

Social Justice and Caring Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday, July 7, 2021 (via Zoom)

Present: Martha Arko, Bill Dorgan, Mary Huettl, Ann Karner, Julie Ludden, Christine Malec (minute writer), Margaret Malec, Kim Roering, Mary Root and Mary Weyandt

Prayer

The prayer was led by Mary Huettl.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Margaret reported that forty-five units were donated at the American Red Cross blood drive that was held at the parish on Monday, June 28, 2021. She stated that the next blood drive will take place at Grace Lutheran on Monday, August 30, 2021, from 1:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative

Ann said that since the legislative session has concluded, there is not much being done with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative's "Bring it Home" work. (This work focuses on making legislative changes related to housing.)

Ann noted that Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative is embarking on a project in which it is asking congregations to recruit ten people to attend a training in August. She stated that each of these ten people will be asked to recruit an additional ten people - with the intent that all of them would be available to respond to needed action items (such as contacting the Governor, legislators, mayors etc. regarding housing-related issues). The committee members discussed whether the parish would be able to find this many volunteers.

Ann reminded the committee members that Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative has an expectation that its members offer it financial support - even if the amount is small. She mentioned that the amount of the donation has never been specified. Margaret noted that the parish could support the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative by choosing this organization as a future We Care Campaign fund recipient - as it has done in the past.

Ann remarked that the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative works on long-range housing-related issues whereas the parish's collaboration with Progressive Baptist addresses the more immediate needs of the unsheltered.

The committee members acknowledged that working with the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative is a big commitment and requires the work of many volunteers. They debated whether the parish should continue with this effort given that, as of now, there are not many volunteers working on this. They decided to table this issue until Julie Moore, an absent committee member who works with this organization, has a chance to participate in the discussion.

Donation Closet

Christine reminded the committee members that the new schedule for collecting items for the donation closet charities on a rotating basis will begin in August - starting with the collection for Brittany's Place.

Martha mentioned that she left messages for her contact from Brittany's Place (via e-mail and telephone) asking what type of donations her organization desired but that she has not heard back from her. She read the e-mail that she sent to her contact to the committee members and they thought it could be used as a template when contacting the other organizations for which the parish collects donations. Julie agreed to send a copy of the e-mail to Christine who would forward it to the entire committee.

Julie noted that the Brittany's Place website contains a list of items being requested by the organization. For the August collection, the committee members decided to use ideas from the list contained on the website if Martha never hears back from her contact.

The committee members considered the possibility of collecting for Joseph's Coat instead of Brittany's Place in the future if the committee continues to have trouble connecting with the latter organization.

Kim announced that she still intends on writing an announcement for the bulletin and/or the *Pulse* informing parishioners of the pending change to collecting donations for the chosen organizations on a rotating basis (Brittany's Place, the Listening House, Merrick Community Services and Progressive Baptist/Freedom House).

Meeting with Progressive Baptist

Christine said that the next meeting with Progressive Baptist will take place this Thursday, July 8, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. via Google Meet.

Ann mentioned that Progressive Baptist is currently working on an application for a grant that would help expand its food shelf.

The committee members discussed asking Progressive Baptist if it is participating in its own National Night Out, and, if not, to invite the congregation to St. Pascal's event. Ann volunteered to ask one her Progressive Baptist contacts about this.

Angel Tree Ministry

Mary Weyandt announced that she had spoken to Fr. John Mitchell and they determined that the parish will participate in the Angel Tree ministry, a program that provides the children of incarcerated parents with Christmas gifts - as it has done in the past. She stated that this will be in addition to collecting Christmas gifts for the Catholic Charities Giving Tree program.

National Night Out Event

The committee members discussed the National Night Out that will be held in the upper parking lot of the parish on August 3, 2021, from 6:00 - 800 p.m. but that the restrooms near the church would be made available for use.

Mary Weyandt reported that parish Business Administrator, Theresa Ruttger, submitted an application for the National Night Out event. She said that the parish is still waiting to hear if it qualifies to have a band or deejay perform at the event. Mary proposed that if the parish does not qualify for either, a playlist could be created which could be broadcast over a speaker.

Mary stated that that parish is also waiting to hear if local fire or police department staff will attend the event. She said that, if not, it is possible that a volunteer from the parish who is a fire fighter or police officer could be invited to serve at the event.

Mary noted that no other National Night Out events are being held in the neighborhood around the parish on August 3, 2021, so it is hoped that this might increase the chances that those living in this area will attend the event.

Mary stated that the plan is to provide ice cream treats, have activities for children - such as chalk, jump rope and providing them access to the playground.

Mary suggested the possibility of having door prizes - which may involve having to solicit donations from local businesses. A suggestion was made that some type of giveaway be handed out to those in attendance (such as a St. Pascal Baylon cup or pen).

Mary said that once more of the event details are finalized, flyers will be made advertising the event. The committee members discussed distributing the flyers in the neighborhood around the parish - handing them out in groups of two, approximately one week before the event. They also emphasized wanting to invite parishioners to attend the event as well.

Mary stated that, during fellowship Sunday on July 25, 2021, supplies will be made available for any child who may want to make a poster advertising the event.

Kim noted that Fr. John has written about this event in the bulletin and that he spoke about it at mass. She said that it will also be mentioned in future bulletins and in the parish's electronic newsletter, the *Pulse*.

Mary indicated that volunteers will be needed to assist with this event. She stated that two Parish Council members have agreed to help (Regina Head and Peter Holmes) as well as several committee members (Mary Huettl, Julie Ludden, Christine, Margaret, Julie Moore, Eileen and Ray Muetzel and Mary Root). The committee members agreed that other volunteers could come from the parish-at-large. She said that a planning meeting will be held on Tuesday July 13, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. She asked the committee members to let her know if they would like to help with this event or if they know of somebody else who might like to assist.

A suggestion was made that those working at the event wear St. Pascal Baylon shirts so that they could be easily identified.

The committee members discussed having a backup plan in case it rains - such as borrowing some tents.

The committee members discussed the funds that were raised through the June We Care Campaign that were designated to sponsor activities that would help the parish do outreach to its neighbors. Kim stated that approximately \$500.00 was raised in the Campaign and that some of this money could be used for the National Night Out event. She said she will speak to Fr. John to verify this.

Next Meeting

Thursday, August 5, 2021, from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. via Zoom

Kim will schedule the Zoom meeting.

Christine agreed to lead the prayer.