



**Interfaith Unity Celebration for
Governor-Elect Gavin C. Newsom**

St. John's Lutheran Church, Sacramento
Monday, January 7, 2019

Remarks by Michael G. Pappas, Executive Director

As the psalmist proclaimed "How good and pleasant it is for sisters and brothers to dwell together in unity." Thank you Rev. Espegren and the St. John Lutheran Church family for so generously hosting this historic interfaith Unity Celebration on the occasion of the inauguration of Gavin C. Newsom as the next Governor of the great State of California. My name is Michael Pappas and on behalf of the San Francisco Interfaith Council, which for over a decade I've been blessed to direct, I also wish to express thanks to the Interfaith Council of Greater Sacramento and its President Edrine Ddungo, for assistance and support in this endeavor.

Since time immemorial, communities of faith have traditionally prayed for their civic leaders and their families. Today is no exception. Governor-Elect Newsom, First Partner Jennifer and your beautiful children, for those of us who have journeyed with you over the course of your civic life, we have come to know you as a leader whose faith expresses itself through action. Harnessing your compassion for

the homeless, the immigrant, the marginalized on the spectrum of income inequality and housing affordability, and to entire sectors of those whose civil and human rights are constantly put in jeopardy, you have consistently and courageously stepped forward as an advocate whose word and pen have made a profound difference and enriched the lives of countless others.

Today, at your invitation, faith leaders representing the rich diversity of our State's religious traditions gather in the name and spirit of unity, not only to pray for you, but also to commit ourselves to support you on these core and seminal issues. We offer this worship to you as a gift, realizing the gravity of the challenges you will be called to address on our behalf. As you take up the mantle of leadership as our Governor, may you be blessed with discernment, strength, patience and perseverance, and may the hallmarks of your tenure as our Governor be those of justice, inclusion, peace, unity and collaboration.

With this blessing, allow me to introduce the Chairman of the Board of the San Francisco Interfaith Council, Kaushik Roy, to offer a brief welcome and to read our foundational interfaith statement.