



Congregational Community Church

GENAVIEVE HEYWOOD
PASTOR

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December 23, 2009

Dear Mayor Spitaleri,

I write to you seeking a conversation and your support. I called City Hall today to set up an appointment and understand you are unavailable until after January 4, 2010. Maria Rodrigues said that I would get a call after that date.

When you spoke on December 21, at the informational meeting with the Community First Team, you spoke as the Mayor of Sunnyvale. You told the new owners that they must hire the same teachers as unemployment is an issue for this valley and you told the church that we are not a church.

Please recognize that the designated new owners, Community First School, will maintain and potentially even increase employment in Sunnyvale. They plan to expand their services to include programs for infants and school age children - programs that are vital for the working parents of Sunnyvale. I am personally excited that Community First is not only continuing the existing programs but adding infant and school age children programs. Since quality childcare in Sunnyvale is a top rated issue in the annual Sunnyvale Resident Satisfaction surveys, I sincerely ask you for your full support of the Community First Team. I feel that by not extending your full support to this experienced and honorable team you are missing a tremendous opportunity to honor one of the top rated needs of our Sunnyvale community.

Please, understand that after long deliberations, this congregation prayerfully discerned that the preschool is no longer its mission and ministry. However, the entire church council would like to see this school continue and thrive. Instead of just closing the school, we sought new owners who not only have the skills but are also fully committed to running a high quality school as a sustainable business in our neighborhood.

I would like to share with you that at the end of Monday's meeting the Community First Team was verbally harassed and threatened by several people. To be more explicit, several Church members saw 3 parents approach one of the buyers, Angelina Bowers, and heard a man in the group threaten to slander her on the web and destroy her business and her reputation. Angelina asked if that was the only way they would communicate with her. A second person in that group said that that was the only way she would listen. The third person remained silent. Further, the church and myself have received verbal harassment and anonymous internet harassment.

I am confident that you did not intend for your comments on Monday to encourage verbal harassment and threatening behavior. I also believe that you would not knowingly want to be seen as a public leader of such a group. Therefore, I sincerely ask you to rethink your position in this matter and use all your influence to make the Community First School successful for the benefit of a wider age range of children, and their parents in Sunnyvale.

I look forward to meeting you in early January to talk about this further.

Sincerely,

Pastor Gen Heywood

CC:

Christopher R. Moylan, John N. Howe, Ron Swegles, Dean J. Chu, Melinda Hamilton, David Whittum, City Council, Community First School, Church Council