



JILL AND ANTHONY CHRISTMAS 2016 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Mentoring and teaching emerge as a theme this year for me. Highlights include the joy of working with Sarah Pruitt to help organize my office and finalize the syllabus for my Housing Justice course at Azusa Pacific University (APU); Chase Andre, a Fuller Seminary Intern, and realtor, who did excellent research on granny flats—those back yard dwelling units (he discovered 750 in Pasadena!); Flo Annang and then Janet Randolph on Christian community development efforts on N. Fair Oaks (the city approved all the capital improvement projects we submitted—the community wants to feel more connected with crosswalks, thriving businesses and traffic slowing measures). On June 4th I led a day-long Housing Justice workshop in Denver for 36 faith leaders. I felt God's hand working powerfully each moment and hearts move—including mine. In the spring, I felt very honored (and sometimes nervous) to play the role of professor to eight MA Social work students at APU. My student Denise sent this email: "All of the knowledge you gave me last semester is helping me at my agency as many of the homeless are sleeping at our building after the city decided it was against the law for them to sleep on public property."

Another theme is advocacy. Proverbs 31:9 says, "speak up for the poor and helpless,



and see that they get justice." Not just Denise's city, but many others, are seeking to make homelessness illegal, including Pasadena. "But where do they go?" asked Andy Wilson, a City Council member. Good question. Like Jesus, there is no room in the inn—shelters are full and housing is too expensive. The night that criminalizing homelessness was on the agenda, we went from only one council person, Tyron, who was against it, to 100% vote not to make aspects of homelessness illegal. I rallied 16 folks to speak on 16 talking points. It felt like church. When Pastor Manning preached how Jesus cares for the poor, everyone in the Council Chambers clapped! Throughout the evening Councilman John Kennedy disclosed "I think I'm not the wrong side of this issue; my mind is being changed". The Holy Spirit was alive and well. We kept praying. And God answered. I will never forget what Daniel, one of the 20 homeless brothers and sisters who attended, said, "I never knew people cared about us until tonight."

Part of advocacy is helping dispel negative notions about affordable housing. The prophets warn, but also help us to imagine a better world. Tours of award-winning affordable housing help us to imagine. I coordinated a tour for 65 folks for the CCDA national conference. We piled on the chartered bus and stopped at eleven sites—the ornate marbled-wall Rosslyn Hotel turned into 250 permanently supportive housing (PSH) units for formerly homeless; the 102 PSH Star apartments, with huge manufactured units stacked up like a star, and 1,093 senior units created over the a tunnel (who said we had no land?). When asked at the debriefing what was most impactful, many agreed it was when I gave folks a choice to

climb the bus, or walk to the next site through a sea of homeless folks living in tents on the street. LA County is our nation's homeless capitol with 47,000 homeless people. May God have mercy and raise up more compassionate leaders with vision to address this crisis.

I feel my book and work are more needed now than ever. A friend named Mike, who is presently reading *Making Housing Happen*, said, "I thought I would learn about housing from your book, but I'm learning more about Christian faith and action. Thank you for such a meat-y book." I never dreamed I'd be an author, or a professor, or be able to persuade city leaders, God indeed loves to surprise us. There was no surprise greater than for God to enter the world as homeless baby...to bring peace on earth.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

You may be part of my regular support team that has faithfully given for years... thank you!! Last month one donor gave \$1,200 donation. If you can give this or \$20, it is all needed to help our ministry.

This Christmas I invite you set up a monthly giving account to N. Fair Oaks Empowerment, to support Janet 's beautiful efforts to lead that initiative. Also, please consider a direct withdrawal or monthly credit card contribution to my account: Jill Shook. A Homeless Summit with Pasadena churches and a Housing Justice Institute are on the horizon for 2017. Homeless friends are slowly being housed but we have much more work to adequately house the 530 still living unhoused in Pasadena as well as the 26,000 low-income households on the waiting list for affordable housing.

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Jill Shook & Anthony Manousos

Some 2016 Highlights

January: Jill and Anthony traveled to Peru for a world gathering of Quakers. We loved the Sacred Valley, Machu Pichu, and the local Peruvians we met.

February: We attended a memorial service for Grandpa Vic Heirendt, “romantic dancer” and “father of the year” who was brought up in an orphanage, raised 10 kids, & died at age 100 on Valentine’s Day!

March: We were speakers on sustainability for the Orange County Friends Retreat in Julian, CA. We helped plan the Palm Sunday Peace Parade with the theme “Peace Without Borders: Welcoming Refugees.”

April: We celebrated at the Rose Bowl the 20th anniversary of STARS, a tutoring program started by Jill. We saw youth that Jill recruited, who are now grown, in love with Jesus, attending college, and running STARS.

May: We celebrated Anthony’s 67th birthday at El Greco Café, a Greek-themed dining area under our grape arbor.

June: Anthony coordinated peace and justice activities at Pacific Yearly Meeting at Walker Creek Ranch in Marin, CA. Jill lead a Housing Justice workshop in Denver.

July: We organized “Complete Streets” event on N. Fair Oaks, with community leaders, churches, and neighbors. We also enjoyed a visit from Jill’s fun-loving brother Doug and his wife Vicki, who came all the way from Australia.

August: We went to New York for a conference with Mission Door, Jill’s mission; celebrated our fifth wedding anniversary at Niagara Falls, and visited Anthony’s sister and her family in Princeton Junction, NJ. At CCDA Jill gave a housing justice workshop and led an Affordable Housing Tour in LA.

September: We loved attending Jill’s niece’s wedding. Annie Hereindt married Tervis in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. We started “Marriage Mentoring” with a wonderful African American couple. Anthony helped organize “Not in God’s Name,” a conference focusing on an interfaith response to violence fueled by religion. It featured Jewish, Muslim, and Christian scholars and honored interfaith peace activists.

October: Anthony went camping at Joshua Tree with his men’s group. Jill led a strategic planning for churches addressing homelessness at Temple City. We started attending “aquatherapy” at the Pasadena Rosebowl to help with our aches and pains.

November: Anthony went to DC for FCNL’s annual lobby day and Jill went to Knoxville, TN, for a gathering of organizers at Highlander Institute. We celebrated Thanksgiving with the Heirendt family in a lovely home in the idyllic foothills near Fresno and we all went to Yosemite to enjoy its magnificence.



Our Quaker Bible Study



Jill and her amazing “Mamacita” during their annual week vacation together



Homes not arrests



Wearing Peruvian traditional clothing, Cuzco, Peru

Anthony’s Highlights From Peru to Washington, DC: Working for Peace and Reconciliation



With Diane Randall and others at FCNL

During a time when our country and the world are being torn apart by partisan politics and violence fueled by xenophobia, racism and bigotry, I feel that God is calling me more urgently than ever to work for peace and reconciliation. In January Jill and I went to Peru to take part in a world gathering of Quakers from every continent and theological background, from Evangelical to liberal. We had a blast making friends and helping to build bridges of understanding. All 350 of us united around a concern for sustainability, agreeing to take concrete steps to help preserve God’s precious creation for future generations. Since returning to the US, Jill and I have spoken about stewardship and living sustainably at a number of Quaker gatherings and given tours of our home. I continue to serve on the board of Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace—work that seems more important now than ever. Another highlight was going to Washington, DC, right after the election to take part in a lobby day sponsored by Friends Committee on National Legislation. Our theme was “love your neighbor: no exceptions.” Over 350 people of faith joined in this effort to lobby for mandatory sentencing reform; and I am now organizing advocacy teams in the LA area. Thanks to my wonderful spiritual director, I’ve connected with the Community of Divine Love, a group of Episcopal monks who do amazing prison ministry. For more about what I’ve been thinking and doing, see my blog, which includes an article Jill and I wrote about Bolivian Quakers engaged in sustainable cattle ranching:

laquaker.blogspot.com