

J&H Virtual Meeting 06/18/20

Present- Mark Schumacher, Sara Cross, Jean Smits , Mike Westenberg, Jackie Thiry

Thank you to Mike for setting up the zoom meeting.

The main purpose of the meeting was to touch base before adjourning for the summer. Our community is hurting. Is there something we can do? Below is an update on current items and a summary of our discussion.

Justice Herald- If you recall, we agreed the focus of the Justice Herald would be on Caring for God's Creation since this is the 50th anniversary of Earth day and the 5-year anniversary of Laudato Si. Proposal was to focus on what is happening in our Green Bay area with articles from the Green Bay Sustainability Commission, Joshua Environmental Task Force, Green Bay School Board 100% Clean Energy Resolution, Aldo Leopold School environmental programs, the Farmory mission / vision, and Sisters of St. Francis sustainability practices. Since it would be difficult to hand out any paper copies until this Fall because of coronavirus safe practices, Mike suggested we could ask people to do a 5-minute video that could be posted to Facebook. All people agreed and the video's started being posted this past Tuesday, June 16, on St. Matthew Facebook page. They are awesome and give a clear message that environmental action is happening here in our community. PLEASE view them and SHARE on your Facebook page so the optimum number of people see them. Mike will send the link to everyone.

Seasons of Creation- "Season of Creation" is celebrated by Christian communities around the globe, beginning on September 1, Day of World Prayer, and ending on October 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. (See <http://seasonofcreation.org>). For the past couple of years, Jackie and Kay have been on a committee with Michelle Becker from Resurrection, Marge Mattice from Prince of Peace and various other people to organize an Ecumenical prayer service. If anyone is interested in participating, please let Jackie know. We will meet toward the end of July, beginning of August.

St John Homeless Shelter- During the "sheltering at home", St. Johns was able to house half the guests at a church downtown until the end of May. Then both populations were moved to the empty San Luis Nursing Home in Ashwaubenon until this week. They are now back at St. John's for two weeks and then the summer program begins. Jackie was on a Zoom call initiated by Alexis Woods, the executive director of the homeless shelter. This is Alexis invitation to the call held on June 11.

We want you to be the first to know about The Gridiron, the newest project of St. John's! As our volunteers, you are the closest to the work that we do and our mission to serve, and you are also our greatest supporters and community advocates. That's why we wanted you to be the first to hear about The Gridiron, a mixed use, multi-family development that provides both affordable housing and intentional social connection. This innovative housing model is the result of our Executive Director Lexie Wood's doctoral research, which focused on the impact of social isolation and marginalization on cost-burdened households, ultimately shortening their life expectancies by 30-40 years. This housing proposal is a win-win: it provides necessary additional affordable housing to the area, emphasizing social connectedness, while also removing the transportation barrier that exists between job seekers and employment opportunities located within the village of Ashwaubenon, The Gridiron location. It is our strong belief that a different way of offering housing in our community can strengthen families and the local economy while decreasing the number of households that ever experience homelessness in the first place. As a result, marginalized populations will see increased levels of life satisfaction, decreased costs of living, and extended life expectancies. With all this said, please know that our homeless services will remain in downtown Green Bay.

We need your support to be advocates for The Gridiron!

Racism- Group shared their thoughts. It is hard for us, a white population, to admit or understand our white privilege. All agreed educating ourselves through books and all the webinars now available is helpful. We appreciated this past weekend homily challenging everyone to take some action against systemic racism. No one is exempt. The church does not have a good past record on combatting racism. All felt it was important for parishes to keep it in front of their members. Possible action steps might include:

- Mike has posted the Wisconsin and US bishops letters against racism on Facebook page. We agreed to forward to Mike things that we came across that could be posted on the web-site.
- Jackie shared information on a St. Vincent de Paul Zoom Racism simulation. The in-person simulation is attached.
- Michelle Becker, from Resurrection is going to investigate the JustMatters Racism module. If it is offered, we discussed the need to encourage participation, especially for those who normally do not engage in this sort of thing.

Faithful Citizenship- The November 3 election is very important. Getting voters to the polls is a priority. Possible action:

- Education on how to vote by mail. Casey Hicks, Conservation Voter organizer, made a video on how to request an absentee ballot. This could be posted on our web site. Bulletin insert with instructions could be done.
- Recruit poll workers. Green Bay is in dire need. Perhaps put in bulletin.
- Do a video of people telling why they vote.
- Engage in letter writing through Votefwd.org. It allows you to pick a list of people who normally do not vote. It is a form letter with space to write why you personally vote. The idea is to encourage registered voters to vote. It cost you the price of a stamp for each letter.