Scranton Area Ministerium Minutes 12 September 2018

Salvation Apostolic Temple 243 N. Main Street Scranton

**Present:**

Bev deBarros *Exodus Ministries* Rev. Rebecca Barnes *St. Luke Episcopal*

Marion Beddoe-iobst *VAC volunteer* Rev. Lou Divis *St. Peter Episcopal*

Rev. Anthony Ismael *Salvation Apostolic Temple* Mrs. Edith Ismael *Salvation Apostolic Temple*

Dr. Melinda Krokus *Marywood University* Ms. Darlene Leonard *Salvation Apostolic Temple*

Ms. Carole Mason *Elm Park U. Methodist* Rev. Mary Owens *St. Matthew Lutheran*

Sr. Terry O’Rourke IHM *Friends of the Poor* Rev. Jim Redington SJ *University of Scranton*

Rabi Daniel Swartz *Temple Hesed* Sr. John Michele Southwick IHM *Marywood Univ*

Rev. JoAnn Usry *Love Fellowship Christian Ministries* Mrs. Vera Walline *BaHai Community*

Ms. Katy Windels *Diocese of Scranton Off. Parish Life* Dr. Phil Yevics *PA Prison Society*

Since our President Rev. Jack Munley was on a mission trip to Kenya, Vice-President Mother Rebecca Barnes called the meeting to order at 9:06, and invited our host Pastor Rev. Anthony Ismael to offer the opening Prayer. Pastor Ismael also welcomed the group to Salvation Apostolic Temple.

Rev. Barnes then invited all present to introduce themselves – special recognition was given to Dr. Melinda Krokus from Marywood University who was joining us for the first time. She will be representing the local Muslim community.

Minutes from June Meeting had been distributed by email the night before, and printed copies were available. Fr. Redington made a motion to accept the minutes as given, Vera Walline seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Fr. Redington distributed copies of the Treasurers Report, noting that it was the same as that submitted in June because there had been no activity over the Summer. Darlene Leonard made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report as given, Sr.. John Michelle Southwick seconded, all voted in favor of the motion.

1. Bethel AME Shelter – Homeless Coalition – Pastor Darian was not able to be with us. Phil Yevics reported that a service group based at Countryside Methodist Church had heard of the difficulties with the Bethel AME Shelter and had held a meeting at the University of Scranton on August 6 and another on September 4 at Bethel AME Church. The Group is calling itself the Greater Scranton Homeless Coalition.
   1. Pastor Banks had explained at the August 6 meeting that the Bethel community had deep concerns about their ability to open the shelter last year, and while it was open on an emergency basis for the Winter of 2017-18, there are still serious concerns about whether they could host it for the 2018-19 season.
   2. Phil noted that previous SAM meetings had voiced the conviction that this should be a commitment that is shared by the faith communities of the area and not fall exclusively on Bethel AME. He said that the same sentiment had been expressed at the August 6 meeting, and suggested that SAM channel their support for the ministry to the homeless through the emerging Coalition.
   3. Dr. Krokus voiced a concern that the lead should not be taken by those outside the immediate Scranton area, but it was pointed out that there was a significant representation by the Scranton community within the coalition.
   4. Phil promised to share the communication from the Coalition after which each SAM member could decide if they wished to be directly involved with the group.
2. Promoting Civic Engagement –
   1. Rabbi Daniel Schwartz noted that the Reform Jewish community was sponsoring a program on September 29 to *Harvest the Vote*, building on themes from the harvest feast of Booths. He welcomed people of all backgrounds to join Temple Hesed on that date for a celebration culminating with fireworks.
   2. Mother Barnes shared information about a program that based on the *Reclaiming* Jesus program, adapted to address current concerns about civil engagement. She will be offering the program at St. Luke’s in Scranton on Thursday evenings in October. See the PDF “Reclaiming Jesus” distributed with these minutes for more details.
   3. Phil Yevics noted that the *Diversity Circles* program popularized in this area by the Martin Luther King Commission was an excellent resource that fits very well with the mission of the Ministerium. A facilitator training open to those who have already participated in the program is being organized for this Fall.
3. Senior Isolation –
   1. Phil Yevics reported that he and Marion Beddoe-iobst had met with staff of the Moses Taylor Foundation concerning their Strategic Initiative to address Senior Isolation in NEPA.
   2. Marion offered further information about her involvement with a program administered through the Voluntary Action Center or VAC, noting that she and other volunteers were available to speak to faith-based groups about the needs and possible ways of responding.
4. Prison Ministry
   1. Cypress House – Mother Rebecca reported that St. Luke’s had formed a non-profit group and recruited a Board of Directors to lead their efforts to provide services for returning citizens in Lackawanna County.
   2. Lackawanna County Prison Book Distribution – Bev deBarros noted that there has been a wonderful response of people donating paperback books to be distributed at the Lackawanna County Prison. What is needed now are more volunteers willing to give at least 2 hours every two weeks to distribute the books. Anyone interested can get more information from Bev at [bmicah6v8@yahoo.com](mailto:bmicah6v8@yahoo.com)
   3. Phil Yevics noted that the LC Reentry Task Force will be meeting Tuesday September 18, from 9 – 10:30 AM at the Outreach Agency [formerly EOTC] on Seventh Avenue in Scranton. They normally meet on the third Tuesday of every second month.
5. Thanksgiving Interfaith Service, Friday November 16 2018
   1. Rabbi Daniel explained that last year the service had been moved to the Friday Sabbath Service at Temple Hesed, and that SAM had decided to do the same thing for 2018.
   2. The framework for the service will be the Friday Sabbath service, however Rabbi Swartz welcomed prayers, readings, songs or activities from any of our faith traditions. Please contact him at [rabbidaniel@comcast.net](mailto:rabbidaniel@comcast.net) with any suggestions.
   3. His congregation has decided to offer a potluck dinner before the service, with crafts and games to encourage a more family friendly atmosphere.
6. Facebook and Web pages
   1. Phil Yevics pointed out that we have not been updating our web page or keeping our Facebook page current. Unless we are able to do so, not only is it an unnecessary expense, but it can actually present at negative image to the community.
7. Information was shared about the following Upcoming Activities
   1. September 20 – University of Scranton Lecture *Finding Jesus Among Muslims*
   2. September 21 (Oct. 5) – Diversity Circles, Facilitator Training

Contact Shanie Mohamed - [spm5824@psu.edu](mailto:spm5824@psu.edu)

* 1. Nov. 2. *Moms for Gun Sense* at Temple Hesed
  2. Nov. 10-11, Temple Hesed will host a weekend of self-acceptance activities for those exploring a new gender identity.
  3. On Nov. 15, *Neighborworks* will be honoring several local citizens, including our own Rabbi Daniel Swartz.

1. Future Meetings – All planned for the second Wednesday of the month from 9-10:30AM
   1. October 10 - Temple Hesed
   2. November 14 – St. Peter Roman Catholic Cathedral
   3. December 12 – *I am almost sure someone volunteered to host, but could not find it in my notes. Please volunteer again!*
   4. 2019 meetings

January 9 2019; February 13 2019; March 13 2019; April 10 2019; May 8 2019; June 12 2019?