



114 West Montgomery Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20850
www.iworksmc.org T: (301) 762-8682 F: (301) 762-8773

For Immediate Release
January 31, 2008

Contact: Barbara Garlock
(240) 361-0858

Community Ministry of Montgomery County Becomes “Interfaith Works”

***Multi-faith Group’s Mission for Social Justice Remains the Same;
New Name Reflects Energy and Diversity***

Rockville, MD ----- Community Ministry of Montgomery County (CMMC) announced today the launch of its new name, ***Interfaith Works***, which better reflects the scope of its programs, and the energy and the diversity of its community of volunteers and contributors. Since 1972, CMMC, now *Interfaith Works*, has pursued social justice by identifying and meeting the needs of the poor, leading and engaging Montgomery County’s faith communities in service, education, and advocacy.

“Our new name emphasizes two of the critical components of our work,” Executive Director Becky Wagner explains. “We reflect many different faith traditions, but as an organization, we don’t espouse any particular religious identity; rather our members are drawn together by the universal call to help others in need. ‘Interfaith’ captures that mission. Focusing on ‘Works’ draws attention to the vibrant and proactive nature of our mission – not to just talking about social justice, but providing services that meet real needs of Montgomery County’s poor. Put it all together, and when faiths collaborate, it works!”

Interfaith Works is composed over more than 140 faith congregations in Montgomery County, MD, including Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and Hindu faiths. In addition, *Interfaith Works* attracts philanthropy from businesses and individuals in the county that share the desire to address the immediate needs of the poor and to work for self-sufficiency for those caught in the cycle of poverty. Distinguishing *Interfaith Works* is the combination of dedicated staff that manage its programs with professionalism and compassion, along with the literally hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours logged each year by over 7,000 members of its many congregations.

“*Interfaith Works* is fortunate to have the support of so many individuals in the county, but the needs of the county’s indigent and low income families continue to grow too,” Wagner said. “Addressing poverty is more than just helping to pay the bills, it is working with families and individuals to address the root causes of these situations in a county that is becoming increasingly more expensive in which to make ends meet,” Wagner added. “The new name *Interfaith Works* conveys both our faith roots and our emphasis making a real difference.”

CMMC, now *Interfaith Works*, has been recognized recently by such organizations as Charity Navigator, The Meyer Foundation, Bank of America and Montgomery County Community Foundation for the quality of its programming, the leadership of its staff, and the degree to which it commits its resources to its mission. Among *Interfaith Works*’ programs for individuals and families in need are:

- **Community Based Shelter and Sophia House**, which combined serve over 21,000 meals and provide shelter to over 300 women a year;
- **Horizon House**, supported homes for disabled, homeless men and women across the county; and **Welcome Homes**, permanent supported housing for elderly disabled homeless women;

- **Friends In Action**, assisting 50 at-risk families each year through intensive case management augmented by nearly 200 trained volunteer mentors who provide friendship and support;
- **Interfaith Housing Coalition**, providing supported housing, intensive case management and mentoring for 26 homeless families as they build skills for self-sufficiency;
- **Congregation and Community Emergency Support**, administering direct cash assistance through grants to prevent evictions, utility cut-offs, buy medicine and food;
- **Hand to Hand** eviction prevention loans to help low income working families stay in their homes;
- **Interfaith Clothing Centers**, distributing \$2.5 million of donated clothing and house wares free to 10,000 low-income clients a year; and
- **Community Vision**, providing day services and emergency seasonal emergency shelter for 500 chronically homeless adults, including mental health assessment, addictions treatment support, life skills development, resource referral along with meals, showers and laundry.

For more information or an interview with *Interfaith Works* Executive Director Becky

Wagner, contact Barbara Garlock, *Interfaith Works* Director of Development, at (240)

361-0858 or the *Interfaith Works* office at (301) 762-8682.

#

About Interfaith Works: *Interfaith Works is nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization composed of over 140 faith congregations in Montgomery County, MD. Relying on countless hours of our volunteers, Interfaith pursues social justice with an emphasis on identifying and meeting the needs of the poor by leading and engaging Montgomery County's faith communities in service, education, and advocacy. Its priorities are based on more than 35 years of experience as Community Ministry of Montgomery County on the frontline with more than 33,000 low-income residents. www.iworksmc.org*