Scranton Area Ministerium Minutes of December 14, 2016

Swartz Conference Center, Marywood University

**Present:** Rev. Darien Banks, Bethel A.M.E. Bev deBarros, Exodus Ministries

Mildred Harvey, Wailing Women Dr. Riaz Hussain, NEPA Muslim

Ruth Jones, Community Activist Peter Kramer, Friends of the Poor

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

Rev. James Redington, S.J., U of Scranton Msgr. Dale Rupert, St. Peter R.C.

Rabbi Moshe Saks, Temple Israel Rev. David Searing, St. Peter Lutheran

Sr. John Michelle Southwick, IHM, Marywood Phil Yevics, Volunteer at LCP Sr. Mary Ann Zimmer, ND, Marywood

Rev. Munley called the meeting to order at 9:09, inviting Rabbi Saks to open the meeting with prayer.

Printed copies of the **Minutes** of the November meeting were distributed. Sr. John Michelle noted that item 5.e should refer to Sr. Kathy Burnes. The minutes were accepted as amended.

Dr. Husain distributed copies of the **Treasurer’s Report**, noting that the amount of the Thanksgiving Service had an extra 0 and should actually be $400. Msgr. Rupert made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report as amended, Pastor Searing seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

1. **Evaluation of Thanksgiving Service** Although Sr. Terry O’Rourke could not be present, she wanted to be sure the group offered feedback on the Interfaith Service the Monday before Thanksgiving.
   1. Several members expressed satisfaction with the program itself and the quality of the participation by those involved. The musical component was also appreciated.
   2. Sr. John Michelle noted that the attendance was disappointing, as was the participation of SAM members.
   3. Rev. Searing wondered if an evening time frame would encourage broader participation. Msgr. Rupert mentioned that the noon time slot provides TV coverage through CTV.
   4. Mrs. Harvey commented that busy people only have so much time to give, and this is a busy season.
   5. All agreed that further thought should be given to improving the participation of SAM members and inviting broader participation from the community.
2. **Preparations for Martin Luther King weekend**
   1. Rev. Searing noted that the SAM Chair is an *ex officio* member of the MLK Planning Commission. This was not communicated through the recent transitions in leadership.
   2. Charlotte Ledbetter and Rev. Banks have been involved with the ongoing preparations. They reported that the program has been prepared and publicity fliers will soon be available.
   3. Saturday January 14, 6-8 PM, Talent show, Potluck at Scranton High School
   4. Sunday January 15, Celebration and Awards Dinner at UofS, 2:30 – 5:30, $25/person, $200 table of 8.
   5. Monday January 16
      1. 10 – 12:30, Teach in at Scranton Police Station
      2. 5 pm March from UNC Olive Street to courthouse
      3. 6 PM “MLK Birthday Party” at Scranton Cultural Center
      4. 7 PM Interfaith Service, Bethel AME
   6. Rabbi Saks made a motion that SAM commit $500 towards the expenses of Rev. Allen for the Interfaith Service. Mrs. Ledbetter seconded, the motion passed unanimously.
   7. SAM decided to purchase a table for the Sunday Dinner. Members who attend can reimburse SAM.
3. **Awareness of the Ministerium** Rev. Searing suggested there is a problem with community awareness of the existence and work of the Ministerium. Rev. Banks added that he had heard folks questioning if the Ministerium was still in existence. Discussion followed on how best the group could enhance community awareness.
   1. SAM does have a **Facebook Page** created by Rabbi Swartz. He will be contacted to see if he is willing to maintain it and how best we can keep it current.
   2. The previous meeting had decided SAM should have its own **web page**. Phil Yevics asked if there were any shorter alternatives to ScrantonAreaMinisterium.org. Discussion supported the longer URL as the only way to avoid confusion.
   3. Phil drew attention to the **contact list** that was circulated at the meeting, asking each member to be sure their information was current. All present agreed that they would be willing to have the completed list shared among the membership.
4. **Leader Enrichment Series** Dr. Yevics expanded on the proposal made at previous meetings that the Ministerium sponsor a quarterly series of Leader Enrichment sessions, noting that it could help address the issues of membership and community awareness.
   1. The proposal is for a 2 hour presentation on a topic that would be of interest to community leaders.
   2. Discussion focused on weekday mornings from 10 to 12 as the time frame.
   3. Topics for 2017 would be
      1. Winter, “Family Matters” a program from the Geisinger Health System that encourages families to discuss end of life issues as soon as possible, before decisions need to be made.
      2. Spring, “Healing Communities”, a national program that encourages faith based communities to become involved with the criminal justice system.
      3. Summer, “Suicide Prevention and Postvention” a program that helps leaders understand factors leading to suicide, learn how to intervene in a constructive way, and discuss ways to help communities deal with a suicide.
      4. Fall,
   4. Rabbi Saks volunteered Temple Israel to host the first session. Specifics will be negotiated for the next meeting.
5. **Recognizing Organ Donors**

Bev deBarros asked the group to consider supporting a proposal she will resubmit to the Scranton Times, asking that obituaries include a graphic symbol recognizing organ donors, even as they sometimes do for religious affiliation. She presented two samples of such a symbol.

Discussion surfaced support for the proposal, but also a desire for more information. Bev will do further research and get back to the group.

**Future Meetings**

Fr. Redington made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Rev. Banks seconded, all enthusiastically supported it. Rev. Munley closed the meeting at 10:34.