaced by the CHI Policy Committee.

The current CHI Policy Committee members include: Tim Curley, The Hospital Council; Diana Dooley, Children's Hospital of Central California; Daniel DeSantis, Fresno Regional Foundation; Don Collins, Fresno County Board of Education; Barbara Miller, Fresno Unified School Nursing Program; Dr. Ed Moreno, Fresno County Community Health Department; Julie Hornback, Fresno County Employment and Temporary Assistance; Dr. Gary Zomalt, Fresno County Dept of Children and Family Services; Laurie Primavera, Fresno Metro Ministry; Norma Forbes, Healthy Communities Access Program (HCAP); Keith Bergthold, PICO; Hugo Morales, Radio Bilingue; Dr. Richard Krieg-

baum, United Way; Steve Newvine, Chamber of Commerce.

The Policy Committee will provide oversight to the implementation phase for Fresno's CHI. Progress to date in terms of program development include the following accomplishments:

California Health Collaborative has been selected as the Program Administrator for the overall Children's Health Initiative.

Fresno Health Consumer Center has been selected as the Outreach, Enrollment, retention and utilization Coordinator to community based organizations in Fresno County.

HCAP will initiate implementation of One e App software that simplifies and streamlines enrollment and eligibility processes for Fresno County families beginning July 2005.

Health Net is the selected Health Plan to deliver the Healthy Kids coverage to currently ineligible children in Fresno County.

Fresno is on track with meeting its timelines to launch the Children's Health Initiative in Fresno County by November 2005!

155,000 Low-Income Adults Struggling to Put Food on the Table in Fresno and Tulare Counties

Statement by Edie Jessup, Fresno Metro Ministry Hunger and Nutrition Coordinator

It is not our 'opinion'. We have the research, and now we have comparative data on hunger and food insecurity in California, and specifically in Fresno and Tulare Counties.

Because we have not 'gotten worse', can we celebrate that 35% -40% of adults in our two counties (below 200% of poverty) don't know where the next meal is coming from at times during the year, or that our neighbors are going hungry?

I think not. Doing no worse than 2001 is not doing better. What is Food Insecurity? Lack of assured access to enough food for an active healthy life through socially acceptable means is food insecurity. Hunger is the result. Lack of income and living wage jobs are the cause.

The California Health Interview Study (CHIS), released by UCLA, on June 7, 2005 (Hunger Awareness Day) shows that there is a rise by 5% in food insecurity in California. 2.9 million people do not have reliable access to enough food because of economic resources.

The highest rates of food insecurity are in the San Joaquin Valley. In Fresno at least 100,000 and Tulare 55,000 of your neighbors are food insecure and at risk of hunger.

The gravest concerns throughout California are the rise in hunger among these populations:

- Adults 65 and older. Grandma and Grandpa are hungry; only in California are SSI recipients not allowed to participate in the Food Stamp program (even though they qualify by income).

- Low-income, pregnant women. 40.7% of low-income pregnant women were food insecure in 2003, resulting in an increase in poor health for mom, and impairing a new generation.
- Low-income homes with children. 38.3% are food insecure and 10.9% are experiencing hunger.
- Unemployed adults. 40.4% are food insecure.
- Low-income wage workers are the fastest growing population who are likely to run out of food every month.

The rise in food insecurity is even more predominant in local Latino, African American and Asian populations, all of whom have worsened situations in the two years between 2001-2003.

Beyond the fact that this is unnecessary— (unnecessary because there is plenty of food), Hunger and Food Insecurity costs our society in medical care, costs our society in children not ready to learn in school, and adults unable to work and contribute to the common good in our communities.

The CHIS Survey of Food Insecurity and Hunger in California is a monumental and reputable study recognizing hunger as a critical measure of health. It is the largest health survey ever conducted in any state.

Yet we know that it did not capture the real number of hungry people in our two counties. The numbers of hungry neighbors is even higher than the 155,000 reported because only people who had 'land-line' phones and spoke English were interviewed.

We must act on the findings. 155,000 adults are at risk of hunger in Fresno and Tulare Counties. Plus, we must consider farmworkers were not surveyed as well as monolingual persons other than English speakers and children who were not counted in this study.

We cannot ignore this data. We cannot ignore the real people, our neighbors, who are suffering.

The Food Banks (Community Food Bank in Fresno, and Foodlink Tulare County) deal day to day with supplying food to hungry people through the emergency food system. They both have the expertise. They know the extent of hunger, and they know what our local capacity for responding to that hunger is through emergency food. They do critical work for our communities responding to hunger — but admit that they only have enough food to respond to 1/3 of the need.

The CHIS data on Food Insecurity and Hunger just released is a start on truly addressing the systemic issues that we must answer. Both Fresno and Tulare County Board of Supervisors have declared themselves 'Food Stamp Friendly Counties'. That requires action on their part, and a review of the Food Stamp/Employment and Temporary Assistance office. Enrollment of all eligible for food stamps would go a long way toward solving a month to month issue for low wage/low income people. Full enrollment in the Food Stamp Program would bring in \$89 million in federal dollars to the Fresno County economy. Why are we not doing that?

Why are our federal child nutrition programs not covering all children with good food at school with breakfast, lunch, and after school snacks? Why are we adults not seeing that all kids get summer lunch? (Summer Lunch is being served at 80 sites throughout the city and county.) Why are there threats to cutting WIC and seniors nutrition programs?

We have work to do. The answer to the CHIS data on hunger and food insecurity is to assure that wages and supplemental programs, --until families have enough income to put food on the table-- must cover a month's worth of living expenses and food.

Join the Foodbanks and Fresno Metro

Ministry to assure that the federal, state, and local programs are sufficient for a healthy community. If you want more information on these programs join us at the Community Hunger & Nutri-

tion Forums and in our Food Resources task group. 'The State of the Plate' here in Fresno can change. Help us solve the problem revealed by the CHIS data by helping charitably with groceries for today, and advocating for systems that do not discriminate, that do assure food on the table on an ongoing basis for all our neighbors through normal access to healthy food by all and full utilization of the federal nutrition programs.

There is nothing more humiliating than an adult having to beg for food for their children or for themselves. There is nothing more humiliating for my community than to withhold food and programs that can answer the hunger of my neighbors. Let's get busy.

The California Health Interview Survey on Food Insecurity and Hunger in California is available at www.cfpa.net and on Fresno Metro Ministry's website www.fresnometroministry.org.

This is not Emergency Hunger. It is systemic hunger, politically endorsed, because we as a community allow it to continue.



Air Quality and Environmental Health Updates



Hello Metro Community! It has been a crazy time for the Environmental Health Program here at Metro. One big change is that Carolina Simunovic, our Environmental Health Director will be on Maternity Leave for the months of July and August. In her absence I have been hired as Acting Environmental Health Director.

As a new face at Metro, I wanted to take this time to introduce myself. My name is Daniela Simunovic. I recently graduated from St. Mary's College of California, with a B.A. in Sociology and a Minor in Justice and the Community. As you may have guessed, I am also Carolina's sister. My interest in our valley's fight for clean air was sparked in 2003 at an environmental justice conference I attended with my sister. Following that conference I participated in the last two Clean Air Action Lobby days in Sacramento, have attended various other air quality events with Carolina, and have followed the major air quality issues through my sister's work.

As an asthmatic and a 15-year resident of the San Joaquin Valley, I feel deeply passionate and committed to the fight for Clean Air in our Valley. I look forward to helping continue Metro's strong presence in the fight for the next few months. If you have any questions feel free to contact me by email at daniela@fresnometmin.org, or by phone at (559) 485-1416.

On the Policy Front ...

In Sacramento. **SB 999:** The "Healthy Children, Healthy Communities, and Healthy Economy in the San Joaquin Valley Act of 2005", which was the main focus of our recent Clean Air Action Day is chugging along through the State Assembly.

If passed into law this bill would add much needed public health expertise to the Governing Board of the San Joaquin Valley Air District. These are the people in charge of cleaning our air, but as of now, they have no public health experts on this board. 999 was originally written to include four public health experts: a doctor with expertise in air quality, an environmental scientist, a transportation and land use specialist, and an environmental justice representative.

But in order to survive a narrow death in the Assembly's Local Government Committee, in June, it was amended to add only a doctor with expertise in air quality, and an environmental scientist. While this was a disappointing

change we were glad to see the bill make progress. Last week it was passed out of the Natural Resources Committee.

The next step for 999 is the Appropriations Committee, which will happen in August when the Legislature returns from summer break, and then hopefully the floor. This bill is the air quality bill of the year. We encourage you to call your Assembly member. We think the addition of the two new members will result in our having cleaner air.

Asm. Arambula: (559) 445-5532

Asm. Villines: (559) 446-2029

Meanwhile at the Air District...

There are currently 2 hot issues being discussed that you may have already heard about in the news. The first deals with the dairies and the pollution they create. David Crow, the Air Pollution Control Officer at the

district, has until August 1st to determine exactly how much pollution these cows are creating. Metro was involved in the advisory group set up to study the science and recommend an emissions factor. The emissions factor Mr. Crow is supporting is 20.6 lbs/head of cow/year, which is much higher than the dairy industry's preference of 5.6 but still under the 35-40 lbs/head/year that we at Metro feel is more protective of public health. On July 13th there was a heated public workshop on this issue where Metro among with others presented our opinion. Mr. Crow must now go back to the drawing board to make his final recommendation. If you have time, call him and urge him to make the best decision for public health, and choose a factor of 35-40. Phone Mr. Crow at (559) 230-6000.

The district is also currently developing a rule that would impose an air pollution fee on new developments including new homes, new commercial buildings, and new industrial buildings because new development means more driving, which means more pollution. On June 30th there was a workshop on this rule.

The new rule is being called D.E.S.I.G.N. (Decreasing Emissions' Significant Impact from Growth and New development.) The main idea is to encourage developers to pollute less, and to have them make financial contributions that will be used to help clean the air.

Fresno Metro Ministry Staff:

Rev. Walt Parry

Executive Director

Laurie Primavera, RN, MSN

Director, Healthcare Policy

Carmen Arambula

Assistant Director, Healthcare Policy

Edie Jessup

Hunger and Nutrition Coordinator

Jeremy Hofer

Hunger and Nutrition Assistant

Phoua Moua

Hunger and Nutrition & Outreach

Carolina Simunovic

Environmental Health Director (on leave)

Daniela Simunovic

Acting Environmental Health Director

Socorro Gaeta

Environmental Health & Outreach

Ellie Stokle

Bookkeeper

Carmen Pauls Wiens

Office Manager

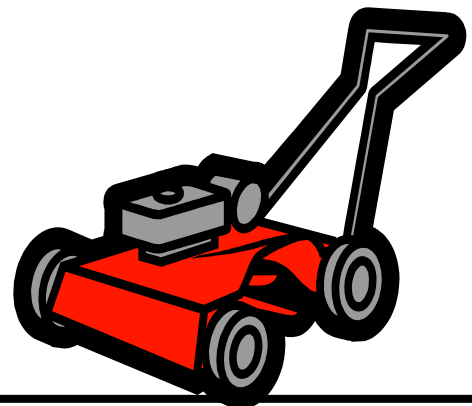
On-Call:

Patsy Finster, Office Assistant

Rev, Kenn Smiley, Cross-Cultural Clusters

Air Pollution 101: Did you know...

**I gasoline lawn mower
running for one hour pol-
lutes as much as
40 running cars!**





Metro Ministry Updates

Rev. Walt Parry, Executive Director

New Board Members Added at Metro's June 23 Annual Meeting

"We have one of her books upstairs, and it's good" my wife responded when she saw that **Dympna Ugwu-Oju** was joining the Metro Board. Dympna is one of six new Board members voted on in the Annual meeting held at First Congregational Church. She is the author of [What Will My Mother Say—A Tribal African Girl Comes of Age in America](#). She is also a professor of journalism at Fresno City College, and Guest Columnist for The Fresno Bee.

Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, another new Metro Board member, has served as assistant editor, production manager, researcher, and translator for a variety of international and national video productions. Kamal's work in multi-faith understanding and appreciation has also been accomplished through his work with the Interfaith Alliance. He currently serves as the Director of the Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno. Kamal founded the Youth Community Service Project that brings youth from various religions together in community service.

The Reverend **Michael Harrell**, pastor of the Kerman United Methodist Church, was also voted onto the Board. Having earned his Masters of Divinity at Claremont School of Theology, Michael previously served as pastor in Taft, California and as Youth Pastor in Tulare. He is co-chair of the Kerman Area Ministerial Association, and serves on several United Methodist District and Conference committees.

Staff Attorney for California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. **Alegria De La Cruz** is another new Metro Ministry board member. While earning her degree at Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California, Alegria served as Editor-In-Chief of Berkeley La Raza Law Journal. Her work with

CRLA is focused upon the unique issues facing California's indigenous farmworker community.

Sengthiene Bosavanh serves as an advocate with Fresno Health Consumer Center Project through Central California Legal Services. Sengthiene anticipates receiving her law degree in May of 2006 at San Joaquin College of Law. She has previously worked as an independent consultant and as an Adjunct Professor in areas of mediation and communications. Her volunteer work has been with many Southeast Asian organizations, and is a member of the Fresno County Mental Health Board.

Now retired, **Dr. Merlyn Price, M.D.** served in private practice as a Family Practice physician. Previously he had been on the faculty of UCSF at Valley Medical Center, and had been engaged in rural health resident training. One of his recent volunteer projects has been in securing medical books for the West Indies. He is originally from Spain.

We welcome these new and diverse Board members. Board officers for the coming year are Tony Gonzales as President, the Reverend Lu Parks as vice president, Alan Peters as Treasurer, Pat Pickford as Development Director, and the Reverend Floyd Quenzer as Secretary. Other members of the board are Dr. Hengameh Akhtaar, M.D., Ruthann Evans, Jim Grant, Mary Ellen Guerrero Clay, Dr. Jane Middleton, Patience Milrod, Maureen Moore, Susan Moran, Ruth Obel Jorgenson, Forouz Radnejad, Reverend Steve Ratzlaff, Rev. Michael Rogers, Dr. Vida Samiian, and Dr. Terry Winant. Individuals who completed their board term this past June include Laurie Labbitt, Alice Rocha, Reverend Bryan Jessup, Francine Oputa, and Pierre St. Fleur.

www.fresnometroministry.org

To become a "Friend of Making Connections," visit www.fresnometroministry.org and click on Donations. Make a secure, credit-card donation of \$35.00. On the line "donation for" please indicate "Friend of Making Connections." Thanks for your support!

Temporary and Long-Term Staff Changes

Phoua Moua who has worked with Metro's Hunger and Nutrition Project for three years will enter law school in Sacramento in August. We appreciate the good work that Phoua has done and wish her the very best in her future. Maybe, some day we can vote for Phoua for Governor!

Daniela Simunovic is serving as Acting Director of Metro's Environmental Health Project for two months during her sister Carolina's two-month leave.

The Reverend Kenn

Smiley who has been serving as a quarter-time employee with Metro is now an "on-call" employee to be engaged for specific Cross-Cultural Cluster and other specific tasks as needed.



In the Community

The Reverend David Finster, Pastor of Fresno's First Congregational Church (The Big Red Church) has announced that he will take permanent medical disability in September. David and his wife Pasty plan to remain in Fresno.

Our condolences are extended to The Reverend David Schlicher upon the recent death of his dad. David pastors College Community Congregational Church, U.C.C. in Fresno.

Opportunity to Support Metro's Making Connections: Community Resource Directory!

Making Connections: A Community Resource Directory is currently gearing up for production of its 2005-06 edition. For the past 15 years, Fresno Metro Ministry has gathered, organized, and updated this directory of non-profit and governmental agencies engaged in providing services and resources to the greater Fresno area. This extensive and valuable resource provides over 350 listings of agencies' contact and specific service information. The purpose of **Making Connections** is to assist individuals and families to connect to the helping services they need. Furthermore, this directory has enabled agencies to link services and collaborate among themselves to gain greater outreach to a wider base of our population. **Making Connections** and Metro need your help. By becoming a friend, you are supporting the development of a stronger, healthier Fresno. "Friends" will be listed in the Directory as supporters of **Making Connections**.

To become a friend, visit ww.fresnometroministry.org and click on donations. Make a secure, credit-card donation of \$35.00 and indicate "Friend of Making Connections" on the "purpose of donation" line. Or, return the bottom portion of this sheet to Carmen Pauls Wiens at the Metro office by August 10. If you have any questions, please contact Carmen at ph. 485-1416 or carmen@fresnometmin.org. Thank you!

We would like to be listed as a "Friend of Making Connections" for a \$35.00 donation.

Please send an invoice to the address below.

\$35.00 enclosed.

We would like to pre-order copies of the 2005-06 Directory at \$7.00 each.

Please send us an invoice.

Your name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

E-mail:

Return in the enclosed envelope by August 10 to Fresno Metro Ministry, 1055 N. Van Ness Avenue, Suite H; Fresno, CA 93728.

No Fences Make Good Neighbors:

University Presbyterian Church Reaches out to People in Need Next Door and Beyond

According to Dave Miller, member of the Ministry of Mission at University Presbyterian Church, no fences make good neighbors.

The mission ministry at University Presbyterian Church is making an effort to reach out to people in their neighborhood. The church is surrounded by apartments – high income and low income. Amid concrete parking lots and apartment buildings, a beautiful park, part of the church grounds, attracts neighbors. The park is accessible. A rather unique phenomenon in Fresno – this park no fence.

One Saturday evening, Dave approached the church and found 35 – 40 family members celebrating a child's 8th birthday at the park – bounce house and all. "With no open spaces in the neighborhood, this part of the church becomes the open space," says Dave. "There are trees, grass, a basketball hoop. People bring pets and kids. Sometimes there are even go-karts driving around the parking lot, or youngsters learning how to drive from parents or other mentors. The park is an extension of the mission of the church. At the birthday party that Saturday evening, someone asked me: 'What kind of church is this?' It's an opportunity to invite

our neighbors to join with us not only for worship, but for the larger mission of the church."

"Reel Theology" is one of the programs offered at the University Presbyterian which attracts people from the neighborhood. Participants watch movies, followed by discussion. *Chariots of Fire*, *Treasure of Sierra Madre*, and *Time Bend* are some of the recent features. "Our lives are filled with entertainment," Dave says. "The purpose of 'Reel Theology' is social – to gather people to watch a movie which provokes thought and discussion."

In 2004, members of the mission committee

devoted time to visiting five local missions. They evaluated twenty local, state, national and international funded missions. They participated in the Summer Youth Program at FIRM, the Crop Walk, FIRM's Home-Based Care Kit Program, their own Neighborhood Program, and dozens of other local mission projects. On an international level, the congregation responded to people in need in Sudan and Iran after natural disasters and civil unrest. In all, thirty-three individuals and organizations – and by extension, the thousands and thousands of lives they touch --

benefited from the generosity and service-minded ministry of University Presbyterian church in 2004.

In 2005, University Presbyterian continues to reach out to neighbors near and far. This summer, University Presbyterian will help sponsor a summer camp for children in cooperation with Bethany Baptist Church and First Presbyterian.

**Help Stop
Hunger!**

**Plan now to
join Crop Walk
2005**

When: Sunday, October 16, 2.30 pm

Where: Westside Church of God, Fresno

**For more info:
Phone Al Evans at 435-7439.**

University Presbyterian Church

Chris Erdman, *Pastor*

Tedd Lyons, *Pastor for Christian Education and Discipleship*

Sharon Stanley, *Parish Associate for Cross-Cultural Mission*

Michael and Pamela Caldwell, *Ministers of Music*



Fresno Metro Ministry

1055 N Van Ness Ave., Suite H
Fresno, CA 93728

Phone: 559-485-1416
Fax: 559-485-9109

metromin@fresnometmin.org
www.fresnometroministry.org

Working together to build a better community.