Scranton Area Ministerium Minutes 14 June 2017

St. Luke Episcopal Church Wyoming Avenue Scranton PA

**Present:** Rebecca Barnes Bev deBarros Tim Maloney

Sr. Terry O’Rourke IHM James Redington SJ Dale Rupert

Moishe Saks Chandra Sitaula Daniel Swartz

Vera Walline Phil Yevics

1. Phil Yevics called the meeting to order at 9:05. He called on Mother Rebecca Barnes to welcome the group to St. Luke’s and to offer the opening prayer.
2. Minutes from Previous Meeting had been distributed by email earlier that morning, and Mother Barnes made printed copies available. After members had time to review them, Msgr. Rupert made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Fr. Redington seconded, the motion passed unanimously.
3. Dr. Hussain had noted in an email that there were no transactions over the previous month and thus the Financial Report he submitted was unchanged from that presented in May. Sr. Terry made a motion to accept the Financial Report, Tim Maloney seconded, it passed unanimously.
4. National Day of Prayer, Circle the Square with Prayer May 4, 2017 At the May meeting, the membership discussed the concern that had surfaced before the event, that it was limited to Christian communities. The group confirmed that they want to communicate to the organizers that a National Day of Prayer should make a conscious effort to include all the faith communities of our area, and specifically the Jewish, Muslim and Ba’hai groups that are part of our membership would be eager to participate in the future. Since Rev. Munley had been our contact with the organizers, it was suggested he should be the one to offer that feedback to them. Rabbi Saks volunteered to be present with him at that time to reinforce our concern for an Interfaith presence.
5. Leader Enrichment Series (See attached flier)
   1. April 22 Healing Communities – Noone attended, but Phil had a productive morning with Rev Sandra Strauss of the PA Council of Churches Advocacy office.
   2. July 21 Suicide Prevention – please encourage folks to attend this program, which was well received when it was presented about two years ago.
   3. September 21 Mental Health First Aid – scheduled for Diocese of Scranton Pastoral Life Center.
6. June 9 Social Justice Sabbath at Temple Hesed. Several members spoke of their very positive reaction to the program and the warm interactions that took place during and after the presentations. Rabbi Swartz presented Dr. Hussain’s request that the Ministerium contribute $195 towards the costs of that program. Vera Walline made a motion that we authorize a check for $195 to be sent to Temple Hesed, Fr. Redington seconded, the motion passed unanimously. Phil Yevics will inform Dr. Hussain of this motion.
7. July 15 Peace Meal – Temple Hesed. Tim Maloney encouraged folks to participate in the Peace Meal scheduled for July 15, for which a flyer was distributed by email earlier this month.
8. Ramadan Food Drive – Tim Maloney clarified that he was encouraging faith communities to collect food in conjunction with the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, which will conclude on June 25. Donations will be given to the St. Francis Kitchen.
9. Prison Ministry
   1. Book Donations – Bev deBarros reported that donations of paperback books have been steadily accumulating. Procedures are being established to distribute them to inmates at Lackawanna County Prison.
   2. Reentry Task Force Outreach - The Reentry Task Force is seeking locations within Lackawanna County to have an Outreach meeting on the 4th Wednesday of each month.
   3. Second Chance Festival August 20. Information about the Festival was circulated with the Agenda. Funds are being sought to assist inmates with the cost of housing when they are first returning to the community. Sr. Terry made a motion that the Ministerium become a sponsor with a donation of $250, Mother Barnes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Phil Yevics will inform Dr. Hussain of this motion.
10. Web Page – Scrantonareaministerium.org Tim Maloney volunteered to assist with the further development and maintenance of the Website. Phil will provide him access, which has already been provided to Ruth Jones who previously volunteered to look into the process.
11. Expanding Involvement in Ministerium
    1. Refining list of faith communities – All members were given access to the list of faith communities originally compiled at Marywood University. Members were asked to look it over this Summer so it could be used to invite participation in the Fall.
       1. Outreach – It was agreed a personal outreach and invitation to participate should be made to as many leaders of faith communities as possible. We will work on a process for doing so in the Fall.
    2. Phil Yevics wondered if the Ministerium could sponsor discussions at the First Fridays in Scranton on topics of contemporary interest, e.g. the death penalty, hospice services, etc. Mother Barnes introduced her staff member Bonita Ferguson, who is involved with the First Friday planning. Ms. Ferguson was very encouraging, and suggested we contact Thom Welby concerning First Fridays or Maureen McGuigan concerning Third Thursday cultural activities to explore possible options.
12. Celebration of Youth – Bethel AME, July 17-21 and Sounds of Fellowship and Praise, Bethel AME July 22. Fliers for these two programs had been distributed over the previous month. All were encouraged to support these initiatives.
13. Rally for a Peaceful Planet – Tim Maloney reported he had decided to postpone this project.
14. Fr. Jim Redington reported he had been invited to participate in the Knowledge Festival' of the Shri Krishna Temple in Edison, NJ. On Hune 9-10. He participated in a panel discussion and gave a talk entitled “Refuge in God, and Salvation, in Christianity and Hinduism.”
15. Members were asked to consider hosting Future Meetings.
    1. September 13 [Tim Maloney will see if the Islamic Center of Scranton is available;
    2. October 11;
    3. November 8 [Traditionally St. Peter’s Cathedral]
    4. December 13
16. The meeting adjourned at 10:37 by acclamation.