



SOUTH COAST INTERFAITH COUNCIL

759 Linden Avenue
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STAFF

Executive Director
Milia Islam-Majeed
Secretary
Patty Lance
Centro Shalom
Amelia Nieto
Harbor Area Farmers' Markets
Rev. Dale Whitney
Good Samaritan Counseling Center
Dr. William Scar

Centro Shalom ◇ Harbor Area Farmers' Markets ◇ Good Samaritan Counseling Center
CROP Hunger Walks (Long Beach, Peninsula) ◇ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Interfaith Celebration ◇ Religious Directory
Congregation Athletic Leagues (South Bay, Long Beach) ◇ Long Beach Religious Leaders Association ◇ Environmental Priorities Network

MISSION

It is the Mission of the South Coast Interfaith Council to promote mutual understanding, respect, appreciation and cooperation among people of faith in the Greater South Bay-Harbor-Long Beach-West Orange County area by extending hospitality, fostering community, offering educational opportunities, providing moral leadership, sharing in service and working for justice.

VISION & VALUES

The South Coast Interfaith Council (SCIC) is committed to:

- Promoting mutual understanding, appreciation and respect among the region's diverse religions and cultures;
- Providing opportunities for conversation, partnership, education, hospitality and celebration among its members;
- Respecting each other's religious observances and, where appropriate, sharing together in common prayer;
- Pursuing common goals that build unity among of the religious communities we serve;
- Providing moral leadership on mutually agreed-upon issues;
- Providing and advocating for poor, hungry, homeless and other marginalized people;
- Fostering peace, compassion, kindness, openness and trust;
- Encouraging the communities we serve to embrace these values.

HARBOR AREA FARMERS' MARKETS

www.goodveg.org
1-866-GOOD-VEG (1-866-466-3834)

- ◆ WEDNESDAY IN HUNTINGTON PARK, 9:30 AM-1:30 PM
Salt Lake Park, Bissell St., at E. Florence Ave.
- ◆ THURSDAY IN UPTOWN LONG BEACH 3 - 6:30 PM,
46TH & ATLANTIC, BIXBY KNOLLS SOUTH OF DEL AMO
- ◆ FRIDAY IN DOWNTOWN LONG BEACH, 10 AM - 4 PM
5th Street at the Promenade in "City Place"
- ◆ SATURDAY IN CERRITOS TOWNE CENTER, 8 AM-12 PM
Park Plaza Dr. north of Performing Arts Center
- ◆ SUNDAY AT ALAMITOS BAY MARINA, 9 AM - 2 PM
Marina Dr., south of 2nd St.

CENTRO SHALOM

2131 Long Beach Blvd, LB 90806
9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Mon - Thurs, (562) 591-2214
Amelia Nieto, Program Director

GOOD SAMARITAN COUNSELING CENTER

310-514-3000
Therapy, Workshops, Adult Education
Long Beach, San Pedro, Palos Verdes

SCIC SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Meetings second Mondays of every month, 7:00 pm at St. Cyprian Catholic Church, 4714 Clark Ave., Long Beach 90808. Contact: Jane Affonso at jgaffonso@gmail.com.

SCIC ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES NETWORK

Meetings every first Thursday of the month, 7:30 p.m. at Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes 90275. Contact: Lillian Light at lklight@verizon.net.

VOLUME XXXII, NO. 2 United in Hope...Grounded in Faith...Open to Grow SUMMER 2010



SCIC Building Homes: Enriching Lives

Join the SCIC in building homes in Long Beach with Habitat for Humanity on the "SCIC Build Day"
Friday, September 17, 2010
8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
For more information or to volunteer, contact the SCIC at 562-983-1665.



Labor Day, Monday, September 6, 9 a.m.
Come and participate in the SCIC Interfaith Unity Bike-A-Thon and raise funds for your faith community/organization and the SCIC.
To get involved contact Richard Brehove at richard@unitybike.org or visit our website at: www.unitybike.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!



32nd SCIC Festival of Music Benefit Concert

Sunday, November 7, 2010
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
&



7th Annual SCIC Interfaith Unity Awards Dinner

Sunday, November 14, 2010
5:00 - 7:00 p.m



SCIC & Humanitarian Day 2010

Join the SCIC in participating on **Humanitarian Day 2010** on August 29, 2010 at the UCO Drop-In Center located at 241 Cedar Avenue in Long Beach from 11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.! Please come and help distribute health care kits and food to those in need! For more information and to volunteer, contact Umar Hakim at 310.346.4105 or Brad Lara-Gagne at 562.607.4006.



Let's Pray Together: Unity Silent Prayer

Please join the SCIC and people from different faiths to send a beautiful and healing message to our community as we unite in silent prayer on the beach at E. Ocean Blvd. & Granada Avenue in Long Beach at 10:00 a.m. on September 11, 2010.
For more information: 562-983-1665



SCIC Helping with Habitat for Humanity ReStore

On July 15, members from the interfaith community gathered to volunteer at the **Habitat ReStore** in the City of Norwalk. Volunteers helped clean and organize 30,000 square feet of new and used home items and decor, building materials and appliances in preparation for the store's grand opening on August 7, 2010.

All proceeds from the store help **Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles** build more affordable homes in our community. SCIC would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who came and dedicated their time for this great cause!



SCIC Feeding the Homeless and Hungry

Members of the SCIC and the local interfaith community came together on June 27 to serve food for the disadvantaged at the **Drop-In-Center**, a community center for homeless and the working poor in downtown Long Beach.

The vision of the Drop-In-Center is to serve the homeless and those in need by sharing the kindness and compassion of volunteer outreach; focusing on their unique needs through the provision of temporary refuge and food; and empowering those with a desire to stabilize and improve their lives.

Brad Lara-Gagne, Director of the Drop-In-Center, commented, "From the Muslim women in beautiful head coverings, to the starched white uniform of Mother Tilly from the A.M.E. church, the strong presence of the gentlemen from 100 Black Men in Long Beach and the nice ladies from the LDS church, it truly was a wonderful event illustrating the diversity of support in our community".



SCIC Participates in and Sponsors Peace Events

On August 5, the SCIC participated in the "Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki: An Interfaith Service Under 2000 Peace Cranes" in the sanctuary of SCIC member congregation First Congregational Church in Long Beach. Special music, the lighting of candles, meditations and prayers as well as words from faith leaders from diverse spiritual traditions were shared during the service. It was a time to remember the bombings of these two cities and the tragic loss of over 200,000 innocent lives.

Subsequently, on August 15 SCIC co-sponsored a forum titled "Security in the 21st Century," with Capt. Paul K. Chappell, Army Retired. This forum brought awareness to the importance of ending war and providing a new direction towards peace for the United States and the world.



2010 Greater Long Beach Area CROP Hunger Walk

Sunday, October 24, 2010; 1:30 p.m. Start.
Los Altos United Methodist Church
5950 E. Willow St., Long Beach
Contact Dale Whitney at (562) 433-3881
or the SCIC at (562) 983-1665.

You are invited to the ****Recruiters Rally****
Wednesday, September 1 at 7:00 p.m.

at Los Altos UMC, 5950 E. Willow St., Long Beach.
This rally is for local congregation/ faith community "recruiters" who plan to sign up walkers and make sure that all donations are collected. Materials pertaining to the CROP Walk will be handed out and refreshments will be served.



SCIC Completes 2010 Summer Interfaith Cafes

SCIC held four successful Interfaith Cafes this summer! Thank you to everyone who participated and made it such a fantastic program! These cafes are small group discussions for laity, youth and faith leaders about how faith both impacts their daily lives and allows them to relate to and appreciate those from other faith traditions. This year, participants also had the opportunity to play *WeBelieve2*, a board game produced by Pastor Duane Moret, past president of the SCIC!

We would like to express our gratitude to following faith communities for hosting and co-hosting the 2010 cafes: St. Joseph Catholic Church, Center for Spiritual Living, Holy Spirit Fellowship, Congregation Shir Chadash, Los Altos United Church of Christ, Vedanta International Cultural Center, The Neighborhood Church and the Soka Gakai International Buddhist Community. A special note of appreciation to Khalil Momand, Rini Ghosh, Anthony Manousus and members of the SCIC Interfaith Relations Committee for their leadership in organizing the cafes.



SCIC and California Faith Action (CFA)

Members of the SCIC board participated in a special convening of **Statewide Religious Leaders** to discuss Conscience, Compassion, and California's Future.

Over 60 invited faith leaders reflected on three topics during the day-long meeting: (1) the core values underlying current projects and programs, (2) the potential enhancement of our work arising from working together in a broader coalition, and (3) opportunities for a collective faith voice in California to have a positive impact on public policy in the public square. CFA's vision is to reorient the public voice of faith in our state along an axis of love, justice and compassion. This convening was organized by **Progressive Christians Uniting** with the support of the **Ford Foundation**.

Thank you to our member faith communities who have made a membership donation to the SCIC for 2010!

Amazing Grace Outreach Ministries \$100.00
Assumption of Mary Greek Orthodox
Baha'i Faith Community of Lakewood \$50.00
Baha'i Faith Community of Long Beach
Baha'i Faith Community of Manhattan Beach \$100.00
Bay Shore Community UCC \$2,686.81
Bellflower First UMC
Belmont Heights UMC \$200.00
Bixby Knolls Christian \$200.00
Brahma Kumaris \$100.00
California Heights UMC
California Sikh Council
CCEJ
Church of Religious Science Redondo Beach \$500.00
Christ Lutheran Long Beach \$47.50
Christian Outreach in Action LB
Community Congregational UCC \$200.00
Compton First UMC
Congregation Ner Tamid
Congregation Shir Chadash
Congregation Tikvat Jacob
Covenant Presbyterian \$125.00
Cross Roads UCC
Curry Temple CME
Dominguez UMC
First Christian Torrance
First Church of Christ, Scientist Manhattan Beach
First Church of Christ, Scientist Palos Verdes Estates \$50.00
First Congregational UCC LB \$2,000.00
First Lutheran Carson
First Lutheran Torrance \$100.00
Gardena First Presbyterian
Gloria Dei Lutheran LB \$807.00
Golgotha Trinity Baptist
Good Shepherd American Catholic
Good Shepherd Lutheran San Pedro
Gospel Memorial COGIC
Grace First Presbyterian
Grace UMC LB \$100.00
Greater Open Door COGIC
Hawthorne UMC
Hollypark UMC
Holy Spirit Fellowship \$500.00
Holy Trinity Catholic
Holy Trinity Ecumenical Catholic \$200.00
Hope UMC
Immanuel - A Center for Conscious Living
Interval House
Islamic Center of Hawthorne
Islamic Center of the South Bay \$300.00
Jewish Federation of Greater
Klein Chaplaincy Service \$100.00
Lakewood First UMC \$250.00
Lakewood Village Community Church
LB Memorial Medical Center Chaplaincy \$100.00
Leisure World Community Seal Beach
Lily of the Valley COGIC
Islamic Center of Long Beach \$500.00
Los Altos UCC \$500.00
Los Altos UMC
Marloma Friends
Mary Star of the Sea Catholic
Masjid Al-Shareef
Namaste Science of Mind and Spirit Center

Neighborhood Church UCC
New Liberty Baptist
New Philadelphia AME
North Long Beach Christian \$205.33
Our Lady of Refuge Catholic
Our Saviour's Lutheran
Pacific Unitarian \$700.00
Palo Verde Ave Christian \$100.00
P'nai Or Jewish Renewal Community
Redeemer Lutheran
Redondo Beach First UMC
Riviera UMC
Rolling Hills UMC \$250.00
San Pedro First Presbyterian
San Pedro United Methodist
Seal Beach Center for Spiritual Living \$250.00
Seaside Community UCC \$100.00
Second Samoan Congregational UCC
Soka Gakkai International
Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist Long Beach \$100.00
South Bay Christian
St. Andrew's Episcopal
St. Anthony Catholic
St. Athanasius Catholic
St. Bartholomew Catholic
St. Cornelius Catholic
St. Cross Episcopal
St. Cyprian Catholic
St. Francis Episcopal \$100.00
St. Gregory's Episcopal
St. James Catholic \$100.00
St. John Fisher Catholic \$1,000.00
St. Joseph Catholic \$500.00
St. Lucy Catholic \$1,000.00
St. Luke's Episcopal
St. Luke's Lutheran
St. Luke's Presbyterian \$500.00
St. Margaret Mary Catholic
St. Maria Goretti Catholic \$25.00
St. Mark's Presbyterian \$100.00
St. Matthew Catholic
St. Paul's Lutheran
St. Peter's by the Sea Presbyterian \$1,000.00
St. Peter's Episcopal
St. Philomena Catholic \$200.00
St. Timothy Lutheran
Temple Beth El
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Israel
Temple Menorah \$100.00
The Neighborhood
The Seamen's Church Institute of LA/LB
Together with Hope UMC
Torrance First UMC
Trinity Lutheran Manhattan Beach \$500.00
Trinity Lutheran Long Beach \$300.00
Unitarian Universalist \$600.00
Unity Long Beach
Vedanta International Cultural Center
Walteria UMC
Wayfarer's Chapel \$200.00
Wayside UMC \$100.00
Wilmington First UMC \$100.00
Woodruff Community UCC

If your faith community has not yet made a membership donation for 2010 please do so now to show your support of the mission of the SCIC.

~ Musings from Milia ~

This August 2010 marks my second year anniversary with the SCIC! It is amazing how fast time flies by! There are so many wonderful opportunities and experiences that I feel blessed to have participated in, all of which I am immensely grateful for.

One of the things that SCIC continuously strives to achieve is to cultivate a sense of unity here in our interfaith community. Indeed, this quest is also a personal conviction of mine and serves as a motivating factor to continue my work of serving others in our pluralistic community. Within these last two years, I experienced many new "awakenings" and "realizations" as a result of meaningful interactions with thousands of people espousing an array of belief systems. Upon reflection, perhaps the greatest realization I came to understand is that for unity to truly exist, we must embody something vital within ourselves and practice it with those around us - and that thing is - **compassion**. Unity ceases to exist if a sense of compassion is not present amidst humanity.

The principle of compassion, in its simplest form, calls us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. It not only impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow human beings, but it also asks of us to dethrone ourselves from the center of our world and put another in our place. It demands us to honor the sanctity of every single moral human being by treating him or her with absolute justice, love, equity, and respect.

In the philosophical study of this powerful emotion, it is believed by many that compassion arises from our intuitive perception that there is a metaphysical reality - and in that ultimate reality - we are all one. This feeling of compassion is an automatic, unconscious impulse that springs from that ultimate reality of all living things. Compassion penetrates the apparent distinction between oneself and others and enables us to perceive the true **interdependence** and **interconnected** nature of the world.

In fact, social scientists for years have defined compassion as the basis of connection, intimacy, openness, kindness, hospitality, and joy. It is an expression of human freedom, flowing from a sound intuition of the unity of life and all living things. What is fascinating is that one's intrinsic nature to be compassionate is not only proven by science, but one can argue that it also exists at the core of all religions or spiritual traditions. Through my academic studies, as well as my engagement with people of different faiths, I have become acutely aware of the centrality of compassion in all the major world faiths and philosophies. I have also come to believe that true religion or faith has little to do with self-righteousness, which is often simply a self-congratulatory form of egotism. This discipline of compassion is the safest way to lay aside the selfishness and greed that often times holds us back, not only from what many call the Divine, but also from our best selves. Indeed, I have found in my own life that the practice of compassion introduces us into a sacred realm of peace and serenity within ourselves.

When we see one another as equal - *when we see the other's heart as our very own* - we can then be truly compassionate with one another. This is often how community begins; and it is this kind of community that leads to a unified existence for humanity. It begins

in these little honest moments where we treat "the other" as we ourselves would want to be treated. And in these moments, it almost never fails that we begin to see a little bit of our own humanity in the so called other, and they in us. What a magnificent thing that is!

Of course, simply realizing this is not enough. In order to nourish this feeling, it is imperative that we also make room for our compassionate impulses to blossom. We must - as a collective society - create opportunities for people to practice their intrinsic moral trait of compassion. **This is what the SCIC does**. In working with faith/spiritual communities, we are able to create opportunities where we take the time to get to truly know one another and, in doing so, come to the understanding that we really are more alike than we are different; that at the end of the day we are truly interconnected beings. It is this awareness that, ultimately, results in establishing unity within our interfaith community. One of the greatest tasks of our time is to not only build this kind of a community, but also to strive to create a global society where people can live together in peace. Faith/spiritual communities must continue to make major contributions in this regard. It is a moral code for all people and for all times.

And so, it seems to me that we all have a choice. We can either live in isolation or we can look deep within ourselves and reconnect with our intrinsic nature of embodying compassion. You and I must both educate and stimulate compassionate thinking. It is not enough to just understand what compassion is, *we must live it*; for in doing so we can - *and will* - continue to change not only this community but also the world for the better. **My firm belief is that any group of people united by a meaningful cause and dedicated to good can achieve great things!**

It is also my firm belief that being compassionate is one of the principal factors that makes our lives meaningful. It is the source of lasting happiness and joy. And it is the foundation of a solid heart, the heart of one who acts out of a desire to benefit others. Through kindness, affection, honesty, truth and justice toward all others around us, we ensure our own benefit. The more hearts and minds we affect through joy, kindness, respect and peace--the more our hearts will find joy, kindness, respect and peace. This is what will unite us as one-- as one community, one society, and one humanity.

With all my heart, **I thank you** for trusting me to serve you and our interfaith community these past two years. *It has been an honor, a privilege, and a tremendous blessing*. **I look forward to us working together for years to come with your continued support and kindness!** It is my hope and my vision that we all continue striving to achieve a collective community with a shared destiny, where we walk side by side with respect, love and compassion for all. For when we truly do this, we will live in unity and in peace with one another.

With gratitude,

Milia Islam-Majeed
SCIC Executive Director