



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Interfaith Service

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Theater

Monday, January 18, 2016

Remarks by Michael G. Pappas, Executive Director

Good afternoon, I'm Michael Pappas, Executive Director of the San Francisco Interfaith Council. I join our Chair G.L. Hodge and Founder and Past Chair Rita Semel in welcoming you to this auspicious celebration, the Birthday of Civil Rights Leader the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This event would not have been possible without the generous support of The San Francisco Foundation, The Tabernacle Community Development Corporation and the Providence Foundation. Let's give them all a warm round of applause.

It is appropriate that we should come together today for prayer and thanksgiving, in an interfaith celebration as, not only was Dr. King a Pastor of immeasurable faith, but every social justice and civil rights movement marked in our nation's history has been led by leaders of faith. In particular, here in San Francisco, in the early days of the Civil Rights Movement, before there was the San Francisco Interfaith Council, faith leaders from every tradition came together, through the Conference on Religion, Race and Social Concerns to proclaim, with a

unified and prophetic voice, the Almighty's call for freedom and equality for all people.

But celebrations and commemorations are not enough. In these times when Dr. King's dream has yet to be fully realized, we in the faith community need to revisit our history and reclaim our prophetic voice in this new chapter in the movement. So thanks to a generous grant from The San Francisco Foundation and the graciousness of our partners at the University of San Francisco, I am pleased to announce that, next month, at USF, the SFIC will be gathering congregation leaders as well as the new voices in the Civil Rights movement to rethink and recommit ourselves to actively and collaboratively exerting that prophetic voice and making a difference to meet the challenges of today.

But prophetic voices come, not only from religious leaders, but by those who have answered the call to public service. With us today are dedicated and hard working public servants elected to represent us and advocate on our behalf...

Joining us this afternoon are:

- State Senator Mark Leno
- Assemblyman David Chiu
- President of the Board of Supervisors London Breed
- Supervisor Scott Wiener

...As well as our City Administrator Naomi Kelley.

And at this time, it is my distinct privilege and heartfelt pleasure to welcome and invite a public servant, whose career was born out of the civil and human rights

movement, our Mayor Edwin M. Lee, to greet us on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco.