

Notes - Faith Committee of the Ventura Social Services Task Force
Wednesday, March 25, 2015, 3-5 pm - Ventura Church of Christ

Present:

Clergy: Jim Duran, Jonathan Hall, Lisa Hochberg-Miller, Jerome Kahler, Dave Schulze

Laity: Sue Brinkmeyer, Kathy Powell, Pam Marshall, Debora Schreiber

1. The group reviewed the mission of the committee, considered the quote below and discussed the check-in question.

Quote: "The central task of the religious community is to unveil the bonds that bind each to all. There is a connectedness, a relationship discovered amid the particulars of our own lives and the lives of others. Once felt, it inspires us to act for justice." Mark Morrison-Reed.

Check-in question: What are the bonds that bind each of us to one another? To the broad faith community within the city? To the residents and the leaders of the city? To those who are experiencing homelessness?

Some thoughts that were shared:

- The word "unveil" says the bonds are already there; we just need to peel away the layers that cause them to go unseen
 - We are all part of one community, and it matters that we are
 - One of the deepest needs we have as humans is connectedness, a need to feel part of a community
 - Connectedness exists within congregations and strengthens them, but it is not just houses of faith that share these bonds
 - We share the desire to make the world better for our children
 - We share a sense that "What you do for the least of us, you also do for me" for love, for justice
 - We share a fear of being homeless: There but for the grace of God go I
 - We share a moral vision that the world is a good place and people are created good, so a vision of a just world in which all can share
 - If you strip away all the stuff we have, some more stuff than others, we are all just people
2. The minutes of the 2/25/15 meeting were approved as presented by consensus.
 3. It was suggested that we might want to add a fourth bullet point to the mission of the Faith Committee: "unveil the bonds that bind each to all." Consideration of this suggestion will be added to the agenda for April.
 4. A partial list of attendees at March 12 event was included in the packet. Sue will email the full list of representatives from agencies and houses of worship to the group
 5. Those present agreed that follow-up to the March 12 Partners for Change event would be different for four sub-groups:
 - a. Those who attended and submitted a plan: thank you for coming, we welcome your feedback, among the ideas other congregations included in their plans were , is there anything we can do to help you as you move forward, respond to specific

- requests in plans, contact us if you'd like someone from the task force or from a service agency to meet with your social action group, or missions board, or present to your congregation, invite to Faith Committee meeting, we will be including you on our mailing list unless you request that we remove you. Separately mail Faith Committee brochure, VSSTF brochure and VHPF rack card, invite to attend meetings, print as many as you like, or contact Debora if you'd like more delivered
- b. Those who attended but did not submit a plan: Thank you, welcome feedback, have you created plan yet, blank copy of plan, list of some ideas congregations included in their plans, offer to meet with sub-groups or entire congregation, invite to attend Faith Committee and VSSTF. Mail VSSTF brochure, Faith brochure and VHPF rack card - print as many as you like, contact Debora for more
 - c. Those who registered but did not attend: sorry you could not join us, we'll be mailing copy of resource guide that includes a blank plan, ideas some congregations included in their plan, offer to meet with any subset of congregation or with whole, or to arrange speakers
 - d. Congregations that neither registered nor attended: send letter from Committee clergy telling them about Task Force and Faith Committee, enclosing brochures and inviting them to attend a meeting. Sue will draft such a letter and will circulate prior to next April meeting so that it can be ready for signature
6. Houses of Faith that were not represented on March 12 but are active in the community include Assembly of God, Lighthouse Church in Montalvo (Matt Russell), Grace Baptist (Tracy McMillan), Harbor Church, City Church, Grace Lutheran, Avenue Community Church, Ventura Missionary, The Seed, and Pastor Steve on the Avenue (Jim Duran will provide name and address)
 7. The VSSTF website needs to be updated right away adding the Resource Booklet (Judy has it on a flash drive), a list of volunteer opportunities, and a list of agency contacts for volunteering and for donations. Sue will work on this.

The next meeting will be 4th Wednesday, April 22, 2015, at 3 p.m. at Ventura Church of Christ, 5401 Bryn Mawr.