

**Saint Pascal Baylon Catholic Church
Social Justice and Caring Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday, October 3, 2019**

Present: Martha Arko, Anna DeCrans, Kendall Doom, Ann Karner, Christine Malec (minute writer), Margaret Malec, Bonnie Steele and Julianne Wojick

Angel Tree Ministry

There was no update on the Angel Tree ministry, a program that provides the children of incarcerated parents with Christmas gifts. Margaret noted that there has been a bulletin announcement regarding this.

Beacon Congregational Convening

Anna reported on the Beacon congregational convening that she and Kendall attended. She said that Beacon (an interfaith housing collaborative working to end homelessness in the Twin Cities) is focusing on three policy issues:

- investing in building homes for people with very low incomes - using housing infrastructure bonds,
- changing the Housing Support program to include homeless families and
- creating a state rent subsidy program that distributes rental subsidies for all who qualify (making up the difference between what an individual and/or family can afford to pay in rent and what the housing actually costs).

Anna stated that Beacon also provides workshops on various topics for donors, members and interested congregations and that there are many opportunities for getting involved - in advocacy, research etc.

Anna mentioned that she will continue to stay engaged in this organization. The committee members discussed choosing an effort to support.

Center for Mission/Committee Retreat

The members chose some dates for the day of reflection that Adam Fitzpatrick, the Social Mission Outreach Coordinator for the Center for Mission of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, will lead for the committee - Saturday, January 11, 2020 or Saturday, January 25, 2020. Bonnie agreed to contact Adam to determine if he would be available on either of these dates.

Clothesline Project

Bonnie announced that after many attempts to communicate with the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, she finally heard back from this organization. She stated that the clothesline display containing t-shirts hanging from it with the names of those who have been victims of

domestic violence will be delivered to the parish on Friday, October 4, 2019, and that it will be set-up in the gathering space.

Come Together

Bonnie passed around a *Monthly Gatherings Host Guidebook* for Come Together, an ecumenical group of people of faith who gather monthly for contemplation, discussion, music and prayer in a variety of churches and faith-based organizations around the Twin Cities to pray for peace and an end to violence in homes, communities and the world.

The committee members discussed whether to host a meeting at the parish. Bonnie reminded the committee members that this event usually includes a worship service with a message, prayer, petition and song and small/large group conversations with discussion questions regarding a specific topic, and, at times, a peace walk of the surrounding neighborhood. She said the host congregation is responsible for providing the venue, choosing the music, speaker, text and topic for the meeting, offering hospitality etc. Bonnie stated that the theme used is one germane to the congregation and its surrounding community.

Bonnie said that the storytelling and conversation help build community and relationships, make people feel they are cared for and not alone etc.

The committee members discussed the possibility of hosting a Come Together meeting and a theme they would choose for it. They commented on the recent violence occurring in St. Paul and debated whether this could serve as the topic for the meeting. They noted that the theme for Phase Two of the JustFaith Catholic program being held at the parish in January, February and March of 2020 is “Journey to Justice” - which relates to the theme of violence. Because of this, they discussed the possibility of having the Come Together meeting serve as the immersion event for Phase Two of the JustFaith Catholic program. They decided that a possible date and time for this event could be Saturday, February 29, 2020, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. If the event is successful, the committee members agreed they would be willing to host another such meeting in the future.

Committee Brochure

Bonnie noted that she is still working on the committee brochure but that it has not been finalized.

Committee Commitment/Expectations

The committee members continued their discussion of what expectations they might like to establish for committee members - in terms of attendance, term limits, getting representatives from the entire parish, how the committee should be configured to best serve the social justice and pastoral care needs of the parish etc.

It was noted that the Parish Council is supportive of the committee moving forward with social justice-related work and that such efforts take many volunteers. It is hoped that participation in

the upcoming JustFaith Program will prompt those enrolled to become involved in the committee and its projects.

The committee members felt it would be helpful to send a survey to members (past and present), asking what drew them to committee, what their hopes are/were, what next steps should be, how they might like to be involved etc.

Compassion Kits for the Unsheltered

The committee members noted they appreciated hearing pastor Fr. John Michell speak about the compassion kits for the unsheltered from the pulpit.

Bonnie reported that several parishioners have expressed interest in helping assemble the compassion kits. The committee members asked her to let them know when the assembly would take place so that they could assist as well.

The committee members discussed that children could help with this as well. Bonnie mentioned that she would contact the school about the project. She spoke about the possibility of this becoming an Eagle Scout project.

End-of-Life Events

Bonnie reported that the end-of-life-event regarding palliative care and hospice that was going to take place on November 9, 2019, will be rescheduled. She said that the person who is hired for the pastoral care position will be responsible for rescheduling and planning this event.

JustFaith Catholic Program

Ann reported that the JustFaith Catholic program (a three-phase small-group experience involving prayer, study, dialogue and immersion as participants explore contemporary issues through the lens of Christian faith) will begin next week - with the Tuesday evening group starting October 7th and the Wednesday afternoon group on October 8th. She stated that twenty-seven parishioners have enrolled in the program.

Little Free Pantry

Bonnie reported that when parish Business Administrator Theresa Ruttger returns from being out-of-the-office, she will look into whether there are any city requirements associated with having a free pantry box on parish grounds. (The pantry box is similar to the lending libraries one sees around town but different in that it would contain foodstuffs instead of books.)

One Body

Bonnie announced that the parish will host a meeting on Saturday, November 9, 2019, from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. for One Body, an organization whose goal is to teach others how to welcome the stranger and immigrant and how to treat them through the lens of Catholic social teaching.

Bonnie said that the planning team for this event will come to the parish on Tuesday, October 8, 2019, to walk through the building, find spaces for break-out sessions, plan the liturgy etc.

Kendall asked if childcare would be provided. Bonnie stated that she would ask Kim Roering, the parish's Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, about the possibility of providing childcare.

It was noted that this event would serve as the immersion experience for Phase One of the parish's JustFaith Catholic program being held this fall.

Bonnie reminded the committee members interested in attending to register for the event on-line. She provided them with the e-mail address for this.

Stephen Ministry Program

Bonnie said she had no new information regarding the Stephen Ministry program at this time. (This program uses lay people to provide one-on-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life.)

Candidate Forums

Anna reminded the committee members that this November's local election includes various candidates running for City Council. She stated that the candidates running for these seats would be hosting various forums on such topics as housing. Christine mentioned that Anna had sent her an e-mail containing information regarding these forums and that she will forward it to the rest of the committee members.

The committee members discussed the possibility of putting information regarding these upcoming forums in the parish bulletin, on the kiosks, in an e-mail that would get sent to parishioners etc.

Voter Registration

Bonnie mentioned that she had attended a meeting for Social Justice Coordinators and Directors for the Archdiocese and that one of the topics discussed was training parishioners to help the unsheltered with voter registration. She said there was a training event held on October 1, 2019, and that an early voting event will take place on November 1, 2020.

Next Meeting

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

At the September 5, 2019, meeting, Bill Dorgan volunteered to lead the prayer at the November 7, 2019 meeting.