SCRANTON AREA MINISTERIUM Meeting Minutes 9 November 2016

Rectory, St. Peter Roman Catholic Cathedral Scranton PA

**Present**

Riaz Hussain, Ph.D., Imam, Campus Mosque at U of Scranton

Rev. Jack Munley, Hospice Chaplain, *President*

Sr. Terry O’Rourke, IHM, Friends of the Poor

Fr. Jim Redington S.J., University of Scranton

Chandra Sitaula, President Bhutanese Cultural Foundation

Rev. JoAnn Usry,

Vera Walline, Baha’I Community

Phil Yevics, Prison Ministry at LCP

Msgr. Dale Rupert, Pastor of St. Peter’s, was on hand to welcome participants, but had to leave for a sick call. Deacon Edward Schoener who also serves at St. Peter’s introduced himself to folks before he had to leave for work.

Rev. Munley called the meeting to order at 9:07 and asked Sr. Terry to lead us in prayer.

1. **Minutes** Rev. Munley distributed copies of the minutes from the previous meeting, which had been distributed by email earlier that morning. Dr. Hussain made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Vera Walline seconded, the motion passed without exception.

2. **Treasurer’s Report** Dr. Hussain distributed copies of the Treasurer’s report, noting that a new check had been issued to the Family to Family program, and that a few members had recently submitted their dues for 2016. He encouraged all who were able to submit dues, which apply to the calendar year January 1 to December 31 2016. Fr. Redington made a motion to accept the treasurer’s report as submitted, Rev. Usry seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

3. **Interfaith Thanksgiving Service**

 a. The Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be held on Monday Nov. 21 at St. Peter Roman Catholic Cathedral in Scranton, beginning at 12:10. [Note that the email reminder had a typo that read 12:20.] The Service will be broadcast live over CTV of the Diocese of Scranton.

 b. All members of the Ministerium are encouraged to attend and process in together. Members should gather in the Rectory at 11:30. Clergy are welcome to wear liturgical garb.

 c. Sr. Terry distributed copies of the current draft of the program, noting that there were several changes from the version distributed at the previous meeting. All arrangements have now been finalized.

4. **Martin Luther King Celebration**

a. Rev. Usry reported on the ongoing preparations for the celebration of Martin Luther King holiday on Monday January 16, 2017 with the theme, “Peaceful Tomorrows”.

 b. Sunday January 15 will be the dinner at the University of Scranton.

 c. Monday January 16 in the afternoon will include the walk and children’s party.

 d. The evening of January 16 there will be the Interfaith Service at Bethel AME, with Rev. Allen as the featured homilist. Rev. Usry will take to the Committee SAM;s offer to underwrite Rev. Allen’s visit.

 e. Jennifer Pennington is the secretary for the planning group – Jennifer.pennington@scranton.edu

 f. Phil Yevics asked if it might be appropriate for SAM to sponsor discussions on race relations. After some discussion it was decided that for the moment it would be more productive to support efforts that are already underway. Rev. Munley will reach out to Fr. Cyril Edwards and to Atty. Mulligan to see how we might support their efforts.

5. **The Future of the Scranton Area Ministerium**

a. Phil Yevics will work on preparing a contact list that can be shared among members.

 b. Phil suggested it would be worthwhile giving thought to how we can grow the membership to be more representative of local faith communities.

 c. Chandra Sitaula gave an example of the ongoing need for advocacy with local institutions to ensure fairness in the way all are treated.

 i. Phil Yevics will ask EOTC for copies of the directory of Service agencies that was prepared for people returning to the community from prison.

 ii. Rev. Usry noted that there used to be a County Advisory Panel on Diversity. Rev. Munley will make inquiries to see if the group is still active.

 iii. Rev. Munley noted that Rev. Howard Woodruff had been active in establishing a chaplain program for the Scranton Police force. He will contact the Chief of Police to inquire about the current status of that initiative. Rev. Usry suggested inviting the Chief to a SAM meeting.

 d. Phil Yevics suggested the group needs to work on common projects, not just get together and talk. He will bring a more specific version to the December meeting of his proposal for a Leadership Enrichment Series that was introduced at the October meeting.

 e. All agreed the group needs a web presence. Phil will work with Sister Kathy O’Neill who had prepared a draft of a SAM website. We also need to discuss with Rabbi Dan Swartz how best to maintain the Facebook page he created for the group.

 f. Phil suggested it would be useful to prepare a flier that could be used to encourage new people to join.

**6. Next Meeting** Wednesday December 14, Swartz Conference Center, Marywood University.

Dr. Hussain made a motion to adjourn, Fr. Redington seconded, the motion passed unanimously at 10:22 AM.