

NOVEMBER 2019

Episcopal Community Services

# The Spotlight



Watch a video celebrating the San Francisco Interfaith Winter Shelter's 30th year in 2018. ([youtu.be/talHLWCRO5Q](https://youtu.be/talHLWCRO5Q))

## San Francisco Interfaith Winter Shelter Returns for Its 31st Year

The low temperatures and wet weather of San Francisco's winter months are dangerous for people experiencing homelessness, and particularly those who are unsheltered and vulnerable to exposure-related illnesses. Starting on November 24, 2019, Episcopal Community Services (ECS), in collaboration with partners the [San Francisco Interfaith Council](#), [Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing](#), and [San Francisco Night Ministry](#) will once again launch the Interfaith Winter Shelter Program. The shelter will be hosted by the congregations of the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, First Unitarian Universalist Society, and by ECS at the Canon Kip Senior Center.

Now in its 31st year, the Interfaith Winter Shelter Program provides a low-barrier overnight shelter for up to 100 men experiencing homelessness, as well as dinner and breakfast cooked and served by more than 50 volunteer groups. This year, the shelter will be open from November 24, 2019 until March 28, 2020. While staying at the shelter, guests will have the option to engage with members of the San Francisco Night Ministry, who will be onsite to offer chaplaincy services, as well as ECS Problem Solvers, who take an innovative, highly personalized approach to help people experiencing homelessness find creative solutions and pathways to housing.

*During the winter, shelter is crucial to prevent life-threatening conditions like hypothermia caused by exposure to cold weather and rain.*

“The Interfaith Winter Shelter Program plays an important role in providing shelter for our chronically homeless neighbors during the winter months, and ECS is proud to continue to offer our operational expertise to support it,” says ECS Executive Director Beth Stokes. “Engaging with guests at the Winter Shelter is a key first step to bringing individuals experiencing homelessness inside, off the streets, and near the critical health services they need to stabilize and move into permanent housing.”

ECS is grateful for the indispensable partnership provided by the San Francisco Interfaith Council (which works to identify the host churches where the overnight shelter is located and to identify the church groups, congregations and community groups that sign up to provide the evening meals throughout the program), the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, and the faith communities and volunteers who make the Interfaith Winter Shelter possible every year.

#### 2019-2020 Winter Interfaith Shelter Schedule

- [English \(bit.ly/2rcMTCQ\)](https://bit.ly/2rcMTCQ) (.docx)
- [Español \(bit.ly/2NMUCPx\)](https://bit.ly/2NMUCPx) (.docx)

*The San Francisco Interfaith Council convenes and amplifies the voice of San Francisco's faith-based community. Its work centers on the important issues of civil rights, homelessness, housing affordability, and disaster preparedness.*



YES ON PROP A

## Nov. 5: Vote Yes on Prop. A Housing Bond

ECS endorses Proposition A, a \$600 million affordable housing bond, in the upcoming citywide election on Tuesday, November 5th. Prop. A will fund the creation, preservation, and rehabilitation of affordable housing in San Francisco for people with low and middle incomes, seniors, and teachers. It has also been endorsed by the **SF Council of Community Housing Organizations** (of which ECS is a member), Mayor London Breed, the entire San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Assemblymembers David Chiu and Phil Ting, and other city leaders.



## ECS Focuses on Healthy Aging

ECS has long been one of San Francisco's leading providers of interim and supportive housing and other services for seniors who are low-income and/or homeless (currently or formerly). In fact, this group comprises roughly one-third of residents at ECS shelters and supportive housing sites. The Canon Kip Senior Center serves more than 1,400 seniors annually, providing a vital hub of daytime meals, fresh produce, case management and support services, and community activities for older adults.

[Read more \(ecs-sf.org/?p=4715\)](https://ecs-sf.org/?p=4715)

## Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week

November 16th - 24th is **Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week**, a time to call greater attention to these critical issues that affect millions of Americans.



Keeping food on the table is a challenge for many low-income people in our community — both housed and unhoused. According to the **2019 San Francisco Homeless Count and Survey**, 59 percent of people experiencing homelessness in the city reported lack of food within the four weeks prior to the survey. **Across the nation**, 549,000 Americans are homeless on a typical night, and 42 million are at risk of suffering from hunger.

ECS's staff, volunteers, and partner organizations work every day to provide food and housing solutions for community members in San Francisco who need them. In our most recent fiscal year, we served more than 13,000 persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We provide 1,069 permanent supportive housing units with wraparound services for formerly homeless families and single adults, and 682 beds in our shelters and Navigation Centers. As noted above, with our partners in the Interfaith Council, we will be providing winter shelter beds, meals, and services to more than 100 individuals until March 28, 2020. ECS serves more than 300,000 meals each year at our shelters and Navigation Centers, Canon Kip Senior Center, and through our **CHEFS program**. Partnering with the SF-Marin Food Bank, we hold food pantries in our supportive housing buildings.

### ECS Salutes Our Partners

ECS is grateful to our community partners who regularly provide much-needed meals and food for our community:

- Meals on Wheels
- San Francisco Food Recovery
- Food Runners
- Chase Center
- Stern Grove
- Pan-O-Rama Baking
- SF-Marin Food Bank

### How You Can Help

As the holidays approach — and the rest of the year — there are a number of ways you can help ensure no one in our community goes hungry:

- **Donate** ([bit.ly/2hCt2nx](https://bit.ly/2hCt2nx)) to Episcopal Community Services
- **Volunteer** ([ecs-sf.org/volunteer](https://ecs-sf.org/volunteer)) to serve meals at an ECS shelter or our senior center, or to help with a food pantry distribution
- Hold a food drive to give to the **SF-Marin Food Bank** ([sfmfoodbank.org](https://sfmfoodbank.org))
- Contact your elected representatives and urge them to increase support for services that address homelessness and hunger in your community

Working together we can make a difference in the lives of our neighbors and eliminate homelessness.

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## Bishop Swing Community House Celebrates 10 Years of Supporting People Exiting Homelessness



ECS's Bishop Swing Community House celebrated the housing center's 10th anniversary on Tuesday, September 24th. Residents and staff enjoyed a lively gathering with a delicious home-cooked meal, a prize raffle, and music performed by the building's community music group. Named after retired California bishop, the Rt. Rev. William E. Swing who initiated ECS's response to homelessness in the 1980s, the Community House provides supportive housing for 134 formerly homeless men and women. ECS's dedicated staff provide residents the support they need to live in a stable and warm community environment, allowing them to pursue increasingly healthy and independent lives.

See more photos in the gallery ([ecs-sf.org/gallery-bishop-swing-community-house-10th-anniversary-celebration](https://ecs-sf.org/gallery-bishop-swing-community-house-10th-anniversary-celebration)).

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### Staff Spotlight: Marian Gintu on 20 years at ECS!

Marian is known throughout ECS for her knowledge of vendors and dedication to making sure that the bills are paid on time. She started in 1999 as the Accounts Payable Specialist when the Finance Department had only four people. Now, she's the Accounts Payable Manager and provides back-up to the Payroll Manager. "It's been twenty amazing years!" she says.



"When I first started here, I was a temp for several months," Marian

explains. “During that time, I became more aware of the great work that ECS does, so that when the opportunity came for me to become a permanent employee, I took it.”

Working at ECS was not Marian’s first accounting job, but it is the one she chose for the long-term. “Here we all care about each other, which I didn’t find in previous jobs. The people here are like a family to me. I care about our employees and the people we serve.

“It’s been wonderful to be part of an organization that has grown in the number of people we serve and the number of services that we do for our community,” she adds. “What we do changes lives for the better. We serve people experiencing homelessness. To me, this is better than doing work that is just about being personally successful.”

Marian is dedicated to the ECS mission. “We’re here to end homelessness,” she concludes, “and we need the San Francisco community to do this with us.”



**ECS wishes all of our friends and neighbors a wonderful holiday.**

**Be safe and enjoy!**

Directly engage and become a part of the solution.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

[ecs-sf.org/volunteer](https://ecs-sf.org/volunteer)

**Donate Today**

[bit.ly/2hCt2nx](https://bit.ly/2hCt2nx)

Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco  
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