SCRANTON AREA MINISTERIUM Minutes 10 January 2018

Marywood University, Swartz Conference Center

**Present:**

Rev. Darian Banks Rev. Rebecca Barnes

Lillian Barnett Marion Beddoe-lobst

Bev deBarros Rev. Lou Divis

Uta Dreher Charlotte Ledbetter

Darlene Leonard Rev. Jack Munley

Sr. Terry O’Rourke IHM Rev. Mary Owens

Tiffany Pauline Rev. Jim Redington SJ

Sr. John Michelle Southwick IHM Vera Walline

Phil Yevics

Rev. Munley called the group to order at 9:09, welcomed all to the first meeting of 2018, and asked Sr. John Michelle to offer the opening prayer. Each person at the table then introduced themselves. A special welcome was offered to first time attendees Marion Beddoe-lobst who is the Bereavement Minister at Elm Park Methodist Church, and Rev. Mary Owens of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Scranton.

**Minutes** from the December meeting had been distributed by email the night before and printed copies were available for examination. Mother Barnes noted that the Feb. 7 meeting will be held at St. Luke’s [not Bethel AME as stated in the distributed minutes.] Charlotte Ledbetter made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected, Rev. Banks seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1. Dr. Hussain had provided a **Financial Report** for 2017, which was distributed with the agenda, and printed copies were available.
2. A question was asked about check 7030 from 12/14/2017. It was for the taping of the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service. It was made out to Mark **Migliore**.
3. Rev. Banks inquired about check 7028 to Bethel AME. This was to cover transportation during the July summer camp for children.
4. Mother Barnes noted that dues were received from St. Peter’s Cathedral on 02/09/2017 and again on 11/16/2017. It was unclear to which calendar year each deposit should be applied.
5. Meghan Loftus had notified the Secretary at the end of December that the check from Friends of the Poor for their 2017 dues was mailed in August but was never cashed.
	1. Subsequently Dr. Hussain pointed out that the check was deposited on November 16 2017, as included in the Annual Report.

It was agreed items c and d should be clarified before accepting the Financial Report for 2017.

1. Fr. Redington said he would be willing to take on the responsibilities of **Treasure**r, as long as he could resign from his current position of Vice-President. Charlotte Ledbetter made a motion to this effect, Sr. Terry seconded, and it was enthusiastically and unanimously.
2. Vera Walline nominated Mother Barnes for the position of **Vice-President**, Rev. Divis seconded. When nominations were closed without any other candidates, Rev. Barnes was declared to be Vice President.
3. There was discussion of the advantage of having a second person who could sign checks in case the Treasurer was unavailable. Sr. Terry made a motion that an **Assistant Treasurer** be given authority to sign checks in the absence of the Treasurer. Charlotte Ledbetter seconded. After some discussion of alternatives, the motion passed unanimously.
4. Uta Dreher made a motion to accept Rev. Banks offer to take on the responsibilities of Assistant Treasurer, Charlotte Ledbetter seconded, all voted in favor with gratitude.
5. Rev. Munley addressed the many events of the **MLK Weekend** - Charlotte Ledbetter distributed fliers of the events, details of which can be found online at <http://www.scranton.edu/equity-diversity/mlkcommission.shtml>
	1. SAM has committed to a table at Sunday Dinner from 2:30-5:30 at the University of Scranton DeNaples Center 4th floor.
	2. Charlotte is coordinating the Interfaith Service Monday evening starting at 7 PM at Salvation Apostolic Temple, 223 N. Main Avenue in Scranton. There is parking available at the church. Anyone wishing to take part in the service was asked to contact Charlotte immediately.
		1. Rev. Banks made a motion that the Ministerium make a $200 donation to Rev. Dr. Johnson who will be the preacher at the service. Uta Dreher seconded. All voted aye.
	3. All were encouraged to support the other activities
		1. Saturday 2-4 Marketplace at Steamtown – Art activity
		2. Saturday 6-8 Scranton High - Ethnic Potluck
		3. Monday morning meeting and lunch for children with police
		4. Celebration luncheon and discussion at Penn State Worthington Scranton
		5. UNC-ARC food drive
		6. Monday afternoon March from Progressive Center to Courthouse, followed by MLK Birthday party
6. **Diversity Circles**. Phil Yevics explained that information about the Diversity Circles was distributed with the agenda. It was brought to the area by the MLK Commission and is currently being administered out of Penn State Worthington Scranton campus. Several members spoke of their positive experiences with the program, the need for it in our area, and the commitment of the Ministerium to nurturing its growth.
7. **Bethel AME Winter Homeless Shelter**. Rev. Banks and Tiffany Pauiine updated the group.
	1. As discussed last month, in June the Bethel AME community had decided not to host the Shelter this Winter, intending to address concerns about the physical space and supervision so that the shelter could be on a firmer foundation.
	2. However when the bitter cold hit earlier this month, Pastor Banks was moved to call another church meeting to reconsider the situation.
	3. The group decided that the Bethel AME Shelter would be open on an emergency basis for the next 31 days and after that whenever a “Code Blue” was declared.
		1. Discussion clarified that “Code Blue” is a designation by the city authorities that folks are in danger from extreme cold or other weather related circumstances.
	4. The phone number at Bethel AME is 570.341-0754 if folks have questions about the Shelter. Rev. Banks’ cell # is 570.445-0635.
	5. Tiffany and Anthony Pauline are providing the overnight supervision. Folks being referred to the shelter need to know that there will be a breathalyzer test, with a 0% tolerance for alcohol, and guests are required to shower.
	6. They are accepting monetary donations, but at this time cannot accept food donations unless they are in the form of packages that the guests can take with them in the morning, or if the folks making the donation are able to be present to assist with serving and cleaning up in the evening.
		1. It was noted that the Rescue Mission was providing an evening meal and was open all night, although they did not have cots or other provisions for sleeping. Tiffany noted guests often would like a hot snack before bed, but were not looking for a full meal.
	7. Donations of thermal underwear and socks or other forms of warm clothing would be appreciated.
	8. Members of the group affirmed their appreciation that Bethel AME had taken on responsibility for this important work, stressing that this was a community responsibility that we should all accept by assisting the Bethel AME community.
8. **Interfaith Thanksgiving Service** November 17, Temple Hesed. Phil has obtained the CD with the recording of the service, and has clarified that we are free to share it any way we wish. He is trying to figure out how to edit it and share it on you tube.
9. Request from **Big Brothers/Big Sisters**. Dr, Hussain did send a $100 donation from the Ministerium as decided at the December meeting.
10. P**rison Ministry**
	1. Books. Bev deBarros reported the book distribution at the Prison was going well, and new volunteers are scheduled to be trained tomorrow. There is an ongoing need for paperbacks, especially Large Print, Spanish, and Nat’l Geographics [or other magazines that do not have staples]
	2. Lackawanna County Reentry Task Force – Phil Yevics reminded the group that the Task Force meets every 3rd Tuesday from 9 to 10 AM at EOTC on Seventh Avenue. All are welcome to attend.
		1. Currently Phil is on the Board as a representative of the local faith communities. He is lobbying to see that this representative would always come from the Ministerium.
		2. Mentoring is one area the Task Force has yet to act, and it is one where our faith communities should be very active.
	3. Healing Communities Outreach. Information about this program, which provides training and support for faith communities who want to become more active in assisting their own members who have been involved with the Criminal Justice system as victims or perpetrators, was distributed with the agenda. SAM has sponsored the Healing Community Training in the past and hopefully can do so again.
	4. NEPA Prison Advocates.
		1. Mother Barnes noted that the group will be meeting at St. Luke’s on the first Wednesday of each month, starting at 7 PM.
		2. Phil promised to forward the next meeting summary from the group, and SAM members would then be encouraged to sign up for updates on their own.
11. Future Activities by the members
	1. Marion noted that Elm Park’s Bereavement Ministry was sponsoring their first educational outreach program on Saturday February 10. See the document “Jesus Wept” distributed with these minutes.
	2. Rev. Owens announced that St. Matthew United Lutheran was sponsoring a series of presentations by Hospice groups. She will share info on their February meeting.
	3. Rev. Munley’s “Rescue and Restore” Church was sponsoring a “Change for a Change” program to assist the village they sponsor in Kenya.
12. Future Meetings
	1. February 7 [NOTE- first Wednesday] will be at St. Luke Episcopal Church, 232 Wyoming Avenue Scranton from 9 AM to 10:30.
	2. Please consider volunteering to host one of the following
		1. March 14; April 11 ; May 9; June 13

Darlene Leonard made a motion to adjourn, Jim Redington seconded, meeting adjourned at 10:38.

Respectfully Submitted, Philip E. Yevics, Secretary