

**Saint Pascal Baylon Catholic Church
Social Justice and Caring Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday, May 2, 2019**

Present: Martha Arko, Anna DeCrans, Bill Dorgan, Carmen Johnson, Joan Larkin, Christine Malec (minute writer), Margaret Malec, Fr. John Mitchell, Bonnie Steele, Mary Weyandt and Julianne Wojcik

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Margaret announced that 34 pints of blood were donated at the American Red Cross blood drive that was held at the parish on Monday, April 15, 2019. She said that, even though all the donation spots had been filled, the parish's goal was not met due to the fact that several of the donors were deferred from giving blood. Margaret stated that the next blood drive will take place at the parish on Monday, July 8, 2019, from 1:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Committee Meeting Minutes

Chris reported that Thea Munoz, the parish's Communications and Office Manager, informed her that she posted the missing committee meeting minutes on the Social Justice and Caring Committee's website and will continue to do so in the future.

We Care Campaign

Chris reminded the committee members that the next "We Care Campaign" will take place the weekend of June 1 - 2, 2019. They discussed the following organizations as possible options for the Campaign:

- **Boys and Girls Club of the Twin Cities** - an organization that enables young people to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens,
- **flood relief** - to provide assistance to those who have been victims of the recent flooding in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska or North Dakota,
- **a gang prevention program** in the Twin Cities area,
- **Open Your Heart to the Hungry and Homeless** - an organization that provides financial and technical support to homeless shelters, food shelves and domestic violence shelters throughout Minnesota (This organization is assisting those who lived in the Navigation Center in Minneapolis this past winter and need to find new housing.),
- **Police Activities League** - a St. Paul organization that utilizes athletic, educational and recreational activities to create trust and understanding between police officers and youth and gives them a safe place to play, positive role models and good citizenship,
- **Progressive Baptist Church Fishes and Loaves Food Shelf** - a ministry that provides emergency food items to anybody in need (The committee members wondered how many parishioners utilize this food shelf.),
- **Safe Summer Nights** - a program designed to provide opportunities for police officers to become acquainted with the residents of the neighborhoods they serve in a picnic-type setting,

- **San Lucas Toliman** - a mission in Guatemala that addresses the needs of education, healthcare, housing, land and nutrition by addressing poverty and its underlying causes and
- **The Sheridan Story** - an organization in the Twin Cities area that fights child hunger by providing a weekend supply of food to hungry children whose only meals may be the breakfasts and lunches given to them at school.

After some discussion, the committee members chose Open Your Heart to the Hungry and Homeless and The Sheridan Story for the first two options. For the third option, they debated between the Police Activities League and the Progressive Baptist Church Fishes and Loaves Food Shelf. They decided they would choose the Progressive Baptist Church Fishes and Loaves Food Shelf if this option had not been chosen within a year and they would choose the Police Activities League if it had. Chris said that she would check her records for the last time that the Progressive Baptist Church Fishes and Loaves Food Shelf had been chosen as an option.

Chris agreed to submit the bulletin announcements regarding this Campaign.

Donation Closet

The committee members continued their discussion of the flyer describing the ministries for whom the parish collects donations (Brittany's Place, Joseph's Coat, the Listening House and Merrick Community Services). They decided that, for the donation closet itself, they would create a one-sided laminated 8 and ½ sheet of paper - with the top half of the page containing a description of the ministry and the bottom half listing the items requested by the ministry.

The decided to try and have all the ministry descriptions be the same length and to eliminate details such as when these organizations are open. They agreed to add the web address for each of the ministries on the page so that interested parishioners could look them up to obtain additional information if they so choose.

The committee members discussed the possibility of putting these laminated papers in table top holders for placement in Brioschi Hall at various times throughout the year - rotating which ones are used. They also decided that copies of these could be placed on the committee's webpage and in the kiosks located in the gathering space.

The committee members also decided that, for the bulletin insert, they would use the format of the draft flyer distributed at the last meeting - with descriptions of the ministries on the front and a list of the items requested by each of the ministries on the back of the page.

The committee members resumed their discussion of the text that would be used to describe the Listening House. They reviewed the following revised description that Bill had written as well as language that was taken from the Listening House's website:

Bill's write-up:

“Listening House is a day shelter and community center that provides hospitality, practical assistance, and counsel to men and women who are disadvantaged or homeless adults. The center is in the lower level of First Lutheran Church just north of Metro State in the Mounds Park area. The staff serves those who come, about 70 to 90 mostly homeless people each week day from 9 to 4 PM, Thursday only from 9 to 1PM. The staff provides a safety net of services including light foods, clothing assistance, and help for those who want to find a job or housing. The center partners with professionals who provide mental and chemical health outreach and veteran's assistance.

The safety and comfort of clients comes first with a positive staff that helps those who can to make changes to improve their condition. Clients are expected to have courteous and lawful behavior. The Center is supported by grants and financial help from metro churches and surrounding businesses. St. Pascal's provides contributions of clothing, food products, and other items. The staff welcomes planned visits to see how meaningful the center is to those it serves.”

from the Listening House website:

“Listening House is a sanctuary from the streets where practical assistance, counsel and a friendly ear are offered to people who are homeless, disadvantaged or lonely. Staff and volunteers aspire to create a sense of community and connection by promoting respect for all. Respect nurtures hope, which in turn strengthens personal resolve toward positive change. Our doors open to up to 120 adults each day. Though our space is humble, friendships are rich and we actively engage with surrounding businesses to be a good neighbor. Support comes from a variety of sources and includes financial contributions, in-kind donations, professional services, and over 10,000 hours of volunteer assistance, annually.”

Bill stated that Cheryl Peterson, the Director of Listening House, approved of his write-up - with some minor corrections regarding when it is open (Monday/Tuesday/Thursday: 9:00 a.m.- 4:15 p.m. and Wednesday and Friday: 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.)

The committee members debated which text to use. They decided to combine elements from both descriptions. Chris volunteered to work on this and bring the combined version to the next meeting for the committee's review and approval.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Bonnie announced that October is Domestic Violence Awareness month. Noting that the committee had sponsored a presentation on this in the past, she asked the members if they would like to continue educating the parish on this subject.

Bonnie distributed information regarding the Silent Witness National Initiative exhibit which utilizes life-size silhouettes which tell the stories of those who have been victims of domestic violence. She said that this exhibit helps personalize the subject and demonstrates that domestic violence is found in all socio-economic backgrounds. The committee members liked this idea

and discussed the possibility of putting the silhouettes in the gathering space. Bonnie agreed to investigate obtaining such an exhibit.

The committee members also discussed having a prayer service to support those who have been affected by domestic violence - offering them moral support and providing them with resources regarding this issue.

Pastoral Care

Bonnie told the committee members that the parish has recently obtained some pastoral care resources. She stated that these included:

- booklets to assist ministers of communion to the homebound,
- a set of “Journeying Through Grief” booklets from Stephen Ministries (See below.) that could be distributed to those who have experienced the loss of a loved one - during various times during the first year after their loss (at three weeks, three months, six months and eleven months) and
- a picture book entitled The Next Place by Warren Hanson which explains death to a child in a simple way with a message of peace, comfort and hope.

Bonnie also spoke about the possibility of starting various ministries at the parish. One is a **bereavement ministry program** to help support families who have lost a loved one. She said this could involve sending these families encouraging notes on special occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays and other significant milestones. Bonnie mentioned that she has been sending personal notes to various parishioners and documenting when she does this so that she can keep track of their communication.

Another possible option suggested by Bonnie was having the parish participate in the **Stephen Ministry** program - which trains lay people to provide one-on-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life (such as divorce, grief, illness, job loss, relocation etc.) Bonnie stated that Stephen ministers receive approximately fifty hours of training that cover various topics (such as caregiving, confidentiality, feelings, listening skills, maintaining appropriate boundaries, spiritual care etc.). She said that this training usually takes place out-of-state so it may be expensive to send parishioners there but that this could be offset by having some fundraisers. Bonnie stated that the ministers also meet with each other to support each other in their work.

Immigration

Bonnie asked the committee members to consider hosting another presentation on immigration in the fall and then having a follow-up luncheon in January 2020 to continue discussing the topic - at which participants could bring a dish to share that reflects their heritage.

Bonnie passed around some possible reading materials for the committee members to consider: Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers by the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Racial Sobriety: A Journey from

Hurts to Healing by Clarence E. Williams Jr. - which deals with the practice of seeing every person as a fully functioning human being.

Next Meeting

Thursday, June 6, 2019, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Staff Lounge