

Justice Ministries Coordinating Team monthly meeting

January 8, 2019 6:30pm

Members Present: Justin Mills, Carolyn White, Marjorie Ringness, Julia Logan, David Wagner, Karen Knudson, Emily Austin

Guests: Dale Largent, Randy Urmston, Mary Segall

Members Absent: Sue Ratner, Christopher Brunig, Betsy Bell, Tom Sunderland, Barbara Erickson

Julia opened the meeting with prayer at 6:30pm.

Dale Largent was introduced and welcomed as a potential member of JMCT.

Mary Segall and Randy Urmston visited from the **Mid-East Focus Ministry**. The theme of this year's film series is "Finding Home." First film is February 1. There will be a Sunday forum on February 10 to kick off the series. St. Mark's is becoming well known in this ministry. Mary introduced us to the concept of the **Theology of Solidarity** - working with other ministries and organizations to magnify voices and understand the root causes of social injustice. Mary asked for suggestions of groups or ministries to collaborate with. Sanctuary, Interfaith Dialogue, and the Church Council of Greater Seattle were suggested. The Mid-East Focus ministry would like to pilot a workshop or series of workshops on the Theology of Solidarity. Mary distributed information with details about a proposed workshop, facilitated by Micah Kurz and Elizabeth Myers. The cost is estimated to be \$4,740 for the initial workshop, but Mary is not asking for assistance at this time except for collaboration and organizational support. *Justin suggested that Mary prepare a brief intro to the proposed workshop. And Justin will spread the word to other justice ministry leaders to encourage participation at a workshop as well as helping with it.* A flyer was distributed about a lecture by Tim Wise at SPU on March 1 - "Hope for Reconciliation - The Politics of Fear in America." Aneela Afzali from the Muslim Association of Puget Sound - American Muslim Empowerment Network will also be speaking on April 6 - "American Muslim Women Speak Out." Related to faiths working together - Emily said that there will be a gathering as a show of support for José Robles, a man receiving sanctuary at Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Letters to those in detention like José are encouraged.

Review of December minutes and follow-up on action items: Maris Olsen and Brenda Schoolfield will come to our February meeting to give us an overview of the St. Bridget's Banquet ministry. *Justin will check with Amanda Clark about visiting to discuss the hate de-escalation ministry.* Julia reported that Urban Garden/Kitchen are considered justice ministries per Steve, not part of campus landscape. Marjorie had an email exchange with Brian Sellers-Peterson and learned that three members of the Seattle Service Corps expressed interest in the garden. Karen brought up the challenges of growing anything in the Leffler garden space due to the fence and shade trees. It was suggested that there be some communication with the leaders of food and flower ministries about what should be grown and what will be used. *Marjorie will contact Adam Conley to share this suggestion and create future dialogue about the garden.*

The Edwin Pratt commemoration will be February 2. Brett Bowton-Meade has taken the lead on this big event and will need help with hospitality and publicity.

Carolyn gave a report on the **Carbon Offset project**. This project has been operating for 5 years as a partnership with the Diocese of the Southern Philippines. There has been sharing of expertise from Weyerhaeuser, and in those 5 years, the program has planted almost 30,000 trees with contributions from our

Diocese. The result is the sequestration of 70,000 tons of carbon. Calculating that the average church in our Diocese emits 25 tons/year, this equates to almost 30 years of carbon neutrality for the Diocese! This program is also getting support from a group called E-Care, a new initiative of the churches in the Southern Philippines.

David reported on **Homeless Advocacy**. The Threshold Fund has collected almost \$50,000, surpassing the goal of \$25,000! Carolyn expressed thanks to David for his work on the creation of the Threshold Fund, and David noted that the first mention of this Fund was exactly a year ago today. The intent is to start using some of the Fund during the first quarter of 2019 to assist people with rent and other needs. But there are a few details that still need to be settled in the memo of understanding with Catholic Community Services. There will continue to be discernment as to whether the entire fund would be distributed as needed or would some be kept as seed money for the future. Our initial contract with CCS will be one year. The Threshold Fund has been created to give direct service, but how do we advocate? The Dean has started the process of hiring Marilyn Cornwell as a part-time consultant for 6-9 months to explore this question. Marilyn is a priest and has been actively involved in homelessness advocacy with the Church Council of Greater Seattle and other groups for many years, as well as being a staff member at St. Mark's in the past. David emphasized that this effort does not in any way diminish the current work being done at St. Mark's around homelessness. There will be much more information coming about this in the next few days, and there is a congregation-wide meeting scheduled for Saturday, February 9, from 9-2pm to engage the wider congregation. The Bishop's task force on homelessness, including David and Emily and now Marilyn, continues to meet and is collecting information about what various parishes in the Diocese are currently doing. *David will invite Marilyn to our February or March meeting.*

Emily announced that the **United Way Community Resource Exchange** is coming up on Wednesday, March 13 at Century Link Event Center. This event has become kind of a hub for leadership in the City to collaborate, and Emily encouraged anyone interested in homelessness services to come to that event, simply to network with other providers.

Dale reported that about a dozen people from St. Mark's helped at the **Community Lunch** earlier this month. May/June may be the next time a group from St. Mark's will be needed to help there.

David advocated again for the development of an **online system for volunteers** to connect with various events and projects at St. Mark's.

Justin spoke on behalf of Betsy to ask for thoughts about St. Mark's becoming members of **Washington Against Nuclear Weapons**. Betsy will have a table in the nave on January 20 to find out how much support there is for this issue. *And we will ask her to speak more about this the next time she can be at a JMCT meeting in person.* Betsy also has several book readings coming up for her recently published book, "Open Borders."

Carolyn announced that Daisy Khan, founder of **Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality (WISE)** will be speaking tomorrow night, January 9 at the Interfaith Community Sanctuary in Ballard and had a flyer available for more information.

Carolyn closed with a prayer at 8:05pm. Next meeting: Tuesday, February 5, 6:30 pm in Leffler Living Room.

Minutes submitted by Marjorie Ringness