Scranton Area Ministerium Minutes 12 December 2018

University of Scranton Montrone Hall

**Present:**

Sahar Almasri Islamic Center Rev. Darian Banks Bethel A.M.E.

Rev. Rebecca Barnes St. Luke’s Lillian Barrett AmerihealthCaritas

Atty. Shannon Brown Homeless Coalition Bev deBarros Exodus Ministries

Charlotte Ledbetter Community Activist Benan Mozayen Islamic Center

Rev. Jack Munley Hospice Chaplain Sr. Terry O’Rourke IHM Friends of the Poor

Robin Qayyum Prison Ministry Rev. James Redington S.J. U of Scranton

Katy Windels Diocese of Scranton Dr. Helen Wolf U of Scranton

Phil Yevics PA Prison Society

Dr. Wolf welcomed the group to the University of Scranton.

Rev. Munley called the meeting to order at 9:09 and asked Charlotte Ledbetter to lead the Opening Prayer. He then invited all present to introduce themselves.

**Minutes** from November meeting were distributed by email the previous evening, and printed copies were available for review. Charlotte Ledbetter made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Sr. Terry seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Fr. Redington provided copies of the **Financial Report**, which members had time to review.

Fr. Jim noted that there was a deposit of $100 from 2 members submitting 2018 dues, and there was an expenditure of $134 for the 2019 Web Hosting and email. The balance at the end of 2018 is $1,130.57.

There were no questions or comments. Rev. Banks made a motion to accept the Financial Report as given, Lillian Barrett seconded it, the motion passed unanimously.

1] Review of Interfaith Thanksgiving Service –

* Newspaper article – Several members mentioned that the Letter to the Editor reacting to the shooting at the Pittsburgh Synagogue and announcing the Service was well received.
* Sr. Terry spoke of her appreciation for the work Rabbi Daniel had put into the service, which she found to be quite moving. Several members thought the pot luck dinner was a nice community gesture.
* Rev. Banks suggested same place, same format next year, based on the formula “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!”

2] Martin Luther King Weekend

* Interfaith service – Charlotte Ledbetter explained that Bethel AME would be hosting the Monday evening Service, and that Bishop Ray Johnson had agreed to be the principal speaker.
* Charlotte will be organizing the choir. Anyone interested in participating is asked to contact her.
* Sunday Dinner at the University of Scranton will begin at 2:30. Phil Yevics made a motion that SAM sponsor a table, with those who were able paying the $25 to SAM to cover the cost of the meal. Mother Barnes seconded the motion, it passed without exception.
* Sr. Terry noted that there were two activities for the youth on Monday, and that the March from UNC Progressive Center to the Courthouse was again planned for late afternoon.
* Mrs. Almasri reported that there would be a Celebration at Penn State Scranton on Monday afternoon.

3] Grant from Moses Taylor Foundation –

Phil Yevics explained that the Moses Taylor Foundation had given the Ministerium and the Diocese of Scranton a grant of $1,490 to offer a workshop for community faith leaders that would address the issue of Senior Isolation.

Katy Windels reported that the Workshop would be held at the Diocesan Pastoral Center on Wyoming Avenue in Scranton on a Saturday from 10am to 1pm. March 30 is the first choice for a date, but it has not yet been confirmed.

Prof. Jim Silberski of Misericordia University has agreed to offer a presentation about Senior Isolation, which will be followed with small group discussion about how faith communities might be prepared to respond.

The day will conclude with a Catered Lunch, but Cypress House Bakery will not be ready to provide it, so we need to find a provider.

4] Phil Yevics mentioned his hope that there would be several offerings of the Diversity Circles Program this Spring, but he does not yet have any specific information.

5] There were a range of reports concerning Prison Ministry.

1. Bev deBarros reported that the distribution of books at the Lackawanna County Prison [popularly known as the Bookmobile] had lower numbers over the last month because of the Thanksgiving holiday. Paperback books or soft cover magazines are always welcome. There is always a need for additional volunteers to donate 2 hours at least once every two weeks to assist in book distribution.
2. Mother Barnes reported that the Cypress House Board had met and officially chosen the name of Cypress Hose Bakery for their initial project. Several grant applications have already been submitted and others are being prepared in the hope that there will be sufficient funds to begin organizing in 2019.
3. Bev deBarros was pleased to announce that a group of the Bookmobile Volunteers had arranged to provide every female inmate with children with a book to give their child for Christmas.
4. Phil Yevics noted that this Christmas distribution had displaced the pilot program called “Tell Me A Story” but he hoped it would be started after the New Year.
5. Mother Barnes explained that NEPA Prison Advocates would continue to meet at St. Luke’s on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 PM. All are welcome.

6] Atty Brown reviewed the report from the Greater Scranton Homeless Coalition that had been distributed with the Agenda. He welcomed all to participate in future activities of the group.

7] Mother Barnes reported that the group she had facilitated concerning Civil Discourse had decided they would like to plan additional activities in the Spring. She will keep us informed.

8] Mother Barnes volunteered to host the January meeting at St. Luke Episcopal Church, 232 Wyoming Avenue in Scranton.

Robin Qayyum made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Charlotte Ledbetter seconded, all enthusiastically approved. Rev. Munley closed the meeting at 10:35.

Apologetically submitted,

Phil Yevics

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Secretary