SCRANTON AREA MINISTERIUM Minutes 26 October 2016

Home Health Care Professionals and Hospice, Eynon PA

**Present:**

Elaine Donly, EOTC Riaz Hussain, Ph.D., UofS Mosque, *Treasurer*

Ruth Jones, Community Activist Chaplain Kathy Kaskel, GeisingerCMC

Charlotte Ledbetter, Community Activist Rev. Jack Munley, Hospice Chaplain, *President*

Sr. Terry O’Rourke IHM, Friends of the Poor Rev. James Redington SJ, UofS

Sr. John Michelle Southwick IHM, Marywood University Vera Walline, BaHa’i Community

Sr. Ann Walsh, IHM, Friends of the Poor Phil Yevics, Ph.D., Volunteer at LCP, *Secretary*

Rev. Munley called the meeting to order and 9:04, welcoming the group to Home Health Care Professionals and Hospice, where he serves as Hospice Chaplain.

Phil Yevics offered the opening prayer.

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting** Rev. Munley provided printed copies of the minutes that had been distributed electronically, and gave those present a few minutes to peruse them. Charlotte Ledbetter made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Vera Walline seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Yevics asked if folks found it helpful to have institutional affiliations given along with names, all who spoke up said that it was. He suggested we should develop a more detailed contact list of the membership over the next few meetings.

**2. Treasurer’s Report** Dr. Hussain distributed copies of the Treasurer’s Report. He noted that while the minutes of the previous meeting reported that the distribution of the collection from last year’s Thanksgiving Service had been accomplished, the check to Family to Family had not been cashed because of confusion over who should receive it. A new check is being issued to resolve the matter. Members were reminded that dues are based on the calendar year.

**3. Calendar Updates** Rev. Munley distributed copies of the SAM Calendar of Events, to which members made the following additions:

a. Fr. Redington noted the talk this evening at the University by the Director of Jesuit Relief Services as well as a refugee who has settled in Scranton.

b. November 6 will be the Turkey Trot sponsored by the Commonwealth Medical College to benefit Friends of the Poor.

c. Marywood University will be holding a Fair Trade Sale on November 8 and 9 at the Learning Commons from 9 to 5 each day.

d. On November 10, Marywood will be holding a Candlelight Vigil and Refugee talk, beginning at 8 PM.

e. The November meeting of SAM will be held on Wednesday November 9 at the Rectory of St. Peter’s Cathedral in Scranton.

f. The December meeting of SAM will be on Wednesday December 14 at Marywood University in the Swartz Conference Center.

g. SAM meetings in the Spring of 2017 will be held on the second Wednesday of each month. The only potential conflict would be on April 12, which will be in Great and Holy Week for both Eastern and Western Christians this year. Members felt the morning meeting should not conflict with participation by most members.

h. Chaplain Kaskel informed the group that the Interfaith Chapel at CMCGeisinger has been completed and is available for use. She looks forward to the Ministerium participating in a formal dedication ceremony that will be scheduled in the future.

**4. Interfaith Thanksgiving Service** Sr. Terry distributed a draft of the program for the Service. She noted that there have already been a few changes from what was discussed at the previous meeting, and there would be further changes pending final confirmation of availability of various presentors. The final program will be determined at the November meeting.

**5. Prison Ministry**

a. Rev. Munley announced that the Healing Communities Training that had been scheduled for October 19 had to be cancelled because of low enrollment. Rev. Sandra Strauss, Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach for the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, has offered to present an information session to promote a future training.

b. Phil Yevics reported that the Reentry Programming at Lackawanna County Prison that had been provided by EOTC was being reorganized because the grant funding that programming was not renewed. Elaine Donley added that the County had agreed to provide some funding so that this important work could continue.

**6. Proposal for a Clergy Enrichment Series**

a. Phil Yevics proposed that the Ministerium consider offering a series of “Clergy Enrichment Programs” on a regular basis, perhaps 4 times a year. Potential topics and presenters that have already been well received include:

1. Geisinger Health System’s “Family Matters” Program, which aims to empower families to talk about end of life issues before decisions are necessary.

2. Suicide Prevention and Postvention. Kathy Wallace and the Suicide Prevention Initiative of NEPA had presented a program over a year ago that was very well received.

3. “Why should my faith community consider becoming a Healing Community?” As mentioned above, Rev. Sandra Strauss from the PA Council of Churches has offered to present such a program.

4. “Mental Health First Aid” is a program offered through the National Alliance on Mental Illness [NAMI]

5. Elaine Donly suggested current explorations of “Smart Recovery” might provide a forum for exploring how spirituality can promote healing.

**7. Martin Luther King Celebration Committee**

1. Charlotte Ledbetter reported that the Committee had been meeting regularly to plan the events surrounding the Celebration of Martin Luther King Day, which will be on Monday January 16 in 2017.

2. Rev. Allen has agreed to be the featured speaker at the Interfaith Service to be held on the evening of January 16 at Bethel AME Church.

a. Noting that the Ministerium had sought ways to be more supportive of the work of the Community in the past, Phil Yevics suggested that SAM might provide financial support for Rev. Allen’s visit. Sr. Ann Walsh voiced her support for that suggestion, and the group decided to explore it further with the leadership of the committee.

3. Phil Yevics asked if SAM could provide an appropriate forum for a discussion on Race relations in our local and national communities. The group decided to investigate that suggestion further in the future.

8. Future Meetings: All will begin at 9 AM

**Wednesday November 9**, St. Peter Roman Catholic Cathedral, Scranton

**Wednesday December 14**, Marywood University, Swartz Conference Center