



Interfaith-Works.org



50 Years of Interfaith Works

OUR ROOTS RUN DEEP

Interfaith Works is a coalition of faith-based communities and affiliated organizations that work together to serve the community through charitable, social, and educational endeavors. Our two primary areas of focus are Interfaith Relations and Homeless Services.



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Olympia, WA 98506

SERGIO'S SERVICE CENTER

3501 Mary Elder Rd NE
Olympia, WA 98506

SANDY'S FLATS

909 Capitol Way S
Olympia, WA 98501

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2024-2025 Interfaith Works Board of Directors

Officers

- **President:** Marcy LaViolette, City of Olympia, member of First United Methodist Church of Olympia (FUMCO)
- **Vice President:** Christa Lensen, City of Olympia
- **Past President:** Lisa Gosiaco, Washington State Department of Social & Health Services
- **Secretary:** Carolyn Cox, Lacey City Council member
- **Treasurer:** Nancy Eastham, retired from The Evergreen State College- Business Analyst position, worships at Temple Beth Hatfiloh

Directors

- **Mary Wharton**, retired school counselor, member of Holy Wisdom Inclusive Catholic Community
- **Brianne Adams**, Olympia Federal Savings
- **Robert Dandy**, Co-Execute Director at Community Kinetics
- **Deb Tarbert**, Association for Talent Development (ATD)
- **Sandy Crowell**, Thurston County Historic Commission Emeritus, Program Council committee to research priests of Squaxin Park
- **Steve Reinmuth**, Attorney, member of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

Staff

We prioritize hiring people who reflect our culture, aspirations and the experiences of our guests. This includes people with diverse spiritual and professional backgrounds to those with lived and living experience with mental health and substance use challenges, homelessness, poverty, and trauma.

- **Administration:** 14 Staff Members
- **Interfaith Relations:** 2 Staff Member
- **Homeless Services - Shelter & Sergio's:** 55 Staff Members
- **Integrative Services - Navigation Team & Mental Health:** 17 Staff Members



Interfaith Works Timeline

Associated Ministries - The 1970s: The First Decade

While Interfaith Works is celebrating its 50th anniversary of incorporation, its beginnings can be traced back to 1968, with the founding of the Thurston County Council of Churches. This brought together the leaders of local Churches to promote ecumenical engagement. After five years under the Council of Churches umbrella, Interfaith Works (as Associated Ministries or AM) was incorporated as a coalition of congregations. The energies of the mostly clergy leaders were focused toward establishing and stabilizing the new organization.

There was an emphasis on Christian ecumenical and unity programs, including an ecumenical summer camp, pulpit and choir exchanges, and Easter Sunrise Service in the capitol rotunda.

Early projects focused on addressing needs of people in prison, leading to creation of an ecumenical jail ministry. President Betty Utter helped lead the creation of The Friendship Circle, serving the religious needs of disabled persons. Other work focused on support for the growing Indochinese immigrant community and establishment of a new hospice program, later absorbed into St. Peter Hospital.

After several years operating out of the home of Executive Administrator, Nancy Hoff, Associated Ministries' first office was opened in a rented closet at First Christian Church in 1977. True to form, First Christian insisted on donating the monthly rent payments of \$40 back to Associated Ministries!

Annual Days of Awareness (a format originally developed by First United Methodist Church and the local Council of Churches) were organized around topics of pressing public concerns. These reflected early on a strong interest in family and youth issues.

The 1976 Day of Awareness led to creation of the Thurston County Family Court, an effort supported by Superior Court Judge (later Supreme Court Justice) Gerry Alexander.

In the late 1970s, greater efforts were directed to legislative advocacy on social issues. Publication began in *The Olympian* of a regular column called *Pastor's Perspective*. AM sponsored one of the earliest local forums addressing Gay Rights in Thurston County in April 1978.

Hospice Session Slated

What is a Hospice?

Do we need one in Thurston County?

These and other questions will be answered at a workshop on the hospice concept Monday, May 22, in the First Christian Church, 701 S. Franklin.

The workshop will begin at 5 p.m. and continue until 10. Participants will be served a light supper for a donation of \$2.

Discussing the historical, philosophical and religious perspectives of death and dying, including ancient and modern rituals, will be Dr. Stewart Govig, professor of religion at Pacific Lutheran University. Seattle Hospice personnel will concentrate on the medical aspects and the involvement of persons within such a program.

The workshop is free and open to all persons wishing to become supportive of the Capitol Hospice of Thurston County, sponsors of the workshop, according to Cathy Anderson, chairperson.



DR. STEWART GOVIG

Reservations must be made by Friday and may be made by calling Cathy, 866-3700, Associated Ministries of Thurston County, 357-7224 or Madge Wells after 3 p.m., 491-2105.

May 14, 1978, *Daily Olympian*

Associated Ministries - The 1980s: The Second Decade

The 1980s saw continuing involvement in social issues and an increasing focus on sheltering and homeless needs. As the previous decade came to a close, the AM leadership began efforts to transition from a Christian ecumenical organization to embrace an interfaith identity, with the inclusion of the local Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Early in 1980 outreach efforts were made to the Jewish leadership of Temple Beth Hatfiloh. This led to an increase in interfaith programming.

The Mayor's Prayer Breakfast (later Community Prayer Breakfast) was initiated, bringing together faith leaders and elected officials in a non-denominational setting to reflect, express unity and share common concerns. Additional member congregations joined Associated Ministries. Membership expanded to include non-Christian faith communities:

- Temple Beth Hatfiloh 1982
- Friends Meeting (Quaker) 1986
- Unity of Olympia 1986
- Olympia Baha'is 1988

Gladys Burns, social worker and Unitarian Universalist member, led the charge on a host of social and health concerns, energetically addressing poverty issues, healthcare access, child welfare and other topics. She worked closely with students from The Evergreen State College to involve them in social concerns.

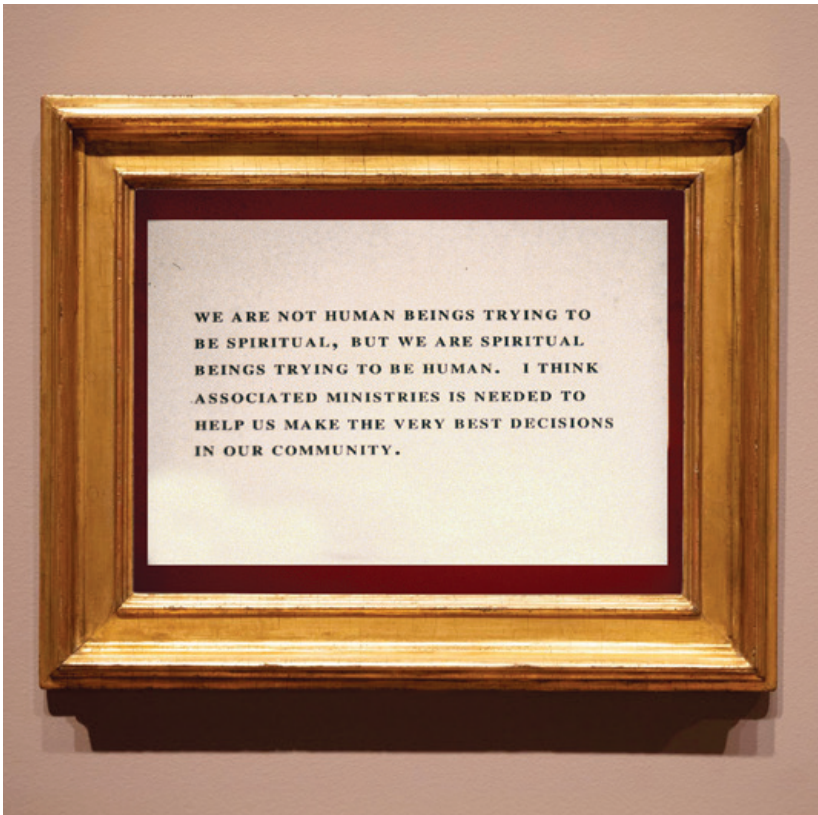
An interfaith potluck was initiated and took place several times a year. The first annual Thanksgiving Celebration was held in November of 1984. The proposed 1985 budget was \$17,281.

AM's office was relocated in 1985 to a house adjacent to Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and owned by the church. The office was initially shared with a newly-formed organization, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Thurston County.

The mid-1980s saw a population increase in Thurston County,

including a growing non-white population. AM sought ways to engage locally and internationally through partnership with the Church World Service organization, to meet the needs of diverse populations, particularly in relation to hunger. A local Indochinese Forum was held, and later a Refugee Center was established at one of the congregations, staffed by volunteers through the AM network. The topic for the 1989 Day of Awareness was “Faces of the County: Cultural Diversity of Thurston County” which featured panel discussion on diversity as it related to county and city affairs.

A 1986 estimate of general volunteers supporting AM counted 221 individuals donating 2500 hours. Nancy Hoff retired in 1989, succeeded as Executive Director by Keturah Brown.



Associated Ministries - The 1990s: The Third Decade

The start of the 1990s found AM again discerning its goals and priorities. At its annual retreat, the Board (which was still composed of clerical and lay delegates from each member community) sought input from the group to evaluate existing programs, determine priorities for the future, and discuss ways to involve more of the community to address social and health programs. At the heart of the retreat was the continued central question, “What does it mean to be an interfaith organization in terms of how we live out our lives?” The closing of the 1990 retreat identified AMs three-pronged role in the community as Communicator, Celebrant, and Catalyst.



What does it mean to be an interfaith organization in terms of how we live out our lives?

AM deepened its commitment to direct service for the homeless by coordinating the annual winter emergency overflow shelter to meet gaps and assumed a greater community leadership role in addressing homelessness. Homelessness was the topic for the Day of Awareness planned for February 1991. November 1990 launched the beginning of the AM sponsored annual Winter emergency overflow shelter for homeless women and families. This was hosted on a rotating basis by ten AM member faith communities that had sufficient space, with organizational volunteers providing on-site service. During its first year the Emergency Overflow Shelter operated 950 bed nights.

Homeless Advocates Networking Development (Project HAND) was organized and operated between 1990-95 to help homeless and struggling families and to serve as a clearinghouse of resources.

Ken Schwilk came on as Executive Director in 1991, serving until 1994. He was succeeded by Cheri Gonyaw in 1994.

After careful consideration, AM dropped sponsorship of Easter Sunrise Service, underscoring its identity as an interfaith organization by stating, “We come together as people of faith. We acknowledge our differences but affirm that, though different, we come together with a unity of purpose and a desire to grow in our appreciation and understanding of each other’s faith traditions.”

Throughout the 1990s, AM strengthened its community linkages with other area organizations and institutions serving human needs and social justice. A Summer Food Service Program was developed to provide lunches to 300-350 children/youth living in low-income apartment complexes.

In 1996 the Clergy Breakfast was initiated to bring together area clergy, members of AM or not, for engagement and collaboration.

AM launched Spiritual Care for the Sick and Dying in the late 1990s, a series of programs and workshops involving multi-faith leaders and professionals. The program was spearheaded by Connie Walker of St. Peter Hospital and St. Michael Parish.

Community Story

Most of the time I was involved, we rotated the shelter in two-week stints from one congregation to another. All the supplies had to be moved, and then there was the laundry. Sometimes, I spent a whole day at the laundromat frantically washing 40 beds worth of sheets and blankets. There was a big bedding sale at Bed Bath and Beyond. So here’s my husband and me pushing carts loaded up higher than we can see around them. As my husband walked by one woman with her mouth open, he said, “Big family.” And I have never forgotten that. We are all one family if we will only admit it.

KATHY ERLANDSON
FORMER INTERFAITH WORKS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2000s: The Fourth Decade

Kathy Erlandson became Executive Director in 2000. The office relocated to Tumwater United Methodist Church and we created our first website! Membership of diverse faith communities continued to expand.

The organization formally adopted its new name, Interfaith Works (IW), in 2004. IW emphasizes faith and intercultural initiatives, along with broadened support for a range of community initiatives. Membership increased to include the First Church of Christ Scientist and Islamic communities.

Study circles for interfaith dialogue were held, breaking down barriers between faiths and building relationships.

IW's response in the aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy focused on creating tolerance and respect in our community, with a strong demonstration of support for and solidarity with our Muslim neighbors.

The Interfaith Works Emergency Overflow Shelter for women and families continued to provide thousands of bednights each winter. The shelter operated on a rotating basis at 11-12 congregations, staffed by over 400 volunteers each season.

CROP Walk grew rapidly to become one of the largest walks in the region.

The Puget Sound Interfaith Youth Camp, organized jointly between IW and Associated Ministries of Pierce County, opened in the summer of 2006. Dozens of campers and their families are enriched through this popular program.

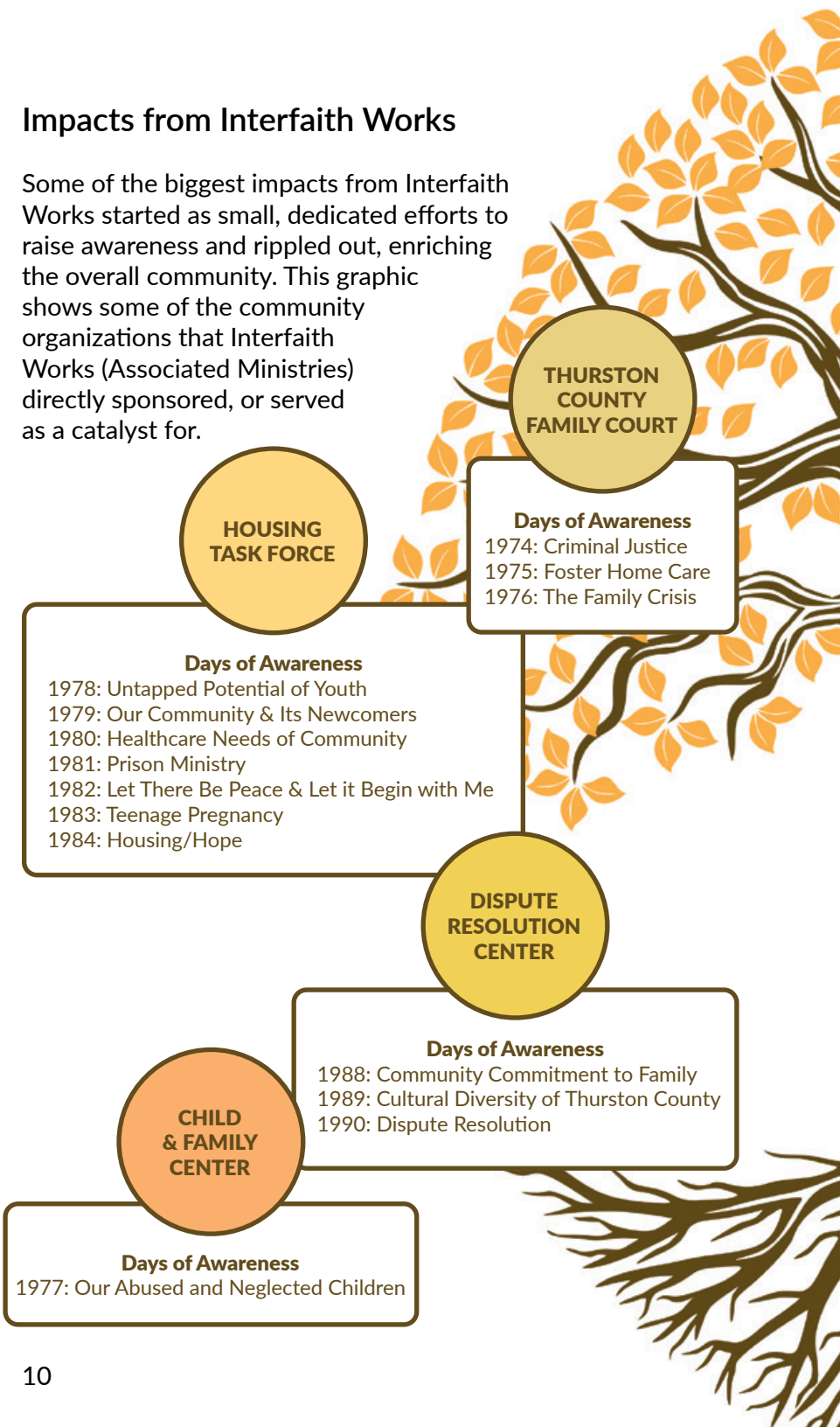
Moments of Blessing began in 2004 in response to incidences of homicide in our community.

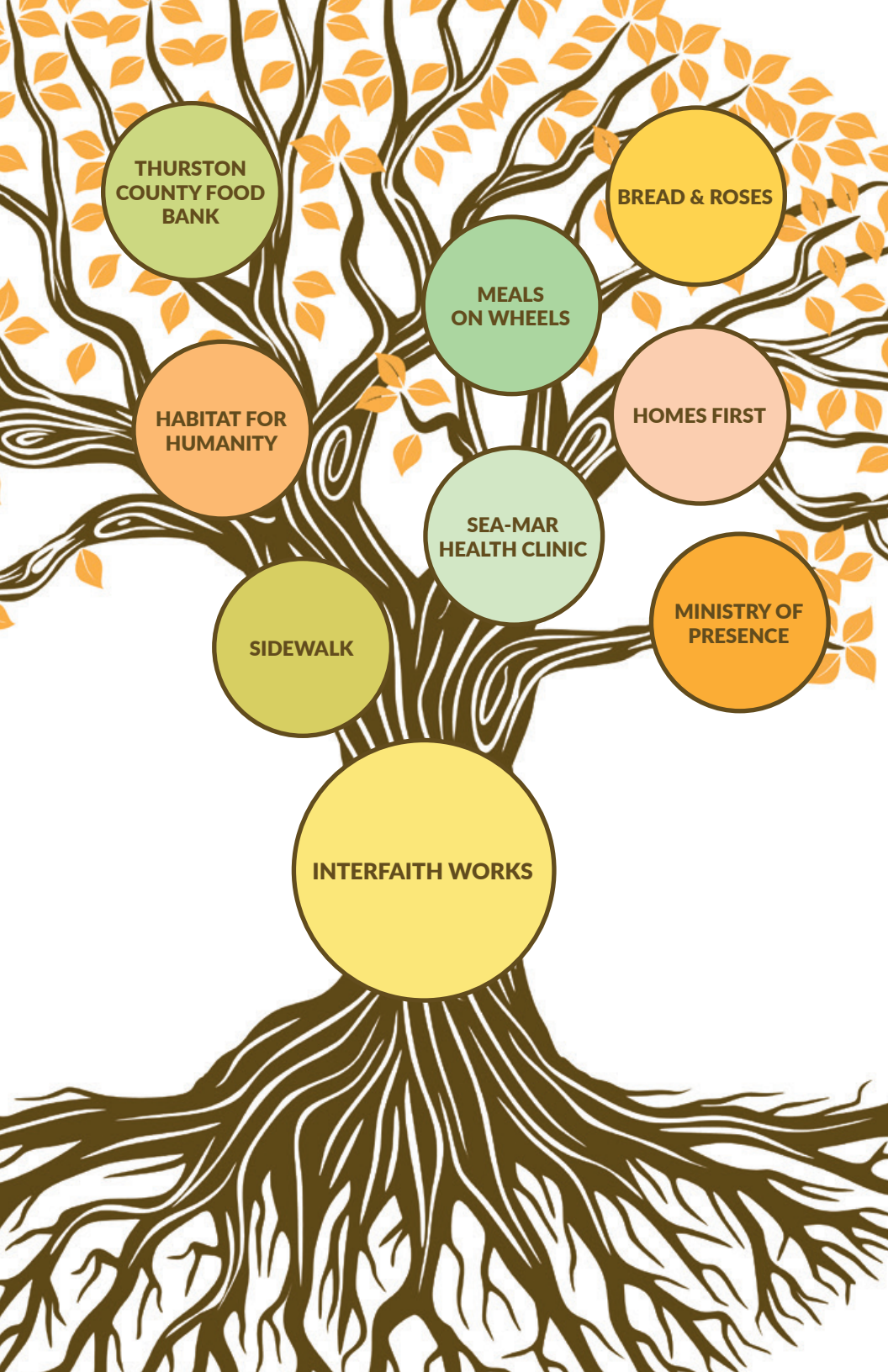
Community Meditation for Global Peace organized a 24-hour silent peace vigil on the Capitol Campus.

A new interfaith Earth Stewardship committee formed to educate, raise awareness and celebrate the environment.

Impacts from Interfaith Works

Some of the biggest impacts from Interfaith Works started as small, dedicated efforts to raise awareness and rippled out, enriching the overall community. This graphic shows some of the community organizations that Interfaith Works (Associated Ministries) directly sponsored, or served as a catalyst for.





**THURSTON
COUNTY FOOD
BANK**

BREAD & ROSES

**MEALS
ON WHEELS**

**HABITAT FOR
HUMANITY**

HOMES FIRST

**SEA-MAR
HEALTH CLINIC**

SIDEWALK

**MINISTRY OF
PRESENCE**

INTERFAITH WORKS

Interfaith Works – The 2010s: The Fifth Decade

Kathy Erlandson retired and Danny Kadden became Executive Director. In the winter of 2013, Meg Martin and Cassie Burke (two long term Emma Goldman Youth Homeless Outreach Project - EGYHOP volunteers) took over the coordination of the rotating women's emergency shelter. It was hosted in one location, in the sanctuary, music room, and library of First Christian Church with IW faith member communities taking two week rotating volunteer shifts. Due to a need for more community support to fill all the gaps in the volunteer shift, a group of Evergreen students took on a two week shift and this was how several of our original staff members were introduced to the world of IW sheltering.

Community Story

I started accessing services with Interfaith Works right after they opened their shelter on Franklin Street in 2014. I was getting out of a very bad situation and was homeless for the first time in my life. I had nowhere to go and Interfaith Works took me in with open arms. Meg, and EVERYONE there saved my life. I was in a bad place and they supported me no matter what, good or bad.

I am now in a better place mentally, have stable housing and am ready to finish taking my life back. I can never repay all the love and support the staff gave me but I can do my best to help others. Everyone deserves a chance, hope, a smile and an ear. Not everyone wants help, some just want someone to listen and say it will be ok. No one deserves to be judged for being homeless.

FORMER SHELTER GUEST

On November 1st, 2014 after a 14 month community struggle to find a suitable location, the 30 bed IW Emergency Overnight Shelter opened for year round service in the basement of First Christian Church. The original 12 staff members operated the shelter from 7pm-7am daily with the help of trained volunteers primarily from member faith communities.

In 2014 the All Souls/Day of the Dead service (later named Day of Remembrance) was offered. This service is planned in coordination with the Thurston County Coroner to honor those who died but whose remains were unclaimed, as well as those who died by suicide and those who died while experiencing homelessness.

In the winter of 2015 IW worked together with United Churches of Olympia and First Christian Church to coordinate day center space during severe winter weather events. This led to an expanded effort in 2016 to operate a warming center out of the old Alpine Experience building in downtown Olympia for the duration of the season. Simultaneous efforts to co-create a clinic and community services hub between Interfaith Works, SideWalk, and Providence Behavioral Health were underway. These efforts led to the opening of the Community Care Center in 2017. This program operated until March of 2020 when the hospital decided to close it at the beginning of the pandemic. At that moment, IW and First Christian decided to transition the nightly shelter to 24 hour services which continue to this day.



During this decade more effort had been made to engage with and deepen the relationship with the local Tribes. IW supported a canoe journey titled, “Paddle to Nisqually” in which members representing several Tribes would travel to the Olympia waterfront. IW promoted the event among its members and encouraged volunteer and financial support.

In 2018 Danny Kadden resigned and a new shared-leadership model was introduced with two Co-Executive Directors: Meg Martin (Homeless Services) and Lisa Gosiaco (Interfaith Relations).



When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Interfaith Works rose to the challenge. We started 2020 with one shelter with 42 overnight-only shelter beds. In response to the crisis, we opened a second shelter and increased to 61 total beds primarily for elders with compounding health conditions and began offering shelter 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When the second shelter was in jeopardy of losing its location, member community FUMCO stepped forward to host. Countless communities and community members stepped up and provided two meals a day to our guests at both locations.

Our staff and services remained a constant in the lives of our guests when the rest of the world was so uncertain. It was not in our budget to open a second location, to move from a nighttime only shelter to around-the-clock services, or to increase the number of people we were serving. Our staff and community partners rallied to make these efforts possible and keep our most vulnerable community members safe.

Interfaith Works Today

So far this decade has been full of expansion, crises, connection, and reorientation. In 2021, with the move to Unity Commons on the horizon, we crafted a strategic plan to guide our work over the next two years. We knew we needed to plan for the upcoming growth and transitions mindfully and to do it in a way that reflected the deeply held values of our guests, staff, board, and supporters. Our strategic plan has helped us guide our work, reminding us to address the roots of issues, not just the symptoms, and focus on the deep level of personalized service and connection we aim for.



In December 2021, thanks to a broad coalition of community support, and in partnership with the Low Income Housing Institute, we opened Unity Commons in Olympia. This five-story building contains a 58-bed 24/7 supportive shelter and 64 units of permanent supportive housing. Together, we supported 47 long-term shelter guests in taking the exciting and sometimes scary step of moving from the shelter, which had been their home for so long, to their very own apartments. It was deeply moving, gratifying, and humbling.



In April 2023, we opened Sergio's, a daytime resource center that provides another layer of support for individuals who experience barriers accessing services and resources. It connects people with hygiene services and vital social services like medical and mental health care.



Most recently, July 2024, we have opened Sandy's Flats, offering 26 units of permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals. Interfaith Works is committed to meeting the needs of our most vulnerable community members and neighbors.

Interfaith Works nourishes a rich tradition of programming that celebrates and honors religious and spiritual diversity in Thurston County through projects that advance work on social justice issues and personal connection. Our Interfaith Relations work includes an ongoing review of the historical legacies of racism and white supremacy that exist in our country, region, traditions, and norms as an interfaith coalition. This process has drawn us into reflection on our histories and brought us to points of reform and growth.

We will continue to uphold a commitment to decolonizing our work as we develop and implement our programs. This led to the desire to reframe the annual Thanksgiving event that had been ongoing since 1984. Thanks to the partnership with leaders and members of the Squaxin Tribe, the event was renamed “Resetting Our Sacred Table” and included Tribal participation. Most recently, leaders and members from the Nisqually Tribe participated in the event. Over the years, we have served our community in many ways and done so with joy, gratitude, and hope.



Program Council Retreat, 2024

Interfaith Works Tomorrow

IW holds a unique position in the community as both a 50 year old institution and a fierce advocate of centering the human dignity of all in our community. This position has helped us lead our peer providers, partners, and community, to engage in the issues of poverty, stigma, and systemic marginalization and expand the concept of what it means to care for each other as a community.

Our work is the work of incremental change. Our best outcomes will only come from years of sustained advocacy; showing up with open hearts, not just for those we serve and the life and death impact our services have for them, but also for the community walking with us in this work. Fighting poverty is more than shelter and case management, it is being an equitable employer, a reliable partner, and a passionate advocate for social justice and real change.

As our organization continues to move out of crisis and towards sustainability, we see ourselves and our participants moving from survival to thriving. We look to build capacity for more holistic care for our participants, comprehensive and integrated mental health and substance use treatment support, more opportunities for permanent housing, and deepening our organizational stability to make this all possible. So many of these goals we see echoed in the dreams and early efforts of the IW membership dating as far back as our inception.

We recognize that our community will always need bridge builders-- those willing to look across and honor our human differences while reaching toward each other. We see the Interfaith Works of tomorrow continuing to grow from the Interfaith Works of today by engaging in meaningful service to all in our community.

Interfaith Works Leadership

Board Presidents

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Gilbert Meyer..... | 1973-1975 |
| Betty Utter | 1975-1977 |
| Bob Benson | 1978-1979 |
| Dorothy Blanchard | 1980-1981 |
| Gary Mark..... | 1981-1982 |
| Dawn Marshall | 1983-1985 |
| Tony Barrett..... | 1985-1987 |
| Paul Zech | 1987-1989 |
| Rev. James Blundell | 1989-1991 |
| Jim Castrolang..... | 1991-1993 |
| Rev. Richard S. Smith ... | 1993-1997 |
| George Hinkel | 1997-2001 |
| Patrick LaVirollette | 2001-2002 |
| James Fulton..... | 2002-2006 |
| Richard Miles | 2006-2010 |
| Barnett Kalikow | 2010-2014 |
| Kathy Gilliam | 2014-2016 |
| Mary Wharton..... | 2016-2018 |
| Catherine Carmel..... | 2018-2020 |
| Andrew Rayment | 2020-2021 |
| Janet Cherry | 2021-2022 |
| Lisa Gosiaco..... | 2022-2023 |
| Marcy LaViolette..... | 2023 to Present |

Executive Directors

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Rev. Paul Davidson, Administrative-Coordinator . | 1973-1974 |
| Nancy Hoff..... | 1974-1989 |
| Keturah Brown..... | 1989-1991 |
| Ken Schwilk..... | 1991-1994 |
| Cheri Gonyaw | 1994-2000 |
| Kathy Erlandson | 2000-2010 |
| Daniel Kadden | 2010-2018 |
| Lisa Gosiaco, Co-Director | 2018-2019 |
| Meg Martin, Co-Director | 2018-2019 |
| and sole Executive Director..... | 2019-2024 |
| Ivy Ayers, Interim Director..... | January 1 - June 30, 2024 |

In 2024, Interfaith Works made the decision to return to a multi-director model, inspired by the collaborative functions of the IW membership. This new shared leadership model is intended to prepare the organization to deeply engage in sustaining efforts in the many decades to come. This move acknowledges that no one person can or should be alone as the face of such a multi-faceted organization.



Rev. Corey Passons
Director of Interfaith Relations
July 1, 2024 - Present



Ivy Ayers
Director of Administration
July 1, 2024 - Present



Meg Martin
Director of Integrative Services
July 1, 2024 - Present



Ti'eri Lino
Director of Homeless Services
July 1, 2024 - Present

Member Faith Communities, Affiliated Organizations, and the work of the Program Council

Interfaith Relations is the branch of Interfaith Works dedicated to fostering unity and celebrating the rich tapestry of religious and spiritual diversity in Thurston County. The Program Council, established in the early 2000s, is comprised of volunteer representatives from the IW Membership and affiliated organizations who guide and support the work of Interfaith Relations. The council provides a forum for interfaith understanding and cooperation among delegates and their respective communities.

Community Story

On November 23rd 2021, there was an attempted delivery of an explosive device to the Islamic Center of Olympia (ICO). The device detonated at the curb of the mosque entrance with the blast heard up to a mile away and felt by the close-knit community of 40+ households which surround the mosque.

ICO reached out to Interfaith Works (IW), who swiftly organized clergy and membership from the IW network along with numerous supportive organizations from the greater Puget Sound area. On December 3rd, hundreds of people lined the walkway to the mosque, holding signs that read, "We love our Muslim neighbors" as mosque attendees gathered for Friday prayers. Seattle news teams covered the event interviewing clergy who came in support from IW's diverse network.

As a board member and congregant of ICO, I feel immense gratitude for the solidarity and allyship of Interfaith Works displayed on that day.

MUSTAFA MOHAMEDALI
ISLAMIC CENTER OF OLYMPIA



The Baha'is of Thurston County

Bahá'i Faith communities of Olympia, Tumwater, Lacey, and surrounding communities

Members of Interfaith Works (then Associate Ministries of Thurston County) since 1988

The Baha'i Faith is a worldwide religion with local assemblies around the world. We have no clergy. We believe in the independent investigation of spiritual truth. Our main teaching is that we are one world and one human family that can become united under one God. The founder of our Faith is Baha'u'llah. Our world headquarters are in Haifa, Israel.

We have had a number of representatives over the years in Interfaith Works. We joined because Interfaith Works reflects the principle of unity that is the essence of the Baha'i Faith.

We have had a wonderful relationship with Interfaith Works. Our resources are limited and we were so pleased to be able to join with other religious organizations through IW to work on the issue of homelessness in Thurston County. We have also applauded the efforts IW has taken to reach out and involve local tribes in the annual Resetting Our Sacred Table event (formerly called the Thanksgiving Celebration).



www.thurstoncountybahai.org



Meditation For Global Peace, 2005



Center for Spiritual Living – Olympia
Interfaith Works Member since 2006
Affiliated with Centers for Spiritual Living

We are a New Thought community, open and affirming. We believe in the oneness of all life and the creative power of thought. Our vision is to live as love in a world of love.

CSL has been actively involved with IW for many years, hosting last year's Garden Party, serving as board members, and supporting many of the programs and Interfaith breakfasts. It is our joy and honor to be part of Interfaith Works and all the good it does in this community.



www.cslolympia.org



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Olympia & Lacey Stake
Interfaith Works Supporting Organization since 2014

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a worldwide faith centered on the belief that everyone on earth is a son or daughter of a loving God and that His Son, Jesus Christ saved the world from sin and death.

In Thurston County there are 15 congregations, 7,500 members, organized as the Olympia and Lacey Stakes. We began attending the Program Council to better understand other Faith Communities and to support the good efforts of others in our community. With the construction of Unity Commons, we organized a community donation drive, collecting needed supplies for the apartments and shelter beds. Two large donations through our Church Humanitarian Services were obtained to purchase furniture for Unity Commons and Sergio's.

For the past decade, we've enjoyed meeting with the Program Council; assisting with the Homeless Shelter; Clergy Breakfasts for a season at Panorama and participating at past Thanksgiving programs.

 www.LDS.org



Community for Interfaith Celebration (CIC)
1974 IW Charter Congregation
Affiliated with the United Church of Christ

The Community for Interfaith Celebration is an interfaith, spiritual community consisting of people who follow various paths (Agnostic, Buddhist, Christian, Earth-Centered, Jewish, Pagan, Sufi, and more). Services are held in a circle with two services per month led by the half-time Interfaith Minister, Rev. Corey Passons, with the remaining services led by CIC members or guests. The community has an active children's education program and is engaged in social justice in a variety of ways in the area.

CIC is an "Open & Affirming" congregation, welcoming all regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, income, physical or intellectual ability.

CIC started as a Christian community in 1973 but became interfaith in the mid 1990's as the spirituality of the community diversified and the congregation began to welcome and engage wisdom and guidance from numerous traditions. A charter member since 1974, CIC continues to be an active and supportive contributor to Interfaith Works.

 www.oly-wa.us/cic



Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County (DRC)
Interfaith Works Affiliate Member since 1991

Our story in Thurston County began in 1990 with the simple notion that residents can settle their own disputes and learn effective communication with a little bit of help from other residents who've learned some practical, teachable and highly effective skills as neutral facilitators. With the help of Associated Ministries, now Interfaith Works, we opened up for service March 1, 1991.

The Dispute Resolution Center empowers people to resolve their disputes by providing conflict resolution services and training community members in those skills. We envision a South Sound community that has and uses healthy and respectful conflict resolution skills. We value personal empowerment, integrity, respect, collaboration, civility, and trust. DRC is committed to centering diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice organizationally, and in our provision of services and programs for the community.



Emmaus Ecumenical Catholic Community
Interfaith Works member since 2013
Affiliated with Ecumenical Catholic Community

Emmaus Ecumenical Catholic Community is an inclusive Catholic community who welcomes and affirms the dignity of every person regardless of race, national origin, religious affiliation, gender or sexual orientation.

As an ecumenical Catholic community, we believe it is important to increase our presence in the larger faith community and recognize the good that comes from interfaith dialogue and the impact it has on the wider community. We are intentional to witness social justice in our community and participate as a member of Interfaith Works.





First Christian Church
1974 IW Charter Congregation
Affiliated with Disciples of Christ

We have a spirit of community and compassion. We prayerfully consider multiple sides of issues and make room for multiple opinions, especially issues that involve our building and the needs of the church's community and the greater community. We have a history of involvement in community organizing and volunteering.

First Christian housed the first Interfaith Works (Associated Ministries) office between 1977 and 1985, housed the Food Bank, Clothing Bank and Child Care Center. Our member Cheri Gonyaw served on the Interfaith Works' Board and then as Executive Director between 1994 to 2000. We hosted the rotating Women's Emergency Shelter each winter during the 1990s and hosted the Interfaith Women's Shelter during the entire winter of 2013. As well we were the first permanent home for Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter from 2014 to 2021. We have organized community meetings on homelessness, LGBTQIA+, downtown safety, the People's House and other topics.



www.firstchristianchurcholympia.org



First United Methodist Church of Olympia
1974 IW Charter Congregation
Affiliated with United Methodists

We are a church that is committed to connecting with God, one another, and the wider community through discipleship, fellowship, and community engagement. We welcome people of all ages, all abilities, all sexual orientations and gender identities, all nationalities and ethnicities, the poor and the rich, single people and the many forms of family because God is love!

Interfaith Works evolved from the Thurston County Council of Churches, which was founded in 1969. The first president

of that council was Dr. Paul Ellis, a United Methodist Minister. The First United Methodist Church of Olympia was a charter member of Associated Ministries. In addition to partnering with IW on a variety of projects, including hosting a shelter in our building while Unity Commons was constructed, we provide monetary support as well as serving on various committees to assist in IW programs.

 www.fumcoly.org



COVID Overflow Shelter at FUMCO



Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
1974 Charter Congregation
Affiliated with Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

We were founded 1905 after, as legend has it, the Swedish-Finnish Ladies Aid Society determined that a new church was needed in downtown Olympia. We consider our congregation as a place for God's growing family, a commitment that ties into a larger sense of the universal family and interfaith relations.

As a founding member of Associated Ministries (Interfaith Works), we have a long history of involvement in interfaith programs and consider that an important part of outreach and service to the local and wider communities and to all of creation.

GLDC is committed to social justice in the world and therefore supports programs such as IW Homeless Services and the Community Kitchen through the Salvation Army. More recently, our members have helped support Unity Commons and Sergio's. GDLC members have served as representatives on the Program Council building strong interfaith relationships as well as on the IW Board of Directors.



www.gloriadeiolympia.org



Holy Wisdom Inclusive Catholic Community

Interfaith Works member since 2017

Not affiliated with the institutional Roman Catholic Church

Holy Wisdom is an international community which meets weekly, primarily on Zoom, with occasional in-person masses and potlucks. Ordained Roman Catholic Women Priests preside at masses but leadership is shared with several members of the community. We are a caring and joyful community, committed to the wellbeing of our earth and all in it. All are welcome in our Holy Wisdom Community.

Holy Wisdom shares Interfaith Works' commitment to justice and service and has actively participated in the work of the Program Council. Several of our members support Interfaith Works as individuals in a variety of ways. For example: volunteering at Sergio's and Unity Commons, donating meals and other supplies, participating in and helping with IW events, serving on the Board of Directors and providing ongoing financial support. Our community values our relationship with Interfaith Works and the opportunities it provides for community and service.



www.holywisdomicc.org



Islamic Center of Olympia Interfaith Works Member since 2009

The Islamic Center of Olympia was pioneered by Cambodian Cham refugees who settled here in the northwest over 40 years ago after escaping the genocide of the Pol-Pot/Khmer Rouge regime. It has now blossomed into the most diverse multi-ethnic faith community in the region.

Following hateful incidents aimed at community members and the center, faith leaders from the wider community reached out to us in solidarity and through them ICO connected with IW. Our members began to participate in IW initiatives like the Hunger Walk and Resetting our Sacred Table celebrations that enabled us to inform and share our common values with other faith congregations and other exchanges.

Our members became active participants in feeding the homeless at IW shelters and initiated the IW project to develop community safety guidelines and protocols by synthesizing insights and experiences of more established congregations. Spinoffs include participation in refugee resettlement efforts and the City of Olympia's Ceasefire Resolution for the Gaza conflict.



www.islamiccenterofolympia.org



Lacey Presbyterian Church Interfaith Works member since 1983 Affiliated with Presbyterian Church (USA)

Lacey Presbyterian Church was formally organized in the early 1980s and joined Interfaith Works at that time.

Lacey Presbyterian's Mission Department is active in the wider community. Local mission projects supported financially in the church budget include:

- Crisis Clinic
- Dry Tykes & Wet Wipes
- Safeplace

- Community Youth Services
- Family Support Center
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- School Support Center/Backpack Program
- Aid Northwest
- Habitat for Humanity
- Hope Village (Westminster Presbyterian)
- Thurston County Food Bank



www.laceypres.org



League of Women Voters Thurston County
Interfaith Works Affiliate Member since 2021

The purposes of the Thurston League of Women Voters are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected governmental issues. We are committed to 1) nonpartisanship in that we never endorse political parties or candidates and 2) diversity, equity and inclusion.

We recognize that we're all stronger and more effective when we work in solidarity with others in our community. Over the years, we have worked with Thurston Community Media, the Asian-Pacific Islanders-South Puget Sound, Thurston Climate Action Team, the Timberland Library, the Nisqually Tribe, the Thurston County Auditor's Office, the Dispute Resolution Center and many other organizations to bring broader expertise and effectiveness to our efforts.

We viewed becoming an affiliate member of Interfaith Works as an opportunity to better connect with faith communities in our community and to support the work of Interfaith Works including its outstanding work in the area of homelessness.



www.lwvthurston.org



The Lutheran Church of Good Shepherd Olympia
IW 1974 Charter Congregation
Affiliated with Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

The Lutheran Church of The Good Shepherd was established in 1957. Pastor Bob Keller was one of the founders of Associated Ministries of Thurston County in 1974, and Good Shepherd has been an active member since.

The congregation's tagline is "Be Seen, Be Heard, Belong," part of its signature as an open-hearted, open-minded ELCA congregation. It has been a Reconciling in Christ congregation since 2009, being publicly welcoming of LGBTQIA+ people, as well as being deeply involved in additional ministries of justice-making and mercy, which include Climate Shepherds leading an annual eco-fair for the wider community and the installation this summer of solar panels on the church's building. The congregation makes quilts that are sent around the world, nurtures a community garden, and shares its spaces with 12-step groups, Scouts, and CIELO (Olympia Latino Comprehensive Educational Center), with whom it sponsors an on-site monthly branch of the Thurston County Food Bank.



www.gsolympia.org



Harm Reduction Altar



Nalanda Institute
FOR CONTEMPLATIVE SCIENCE

Nalanda Institute

Interfaith Works Member since 2004
Tibetan Buddhist

For more than 35 years, what is now the Nalanda Institute has provided an Olympia-area home for the study of classical Buddhist texts and the practical applications of these teachings in daily life. In 2011 we opened our current Dharma Center at 1620 4th Ave E, Olympia.

Nalanda is an eclectic Buddhist community, although we have close historical ties to the Sakya lineage, one of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Our founding teacher, Loppon Jamyang Tsultrim has recently retired from his college work commitments and anticipates devoting more time to Tibetan Buddhist teaching and education through our Dharma Center.

The Nalanda Institute congratulates Interfaith Works on its 50th Anniversary, and hopes that our membership increases awareness of the diversity of religious and other practices in our area.



www.nalandaolywa.org



Mosque Solidarity, 2021



Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation

Interfaith Works Affiliate Member since 1998

Olympia FOR works closely with other peace and social justice efforts, including the WA Poor People's Campaign and the Olympia Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. We support youth activists by providing Kingian Nonviolence training and a \$500 grant to support a social justice project they organize in their school and/or community.

Olympia FOR shares Interfaith Works' commitment to social justice and actively supports the Program Council's efforts to re-imagine Interfaith's long-standing annual Thanksgiving event by centering voices of Indigenous leaders in our Resetting Our Sacred Table program since 2021. We also support the Program Council's efforts to create community engagement opportunities envisioned in Olympia City Council Resolution M-2490 supporting an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Israel and occupied Palestine, including screenings of the Combatants for Peace documentary titled Disturbing the Peace.

While coming from diverse religious backgrounds and belief systems, FOR members share a belief in the transformative power of nonviolence and reconciliation.



www.facebook.com/groups/OlympiaFOR

www.wwfor.org

www.forusa.org



Olympia Friends Meeting

Interfaith Works Member since 1986
Affiliated with Religious Society of Friends
(Quakers)

Olympia Friends Meeting is part of the “unprogrammed” branch of Quakerism. We come from a wide variety of religious backgrounds. The roots of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) are in Christianity yet among unprogrammed Friends some individual Friends do not call themselves Christians or even theistic. Today’s Friends are comfortable with the wide range of beliefs within our faith community and the larger society as well. We have no minister or clergy, on a regular basis we rotate tasks and community responsibilities including leaders (clerks) or elders.

As a community of Friends we seek to respond to spiritual and personal leadings towards peace and justice. We encourage members of the Meeting to participate in various political and social causes that are in line with Quaker testimonies (Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality). The meeting as a whole discerns tithing financially, making donations sponsoring and supporting organizations as well as individuals working toward peace and social justice, including Interfaith Works.



www.olympiafriends.org



Olympia
Unitarian
Universalist
Congregation

Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation (OUUC)

Interfaith Works Member since 1975
Affiliated with Unitarian Universalist
Association

The Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation (OUUC) is a congregation who center love as we seek our spiritual truths, and act on our values in the world. We work to dismantle racism and other forms of oppression, to be generous, an end to poverty, inequality, and to care for the earth while addressing climate change.

OUUC's connection with Interfaith Works has been a strong partnership of many years. This partnership has included an annual budget item of financial support, participation on the IFW Program Council, donating funds from the OUUC Books, Brownies and Beans' book sale, many years of hosting the Women's Emergency Overflow Shelter, opening in 2013 the first Camp Quixote encampment at OUUC, and twice a month, providing dinner for Interfaith Works Shelter guests.

In all of the above history our relationship has been an ongoing partnership of working together to achieve the goals of providing support and safe housing for the marginalized members of our community.



www.ouuc.org

OPEN GATE ZENDO
ORDER OF THE BOUNDLESS WAY

Open Gate Zendo

Interfaith Works Member since 2006

Open Gate Zendo is a small Buddhist Temple and the primary training facility of the Boundless Mind Zen School/Order of the Boundless Way. Originally conceived in 1994, Open Gate Zendo was founded to promote the original Zen principles of self-realization through varied individual approaches, arts and disciplines. Open Gate Zendo is open to anyone who wishes to practice or experience Zen training and/or the Zen Arts regardless of their experience, spiritual beliefs or religious affiliations.

Zen practice and training at Open Gate Zendo is focused on the core philosophy and practices of Zen without reliance on any specific nationalistic or ethnic practices. Remaining nonsectarian allows for a multiple disciplinary approach that encompasses all Zen traditions and allows for a wider range of personalities to benefit from Zen practice and training. The founder and teacher at Open Gate Zendo, Koro Kaisan Miles, served as Board President of Interfaith Works from 2006-2010.



www.boundlessmindzen.org

*St. Andrew's United
Methodist Church*

St. Andrew's United Methodist Church
1974 Charter Congregation
Affiliated with United Methodists

St. Andrew's United Methodist Church has been a part of the Tanglewilde neighborhood since 1959. ALL seekers and believers are welcome in this space, as we seek to respond to God's challenge to live out our faith daily.

St. Andrew's continues its long-term support of the IW philosophy which connects faith-based communities and affiliated organizations, in much the same way as John Wesley, founder of the Methodist faith tradition, emphasized a system of multiple churches working better together. Wesley believed that connection occurs where unity and purpose converge. With connected and combined resources across the IW network, more can be done to impact the needs of the community and the world.

Though St. Andrew's is not currently working on any projects with IW, we are advocates of the IW mission. We particularly support the work that is occurring on behalf of the homeless/houseless population in the Olympia/Lacey area.



www.laceysaumc.com



St. Benedict Episcopal Church

Interfaith Works Member since 1982
Affiliated with Episcopal Church, Diocese of Olympia

St. Benedict Episcopal is a community church in Lacey, WA. Our core values are integrity, inclusiveness, compassion, social justice and stewardship. We strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being. The organizations receiving the largest support from SBEC are Interfaith Works, Union Gospel Mission, TC Food Bank and Faith Action Network.

We are connected in our mutual goals of addressing basic physical and spiritual needs of our broader community. There are two major examples of important moments of involvement. One is our support of IW's strategic direction to pursue long term solutions to homelessness. Not only major capital projects but in creating pathways in which congregations could be part of those solutions. A second major moment was as IW engaged in deep reflection to more authentically celebrate the season of gratitude. Resetting Our Sacred Table, particularly with involvement of local tribes, was a moving, commendable, difficult and poignant shift.



www.stbenedictlacey.org



St John | San Juan Episcopal Church

1974 Charter Congregation

Affiliated with Episcopal Church, Diocese of Olympia

St. John | San Juan Episcopal Church has been offering God's love to the community since January 7, 1864. We are a welcoming and affirming congregation of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia.

Our mission: To love God, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to build a community transformed by the love of Jesus Christ.

As a congregation, we are committed to:

- Worship and faith development in English (8 am and 10 am)
- Mutual respect and partnership in love and service with all who come through our doors
- Reaching out in compassion to the community

St. John | San Juan is committed to collaboration with other faith communities, non-profits, local businesses and other organizations to address critical issues facing the city of Olympia and Thurston County. In addition to maintaining a delegate on the Program Council, members of St. John | San Juan give donations to support IW clients.



www.stjohnsoly.org



Saint Martin's
UNIVERSITY

St. Martin's Abbey

Interfaith Works Member Affiliate since 2003

Saint Martin's University is the apostolate of Saint Martin's Abbey, a Roman Catholic monastery of the Order of Saint Benedict. Our students practice a wide range of religions including a large number with no religious affiliation.

Brother Luke Devine, a monk of Saint Martin's Abbey, was assigned to work in the Office of Campus Ministry in 2003. In response to student interest, he began to arrange Prayer Services for Peace at a time when tensions were high in the post-9-11 world. In order to gain insights on arranging multi-faith prayer services, Br. Luke began involvement with Interfaith Works.

Involvement with Interfaith Works has been a benefit to Br. Luke in his efforts to interact with and understand people of various religious backgrounds. Some of this carries over to the university by informing students, faculty, and staff of some of Interfaith Works' endeavors in interreligious relations and collaborations.



www.stmartin.edu



St. Michael Catholic Parish

1974 Charter Congregation

Affiliated with Roman Catholic Church,
Archdiocese of Seattle

Saint Michael Parish is a vibrant Roman Catholic community that exists so people may be transformed by encountering Jesus Christ and his love for them. At Saint Michael's, growing in faith and love of God and neighbor is the heart of active discipleship. We work both inside the parish and in the wider community as we seek to live out the teachings of the Church through such things as: hosting a men's shelter, prison ministry, provision of rent and utility assistance through St Vincent de Paul, and the Clothing Bank.

We are a founding member of Interfaith Works and share with IW a commitment to engagement and community. Saint Michael's has hosted a men's shelter at our church for 30 years. In prior years, we also worked in partnership with Interfaith Works in support of a women's shelter. We share with IW a deep commitment to serving those who are often forgotten in society.



www.saintmichaelparish.org



St. Placid Priory

Interfaith Works Affiliate Member since 1989

St. Placid Priory is a women's Benedictine monastic community in the Catholic tradition. The Priory was established in 1952. We value hospitality, ecumenism, and Interfaith connections. Seeking to support others in their spiritual journey, we established the Priory Spirituality Center--welcoming all spiritual seekers.

The Benedictine Sisters have participated in Associated Ministries and, subsequently, Interfaith Works from the organization's early days. The mission of Interfaith Works aligns with Benedictine values such as justice, community, hospitality, and peace-making. The Priory hosted interfaith presentations and discussions; we participated in the Blessing of Places where homicides took place; we helped organize the 24-hour Prayer for Peace that happened on the Capitol grounds. We helped with the planning of the Sacred Music Festivals. We attend programs whenever we can and we support Interfaith Works enthusiastically.



www.stplacid.org



Temple Beth Hatfiloh

Interfaith Works Member since 1982
Affiliated with Jewish Reconstructionist
Communities

Temple Beth Hatfiloh has been the center of Jewish life in Olympia since the 1930's. We strive to give renewed meaning to traditional texts, and practice in the evolving civilization of the Jewish people. We are progressive, pluralistic, democratic and inclusive.

TBH was invited to join IW as its first non-Christian member community. Our social hall has convened the IW Program Council for over 20 years, and TBH also helps organize and hosts the IW Summer Day Camp. Our members participate in all aspects of IW programming, and have helped guide Interfaith Works, previously serving in staff and Board leadership positions.

IW's mission integrates perfectly with Judaism's essential social justice mission, often expressed as "Tikkun Olam" or repair of brokenness in the world. It is an honor for us to work alongside our spiritual brethren from other traditions who are equally called to act in the face of human need.



www.bethhatfiloh.org



Summer Camp, 2007



Tumwater United Methodist Church
1974 Charter Congregation
Affiliated with United Methodists

TUMWATER
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The ministry of this congregation began over 150 years ago serving the Tumwater community. The very first Methodist Circuit Rider from the Oregon Conference was appointed to this congregation in 1856.

The first church building was dedicated in 1872, and that historic building still exists on 2nd Avenue. In 1972, the congregation moved to its present location and continues to be in effective ministry to the community.

Tumwater United Methodist was a founding member of Associated Ministries in the 1970s. Over the years, clergy and lay leaders have served in many leadership positions. We are also now connected to the other local UMC churches through the South Sound Co-operative, organizing our ministry so we are better together.



www.tumwaterumc.org



Moment of Blessing, 2024



The United Churches of Olympia
1974 Charter Congregation
Affiliated with Presbyterian Church (USA)
and United Church of Christ

We are a community of believers, doubters and questioners living in covenant with each. We are a theologically liberal, progressive church that welcomes all, loves God, follows the teachings of Jesus and is empowered and nurtured by the Spirit to engage in our community.

We are an open and affirming congregation, celebrating our diversity in religious background, race, age, sexual orientation, and abilities. The United Churches makes explicit the welcome of LGBTQIA+ folks striving to be a place of healing and inclusion.

As spiritually nurtured people, we believe God calls us to challenge the injustices, inequities and systems of our world that take advantage of the marginalized, the disadvantaged, the differently-abled. Based on the teachings of Matthew 25 we are committed to advocating for social progress, focusing on justice issues like systemic racism, trans/homophobia, economic disparities and environmental degradation.



www.theunitedchurches.org



The original staff for IW Overnight Emergency Shelter



Unity of Olympia

Interfaith Works Member since 1986

Unity of Olympia offers a positive, practical, progressive approach to living a meaningful and abundant life. Our desire is to foster lives of true freedom and joy through meaningful talks, enriching classes, engaging events, and supportive community programs. Unity is culturally Christian and spiritually unlimited.

Since joining Interfaith Works in 1986, Unity of Olympia has continued to have representatives attend the Program Council. Our community delivers meals to Unity Commons regularly, and we tithe to Interfaith Works each month. Our members who used to attend Interfaith Works Thanksgiving joyfully attend Resetting Our Sacred Table. This has informed our community to always begin service with a Land Acknowledgment and have respect for our Indigenous neighbors.

Interfaith Works is an important connection to the wider community of Olympia and the surrounding area. We value the rich activities Interfaith Works develops and provides to expand our level of understanding of our local area, and the many spiritual communities here.



www.unityofolympia.org



Former Shelter Guests at First Christian Church



Westminster Presbyterian Church of Olympia
IW 1974 Charter Congregation
Affiliated with Presbyterian Church (USA)

Westminster Presbyterian Church was originally organized as a mission church in 1893. We welcome ALL people to worship and serve the living God through Christ. Together, we learn to love and care for one another and our community, to grow in faith, and to express that faith in the pursuit of social justice and earth justice.

Westminster was a founding member of the Associated Ministries, and continues to support Interfaith Works. As Interfaith Works refocused its mission to alleviating the dehumanizing effects of homelessness, Westminster has materially joined the effort, and has hosted ten transitional housing units/tiny homes on-site at Hope Village in parallel with the larger services provided by IW.

The operation of Hope Village on our church grounds is a partnership with the City of Olympia, other faith communities, and (less directly) with IW. It is a partnership in mission that spans decades, from days of the women's shelter up to the opening of Unity Commons.



www.wpcoly.org



Bread Delivery at Shelter

