

## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

February 21-27, 2020

### IN OUR OWN BACKYARD - Part 18



*Kathy Whilden, Rev. Michael Reid and Marian Penn.  
Photo courtesy of the Community Foundation for Monterey County*

### WHO'S GOT HOMELESS WOMEN'S BACKS AFTER MICHAEL REID RETIRES?

**By Wanda Sue Parrott**

“**FOUNDING** Father” Michael Reid is retiring and the local homeless community, its friends and advocates wonder: *Will the Fund for Homeless Women survive without him?*

If you aren't familiar with the former associate rector from Pacific Grove, his guest blog from the 2016 Community Foundation for Monterey County website will fill you in. He says:

“In the Fall of 2011, while in my office at St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church, I received a letter from a woman asking for help. She said that she had been homeless and was surprised to find so many other women like her: unsheltered, vulnerable, and afraid. They felt invisible and needed support.

“Although at the time I wasn't sure what to do, I felt moved to respond to her plea, and began a journey of discovery that would not only change my life, but would make a difference in the lives of women without shelter in our community for generations to come.

“Traveling without a road map, I cobbled together a bridge, a community of people-who-care, and was taken from a myriad of questions about this human crisis to the understanding and vision we have of it today.”

### A MOVEMENT WAS BORN

Michael continued, “With my co-organizers, Kathy Whilden and Marian Penn, we started by creating a [photo exhibit](#) that helped to make women living without shelter on the Monterey Peninsula a visible reality.

“After a groundswell of support from the broader community, we partnered with the [Community Foundation for Monterey County](#) and created a field of interest fund – into which financial resources for this cause could be invested.”

The fund was created in 2012. On February 18, 2020 Kathy Whilden answered my query about whether the fund would survive Michael's absence.

"Yep, we are continuing with the Fund for Homeless Women. We have two people interested in working with Marian and me. Michael moves to Santa Fe in June . We are starting up the Friends meetings in September. We are alive and doing well."

And Michael added: "The fund will enjoy the ongoing support of the Community Foundation-- where resources are expertly managed. The grantmaking and scholarship processes will continue unchanged. As will annual fundraising and the endowment."

Fact is, Founding Father Michael Reid will be honored at the Fund's annual wine, gourmet appetizers and live fundraising auction gala to which the public is invited and for which auction-item donation suggestions are welcome.

### **"Who's Got Their Back?" Fundraiser**

Mark your calendar for the "Who's Got Their Back?" fundraiser for the Fund for Homeless Women at Montrieo Bistro, 414 Calle Principal, Monterey, Thurs., March 12, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

This year's event celebrates Fund for Homeless Women co-founder Michael Reid's retirement.

RSVPs should be made at [www.fundforhomelesswomen.org/tickets](http://www.fundforhomelesswomen.org/tickets) .

Don't wait! This event always sells out quickly.

Special live auction items will be announced the night of the event.

Tickets are \$100 per person and 100 percent of the proceeds will benefit women living without adequate shelter on the Monterey Peninsula.

For questions about the event or to discuss making an in-kind donation to the live auction, contact Marian Penn at [msmpenn@gmail.com](mailto:msmpenn@gmail.com) or 831-915-7234

### **About The Rev. Michael Reid, Ed.D.**

Michael, originally from Brooklyn, lived in Los Angeles where he completed research on the effects of prenatal drug exposure on infants and children.

After receiving his doctorate degree and leading programs that served people with developmental and neurological disabilities for over 15 years, Michael completed a certificate program in nonprofit fundraising at UCLA.

He moved to Monterey in 2001 to serve as Director of Development and Public Relations at York School.

After three years, Michael answered a call to ordained ministry and completed seminary at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley. He was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real at All Saints Episcopal Church, Carmel.

After six years of serving as Associate Rector at St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church in Pacific Grove, Michael felt moved to retire from parish ministry in order to focus attention on his new ministry--The Fund for Homeless Women. During this time his book "No Vacancy: Homeless Women in Paradise" was published. It is available on Amazon.com. He says:

"The book describes the personal journey of my discovery and response to the plight of homeless women on the peninsula. Not only does the book explore some of the root causes of homelessness for single women in this local context, it describes how three very different community members, from three different religious and cultural backgrounds, came together to help create a social structure to address the unmet needs of others. Some

call it social entrepreneurship--developing community resources and inspiring community members to create an infrastructure for justice and social change.

“Ours was a grassroots effort that now helps to keep hundreds of women on the Monterey Peninsula fed, clothed, out of danger, and in many cases permanently housed.”

According to Michael, “I don’t think I will actually ever retire from the Fund. The Fund will be forever with me. But my day-to-day engagement will continue to change as my husband Bill and I transition to New Mexico.

“As my colleague Kathy Whilden taught me, I am open to surprise.”

### **The Other Founding Father**

Timothy Barrett, local businessman and producer of the groundbreaking symposium at Monterey Peninsula College on May 18, 2013, “Hungry and Homeless in Paradise,” which inspired this column, later ran for a seat on Monterey City Council and served for one term.

As the other founding father of today’s local help-for-the-homeless movement, he’s not leaving the Monterey Peninsula.

Fact is, Timothy is running for Monterey County Democratic Central Committee, District 5, in the March 3 primary election.

Check him out at [www.timothybarrett.net](http://www.timothybarrett.net) .

Or contact him at 831-277-9505, [barrettmemo@gmail.com](mailto:barrettmemo@gmail.com).



**Columnist Wanda Sue Parrott  
and 5th District Monterey County  
Democratic Central Committee candidate  
Timothy Barrett  
at her 85<sup>th</sup> birthday party last week.  
Photo by Rev. Elaine Gehrmann,  
of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the  
Monterey Peninsula**

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This column appears in the weekly Cedar Street Times at [www.cedarstreettimes.com](http://www.cedarstreettimes.com) .

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