

**St. James Social Justice and Peace Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 1, 2017, 5 PM in the Chapel**

In attendance: Michael Drohan, Lois Campbell, Emily Lippert, Evelyn Christie, Rae O'Hair, and Joyce Rothermel

Welcome and Opening Prayer

1. **Accomplishments since our last meeting:** food/paper product collections; volunteering at the Food Bank in Duquesne; monthly letter writing; Respect Life activities (speaker, film series, bulletin insert and prayers), participation at Just Harvest dinner, placed ad for Merton Award dinner, assisted with Ministry Center during Josie's time away; joint parish ministry meeting; Wilkinsburg folks have met twice on housing development issues in Wilkinsburg. Emily gave a brief recap of the film series.
2. **Pantry Collection:** Dec. – toilet paper; Jan. - detergent; Feb. – body soap; March - cookies.
3. **Monthly Letter Writing:** Nov. 18-19; Topic: Single Payer Bill in PA House; Writer – Michael; 5:30 PM - Rae; 10 AM – Lois; Dec. 16-17; Topic: Gentrification; Letter Writer - Lois; 5:30 PM - Evelyn; 10 AM - Joyce; Jan. 27-28; Topic - _____; Letter Writer - _____; 5:30 PM - Evelyn; 10 AM - Emily; Feb. 24-25; Topic - _____; Letter Writer - _____; 5:30 - Evelyn; 10 AM Emily
(For Dec. Jan and Feb. the topics can be gentrification, education funding and Water/Sewer. Timing will determine.)
4. **Social Ministry 3 Parish Meeting on Wed., Sept. 27 at 7 PM:** Evaluation/Next Steps
Well attended; good spirit and participation. Suggestion that volunteers participate in each others' programs. Next Steps: another meeting in late February or early March. St. Bede has agreed to host it.
5. **Volunteer Responses to Date – Follow-Up:** Evelyn reported that four new volunteers are participating at the Ministry Center. (Dan and Deb. McKee and Kevin and Kim)
6. **Sanctuary Project and Weekly Vigil Updates:** Emily attended the last meeting in Evelyn's place. They developed an annual plan for 2018 that included: Martin Luther King, Jr. event, a talent show, and trauma training workshop. A gun buy back is scheduled for Wilkinsburg on Sat., Nov. 18.
7. **Ministry Center and Stone Soup Garden Updates**
Evelyn reported that there is an outreach to St. James to coordinate with a turkey distribution of Rep. Ed Gainey and with the Wilkinsburg Community Ministries. Evelyn has responded. Evelyn has gotten 120 turkeys from the Food Bank for the November distribution. Michael reported great progress with Stone Soup Garden this year involving more people than ever and 19 beds cultivated. A weakness was in the harvesting. People who had planted and cultivated didn't always come to reap the harvest. Stone Soup has joined Grow Pittsburgh and is enjoying benefits of materials for the garden from it. (compost, wood chips, etc.) It was suggested that Michael reach out to other churches in Wilkinsburg for the 2018 season.
8. **Gentrification/Displacements -Wilkinsburg Update:** Lois told about the evidence of people looking into buying properties in Wilkinsburg. At the meeting on Nov. 15, people several of the churches in Wilkinsburg including St. James developed a plan of action. One of the plans is to convene the local CDC, Action Housing, History and Landmarks along with community and church people to work together to ensure that housing remains affordable in the Wilkinsburg area and that low-income people are not displaced. Lois urges everyone to attend the upcoming one hour meeting at St. James on Sunday, Nov. 5 at noon. Lunch will be provided.
9. **PIIN Update:** Working on clean rivers; 4-mile Run. The EPA has given a green light for the County to go green but it is unclear whether Alcosan will go that way.
10. **Advent** – 2nd or 3rd weekend, ask Mike Neuman or Beth Lewis to provide an update from Partners in Progress reminding people of the monthly envelope and how resources are being used. Joyce will ask Fr. Taylor and get

scheduled. Since letter writing is the third weekend it may be a good time for the talk encouraging people to come down after Mass for a light social.

11. Merton Award Dinner Table: Joyce and Michael, Emily, Dr. Nolan, Possibly Rae, Steve and Danielle. All are encouraged to support the event.

12. Old Business

A. Peace Pole – Joyce stopped into the school and was told that she would be contacted by Ms. Jacque (8th grade teacher). No word yet. Another idea is to include the Young Families group in the parish.

B. Parish Updates: Joyce will write a piece telling about the meaning and purpose of the monthly Haiti envelope. Joyce will ask David to write a piece about volunteering on the St. James Team at the Gr. Pgh. Community Food Bank. Tabetha will write one about the corporal works of mercy. (These ideas were encouraged again at this meeting.)

C. Hosting an Immigrant or Immigrant Family – Ad-Hoc Committee to be formed. Some folks from St. James went to the Catholic Charities training. We had a request to host a legal immigrant family over the summer but were not ready. This committee will learn all that is involved for the parish to consider. This maybe an activity that all three of our merging parishes can participate in, in the future. Teresa who attended the Joint Ministry meeting told of the efforts in supporting a Somali family at St. Charles over the past 20 years. Joyce will convene a meeting to kick off the conversation.

13. Announcements:

A. Partners in Progress: Fundraiser at Harp and Fiddle – Nov. 4 at 6 PM

B. APP Speaker: Nov. 9 - Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer: Faith and Violence: Is Religion Killing Us? And Dec. 7 – Bishop John Michael Botean on Nonviolence or Nonexistence: Christian Moral Relevance Today

Addendum: Emily asked about the annual Fair-Trade Fair. We almost forgot. Emily offered to call Janet Berna to schedule the event. (Emily learned that all the weekends in December are taken so we tentatively signed up for Thanksgiving weekend: Nov. 25-26. Emily Lois and Joyce agreed to help. We will reach out for more help.)

Next Meeting: Wed., Jan. 24 at 7 PM in the Chapel