

Minutes of the St. Thomas Aquinas Human Concerns Committee Meeting - January 17, 2018

Attendance: Mary Fong, Paul Chestnut, Ruth Chippendale, George Chippendale, Anne Fillin, Henry Organ, Terry Atkinson, and guests Isabelle Peltier, Vincent Lefebvre, and Jack Colford

1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

2. Approval of September minutes

The minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Crop Hunger Walk Results - October 8

Our team raised \$1150. Overall results are not yet available.

4. Refugee Foster Care

Anne and Paul had a meeting with Maria de Jesus Gutiérrez, the director of the Hispanic Ministry, to discuss the possibility of finding families in the Hispanic community who would be willing to provide a temporary home for refugee children. Maria agreed to pursue this possibility.

NEW BUSINESS

6. Heart & Home dinners

HCC provided a dinner for Heart & Home Collaborative on January 12 at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto. Another dinner is planned for February 9 at University Lutheran Church.

8. L'Arche International

We are joined tonight by a group of parishioners who are interested in establishing a chapter of L'Arche here. They are Isabelle Peltier, Vincent Lefebvre, and Jack Colford. "L'Arche is an International Federation dedicated to the creation and growth of homes, programs, and support networks with people who have intellectual disabilities. It was founded in 1964. Today, it is an international organization operating 147 communities in 35 countries, and on all five continents." (See the summary from Wikipedia at the end.). The three families represented by our three guests have been accepted into the local L'Arche. They are looking for people willing to serve as board members. They are looking for a spiritual partner (who might be a priest).

They need a place to hold meetings. We assured them that the parish would provide a place, and that the HCC is willing to provide a connection to the parish.

9. Have-A-Heart Sunday

We need to set a date for the collection for the Opportunity Center. We are aiming for February 18. Chris advised that we check on the second collection dates for February to avoid a conflict.

10. What's On Your Mind?

Next meeting - February 21, 2018

From Wikipedia (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%27Arche>):

L'Arche is an International Federation dedicated to the creation and growth of homes, programs, and support networks with people who have intellectual disabilities. It was founded in 1964. Today, it is an international organization operating 147 communities in 35 countries, and on all five continents.

The mission of L'Arche, as defined by L'Arche International, is

- to make known the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities (or learning disabilities as they are known in the UK),
- to foster the development of communities that respond to members' changing needs, and
- to engage with local cultures while working toward a more human society.

In pursuit of this mission, L'Arche strives

- to create small faith-based communities of friendship and mutuality between people of differing abilities;
- to develop lifelong support systems for the benefit of all, especially those who are highly vulnerable due to old age and/or multiple disabilities.
- to highlight the unique capacity of persons with disabilities to enrich relationships and to build communities where the values of compassion, inclusion and diversity are upheld and lived by each person.