

For immediate release

Interfaith Public Fast

<https://www.interfaithpublicfast.org/>

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## **Interfaith Public Fast Called**

**In Witness and Solidarity with Sonoma County's unsheltered**

Santa Rosa, CA – Activists from the area interfaith community have initiated an **Interfaith Public Fast**, a program of public fasts to protest and witness injustices. The first event in the series will be a public day of fasting in solidarity with the unsheltered community of Sonoma County from sunrise to sunset on Thursday, March 2, 2023. There will be a gathering to conclude the fast from 5:30 to 7PM at The Living Room Life Center, 1335 North Dutton Ave. in Santa Rosa.

At this moment there are approximately 3000 unhoused people living in Sonoma County, 72% of whom are unsheltered. The unhoused of our county include adults and

children, veterans, and people of all genders, races, and ethnicities. This winter's atmospheric rivers have highlighted the urgent need for safe shelter and services to meet the needs of unhoused people and those of us at risk of homelessness.

Interfaith Public Fast stands in solidarity with all who are unhoused, and invite people of faith and people of conscience to join us in our fast on March 2, from sunup to sundown.

Fasting is an ancient tradition in many faiths, used to express contrition, distress, and mourning, and as a mechanism when seeking guidance. We regard fasting additionally as a way to stand as a moral voice in witness and solidarity with suffering and in demand of change. For those for whom abstaining from food is problematic, we suggest alternatives at [interfaithpublicfast.org/alternatives](https://interfaithpublicfast.org/alternatives).

Interfaith Public Fast is a coalition of these Sonoma County congregations and organizations: Christ Church United Methodist (Santa Rosa); Community Church of Sebastopol; Congregation Ner Shalom (Cotati); Congregation Shir Shalom (Sonoma); Congregation Shomrei Torah (Santa Rosa); First Presbyterian Church of Santa Rosa; Sonoma County United in Kindness; St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (Sebastopol); Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Rosa; Catholic Charities of Santa Rosa; Interfaith Council of Sonoma County; The Living Room, Sonoma County; the North Bay Organizing Project Religious Leaders' Caucus,

Homeless Action! Sonoma County and Redwood Forest Friends Meeting.

Future public fasts will focus attention on other pressing local, national, and/or global issues or events.

Rabbi Irwin Keller of Congregation Ner Shalom said, “Fasting is a strong and personal action to take, valuable to those of us who so frequently feel helpless. It is also a moment of taking stock before taking action. We will therefore be providing opportunities to be of service on that day and to commit to perform acts of service at a later date.”

For more information about the **Interfaith Public Fast** or the March 2 event, interested persons can go to [interfaithpublicfast.org](http://interfaithpublicfast.org).