

Saint Thomas Aquinas Social Justice Committee

Minutes: December 3, 2019

Present: Chris Rehmann (Chair,) Francis Todey, Fr. John Herzog, Chuck Glatz, Paula Friederich

Prayer: Chris

“Grant us, Lord God, a vision of your world as your love would have it:

A world where the weak are protected, and none go hungry or poor;

A world where the riches of creation are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;

A world where different races and cultures live in harmony and mutual respect;

A world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.

Give us the inspiration and courage to build it, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Business

Minutes of November 5, 2019: Approved

Sunday Morning Seminars:

The next date is December 15. Mary Ellen has invited Jodi Stumbo, who is the new director of the Emergency Residence Project, to present a brief report about the function of ERP in our community. Mary Ellen has also invited other parish members to speak about other service organizations with which they are involved.

Possible topics for the January seminar were discussed. Love Your Neighbor was suggested. There was also interest in doing a “faithful citizenship” discussion prior to the Iowa Caucus. Francis will speak to Joe Weyers to see if he would be willing to do this or suggest someone else who might.

SJC report to Pastoral Council: December 10, 7pm

Chris has written a proposal to add a \$3000 line item to the general budget to cover the AMOS dues for STA membership. SJC approved the proposal, which will be submitted for inclusion in the Pastoral Council information packet prior to the meeting. A review of LYN and other SJC activities will be included in the presentation.

AMOS:

Chris reports that the Mental Health and Housing team will contact the “Anawim” group in Des Moines to arrange a potential pilot project/study in Ames.

Chris has asked that we identify people to meet with Courtney Dufford, the new lead organizer for the central Iowa AMOS, after she begins her work January 8. Parish Staff, SJC and Pastoral Council members will be invited to attend a 30-45 minute session with her. Chris will contact Paul Turner, who is the interim organizer, to determine possible dates that Courtney would be available to travel to Ames.

Community ID: The next drive will be at the Ames Middle School, December 7, at 10 am and 2pm.

There is still a need to identify a local bank(s) or credit union that will accept the Community ID.

Immersion Trips: Chuck is looking at possible sites/dates.

Sanctuary: Paula reported that members of the Social Justice committees from STA and STC met 11/21 to discuss how our parishes might become involved to assist immigrant/refugee persons experiencing various difficulties in our community. A working title of “Immigrant and Refugee Committee” was agreed upon by the group. Several members are gathering more specific information about particular issues to be discussed at the next meeting. The group will meet again at STA on Thursday, December 12 at 1pm. All are invited.

Announcements:

Chuck raised the possibility of STA/SJC sponsoring a **“Poverty Simulation”** session. The Just Faith group in Des Moines conducts these sessions. There is a \$1000 fixed charge and a minimum of 50 participants are required. The program takes approximately 3 hours. Typically, there are people, who are affected by poverty, invited to share their stories.

This will be discussed further at future meetings.

Chris announced that there will be an **“Epiphany Immigration Fiesta/Dinner”** on January 5 at 6:00 at Collegiate United Methodist Church, 2622 Lincoln Way. Speakers are being arranged to address immigration issues. It is a pot-luck and attendees are asked to bring 1-2 dishes to share.

Next SJC meeting: January 7, at 6pm.

Respectfully submitted by Paula Friederich

Saint Thomas Aquinas Social Justice Committee

Minutes: November 5, 2019

Present: Chris Rehmann (Chair,) Fr. John Herzog, Tom Budnik, Chuck Glatz, Felicity Douglas, Dave Dirks, Mary Ellen Wishart, Francis Today, Paula Friederich

Guest: Mary Jo Pfeiffer

Prayer: Chris

Father, you have given all peoples one common origin.

It is your will that they be gathered together

as one family in yourself.

Fill the hearts of mankind with the fire of your love

and with the desire to ensure justice for all.

By sharing the good things you give us,

may we secure an equality for all our

brothers and sisters throughout the world.

May there be an end to division strife and war.

May there be a dawning of a truly human society

built on love and peace.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord.

Business

Minutes of October: Approved

Website minutes: Tom reports that the minutes are current on the website.

Follow up on question of offering a Word and Communion service when mass is not offered.

An opinion was received from Fr. Greg Bahl, Director, Office of Worship, Archdiocese of Dubuque. Essentially, reception of Communion outside of mass is discouraged apart from extraordinary circumstances (ex: to persons homebound or imprisoned, etc.) and should not be “scheduled.” However, “praying a Liturgy of the Word or Liturgy of the Hours could be encouraged.”

Tom reported that Joe Weyers has had some discussion with Frank Montabon about the possibility of offering a Liturgy of the Word. Tom will follow up with Joe, Frank and Shari to learn if plans are being made for this offering.

Sunday Morning Seminar:

The October 20 presentation led by Fr. Herzog was well attended (24) and well received. Most but not all participants were STA parishioners. A number of people stayed past the one hour time allotted for extended discussion.

The next possible date is Sunday, December 15, 9:30 - 10:30 am. Possible topics for future presentations : Sanctuary, What is the proper interpretation of Bible, socially responsible investing, LGBT, AMOS, LYN, homelessness in Ames, ERP, Mental Health issues/services.

Dave will contact ERP to see if Jodi (Director) or Troy (Assistant Director) might be available for the December 15 date.

sentation to the Pastoral Council, Tuesday, December 10, 7:00pm:

Chris will lead a brief presentation with updates on SJC activities including LYN and AMOS.

Francis suggested that a brief outline of the proposal to include STA AMOS dues in the budget be submitted approximately one week in advance and included in their packets for prior review.

AMOS

Chris reports that a new regional organiser, Courtney Dufford, will begin work on January 8, 2020. She will be able to offer information and instruction about establishing a core team at STA. Chris will contact her to see if she would be available to lead a 30-45 minute presentation to SJC and or STA staff.

AMOS Civic Academy on Immigration, October 6, 2019:

Attendance was good, (approx. 75-80) including 12 + from STA. AMOS may pursue re-initiating "house meetings" for further discussion of these issues.

Central Iowa Community ID

Chris reports that about 40 people received IDs at the last Marshalltown drive. Approximately 400 total have been issued at various locations thus far. The next drive will be December 7 at the Ames Middle School.

Sanctuary

The general meeting of ASIP will be on Monday, November 11. One or more members of SJC plan to attend.

Mary Jo reported that she was recently able to speak with the Archbishop regarding Sanctuary issues and community education on this subject. She said he was very encouraging about the subject and wanted to be kept apprised of our activities.

Chris will contact Nancy Heideman (St. Cecilia SJC) so that future efforts and information may be coordinated between STA and St. Cecilia.

Immersion Trips

Chuck is investigating the possibility of offering a shorter (3 days?) trip, perhaps to a facility in Sioux City which is a home for survivors of trafficking and refugee center.

Presentation to Youth Groups:

Chuck will inform Jen that SJC will not make a separate offering this year but may assist with a program if provided by STA/STC.

Belonging

Chris will follow up with the person(s) who contacted him to ask what particular concerns/interests may be addressed through STA/SJC.

Other Business

Tom discussed that since Birthright has closed, there is no recipient identified for the STA annual “new-born gift” drive. He will make some community contacts to see if there is a need for this or other items to be gathered and donated.

Community Presentation

Francis announced that there will be a presentation sponsored by Bethesda Lutheran this Saturday, November 9, 7:00pm. The speaker will be Davod Nassar on the subject of “peaceful resistance as he continues to prevent Israeli takeover of the West Bank legally held since 1916.”

Next Meeting: December 3, 6:30 pm (Note the time change for this meeting)

Respectfully submitted by Paula Friederich

Saint Thomas Aquinas Social Justice Committee

Minutes: October 1, 2019

Present: Chris Rehmann (chairman,) Fr. John Herzog, Francis Todey , Kathy Trahanovsky, Mary Ellen Wishart, Chuck Glatz, Paula Friederich

Prayer: Chris

“Guide us to use the talents and skills you have so generously given us to work in collaboration with others to bring change to those who suffer and are oppressed in this world.

Guide us to creatively educate and advocate for others who are denied a voice. Help us to be present to members of the global human family in many ways. Help us to recognize the systems and structures that deny the dignity of the human person. Help us to be engaged and fully focused so we may envision and develop effective strategies to further justice and to be your agents in the world.

Keep us aware of the bigger picture and move us beyond our own self-interest so we may participate in solidarity with those who need our support. Help us to persist in the face of challenges.

Renew our hearts and remind us that your grace is working in us and through us, so we may play a small part in the building of your kingdom.”

Business

Minutes of September: Approved

Website minutes: Tom will make sure that they are updated.

AMOS Civic Academy on Immigration: Sunday, October 6: At this point, 12 people from STA/SJC have committed to attend.

Immersion trips:

Chuck will pursue the possibilities of future trips with Shari Reilly, on behalf of the SJC.

Chris will inquire with Shari about the status of formation of the student social justice team and how they might help.

SJC presentations:

We will consult with Joe Weyers further, to see if he thinks it would be valuable for SJC to host another forum for young students interested in social justice issues. If so, what subject would be appropriate and not repetitive?

Annual presentation to the Pastoral Council

Will provide updates to the PC at its November or December meeting, to be determined.

There is a consensus among SJC that STA should remain as a dues-paying member of this larger community effort, AMOS, and that these dues should NOT come from the Social Justice Grant funds.

Sunday Morning Seminar: SJC is hoping to revive these discussions and presentations, to take place periodically between the 8:30 and 10:30 masses. Subject matter will be current issues within historical and religious context.

The first of these is scheduled for October 20

Belonging

This group was formed many years ago at STA to support the Catholic LGBTQ community. Participation was eager at first, but dissipated over time. There is renewed need and interest in this ministry. We will endeavor to gather information.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 5, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by Paula Friederich

Notes from Social Justice Committee, Tuesday, Sept. 3, 6:00 p.m., St. Martin's Room

Present: Tom Budnik, Paula Friederich, Fr. Herzog, Jean Prestemon, Chris Rehmann, Francis Todey, Kathy Trahanovsky, Mary Ellen Wishart

Guests: David Hansen and Maria Alcivar from Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partnership (ASIP)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00. Minutes of August 13 were approved.

The primary agenda item was a presentation by Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partnership about what "sanctuary" means and what the ASIP group requests of St. Thomas.

In general, people misunderstand "sanctuary" and think that it is hiding and housing people. Sanctuary is not hiding people. If a person is given sanctuary, they have essentially "outed" themselves because their location, though safe, is known by authorities. That is different from "harboring." Another misconception is that offering sanctuary can only be done by providing physical space for persons to live. Though housing can be one aspect of sanctuary, the Ames group is promoting the idea of giving support in a variety of ways...educating about rights, connecting people with resources etc.

Faith groups (as well as schools and hospitals) can offer sanctuary. This is backed by a legal protection statement from Health and Human Services (formerly stated by Department of Justice).

ASIP is asking each faith community they contact to consider forming a small committee to become part of a larger assembly to assure those seeking refuge that there are people who will help them as they consider what to do next in their lives. The first meeting of the assembly will be in November. Does St. Thomas wish to participate?

If a congregation forms a committee, they would select a leader and an alternate who would be the contact for central ASIP. David stressed this as an opportunity to involve college students. The assembly would meet once a month with the goal of getting commitments from each faith group about what activities they are willing to host, what they might share with other groups, and imagining what might be possible if there were more resources.

How would the word get out to people who need sanctuary? The availability of sanctuary would be published via social media and through groups such as AMOS and the Community ID program. Maria said there are very active lines of communication, especially among Hispanic population.

Next steps:

1. Have as many people as possible attend the Civic Academy on Immigration on Oct. 6 (a potluck and program after the Spanish Mass at St. Cecilia's). Publicize this in the bulletin, speak to Shari about students who might attend, let the pastor know about it, contact last year's time and talent list. **Who will do this?**

2. Discuss at our Oct. 1 meeting whether we wish to participate in ASIP and if so, what we must do to get permission .
3. Consider scheduling a Sunday Morning Seminar October 20 to share information about sanctuary. **Mary Ellen will reserve Prophets and Martyr's Oct. 20 8-11 in case we decide to do this.**
4. Other actions:

Tom will remind Fr. Kyle of our request for pastoral letters about clerical abuse.

Paula, Kathy, and Mary Ellen will meet to prepare for presentation to Pastoral Council about AMOS...possibly for Nov. or Dec. meeting. Notify Francis to have him request space on the agenda.

Next meeting: Oct. 1, 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Ellen Wishart

Social Justice Committee Meeting: 13Aug2019

Attendees: Chuck Glatz, Dave Dirks, Tom Budnik, Kathy Trahanovsky, Mary Ellen Wishart, Francis Today, Fr. Herzog, Joe Weyers, Jean Prestemon, Paula Friederich

Minutes were approved from last meeting.

Proposal to have some discussion sessions during coffee and donuts on Sundays (Sunday Seminars). Some ideas that were thrown out: Church teaching on homosexuality, Belief in the real presence in the Eucharist, Diocesan upcoming capital campaign. Joe shared a draft document for 2019-2020 STA Adult Formation Opportunities. There would be sessions on Weds and Thursday evenings and Saturday morning. Frequency would be 1 – 2 times per week and each are about 1 hour. Saturday sessions are for DES Training (Discipleship, Evangelization, Stewardship). Joe is open to us utilizing some of the session slots or potentially having another session on a Sunday. SJC would need to organize the topic and the speaker.

Joe is open for additional/repeat sessions for youth education. Joe would like it to be something where kids and their parents can participate. Past sessions were on trafficking and immigration. Again, SJC needs to organize the session and work with Joe for an appropriate time slot and age grouping.

Meeting with Father Kyle. Meeting went well with good attendance from SJC. Fr. Kyle took our draft and agreed to revise it by October 1.

Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partnership – They have asked for a meeting with STA – SJC in September to discuss how we could partner. This is separate from Ames Interfaith Refugee Association. It was decided this would worth doing. **Action: Mary Ellen will invite David Hansen and Maria Alcivar from the group to join us.**

Chris is working on a visit to the Story County Jail. More to come at an upcoming meeting.

There will be another ID drive on November 9 at Ames middle school. The last ID drive was held at Northcrest.

There is an Immigration Workshop coming up at STC, 6pm, October 6. A meal followed by workshop. There is a hope that STA will send at least 10 people. We should discuss communicating this via the bulletin or other means in the September SJC meeting.

Liz Hall is moving to California (leader of AMOS). Paul Turner will take over temporarily until a new leader is selected. Chris will participate on selection committee.

Mary Ellen is proposing that we reinstate a line item in the SJC budget for AMOS dues. Francis suggests that we should propose this at the November or December meeting when SJC will also speak to pastoral council on SJ Grants and LYN. **Action: Paula will prepare this with help from Kathy.**

Immersion Trip update: Chuck sent an updated list of possibilities with Shery and they have discussed. There is no "Toms Event" this year (due to lack of an organizer). Sheri is still looking for an organizer if someone is willing. A number of students have been going to the Focus Conference which does its own appeal to parents, etc.... NCYC trip will use the majority of the funds from last year.

Next meeting is set for September 3rd (2nd Tuesday is busy with pastoral council and several other meetings). **Action: Mary Ellen will reserve a room with Don for the meeting.**

Minutes of the July 2, 2019 Social Justice Committee Meeting

The meeting began at 6 p.m. in the St. Martin Room at STA. Present were Kathy Trahanovsky, Mary Ellen Wishart, Francis Todey, Paula Friederich, Fr. John Herzog, Chuck Glatz, Dave Dirks, and Chris Rehmann.

Minutes of the 6/4/19 meeting were approved.

Chris gave two updates relating to immigration. (1) The third Community ID event was held in Marshalltown and 201 ID's were issued in the two sessions (both filled to the limit). Previous sessions had issued 110 and 180 at St. Cecilia's. Chris was serving on the photo team. Next event will be 7/27 at Northcrest Community Room in Ames. (2) Liz Hall is working at getting the AMOS Immigration Team, which has only been informally part of AMOS, to a more formal basis and working to organize a Fall program at St. Cecilia's after the Sunday Evening Mass.

Chris had incorporated additional materials received from Lynn Osterhaus, Fr. Seda, and Joe Weyers into the document prepared by Mary Ellen. The committee had further questions on the information from the Archdiocese. Tom Budnik will try to speak to Lynn Osterhaus by phone to make sure she addressed what we were seeking to learn. Chris will send Tom a list of the questions to be pursued. Fr. Kyle was unable to attend this meeting and Chris will seek a selection of times that Fr. Kyle could meet (offering flexibility on time and place with only a subset of the Committee needing to be present. The aim of the meeting will be to review with him how he wants the information presented to the parish, presumably in a series of bulletin announcements per Mary Ellen's outline.

The idea of presenting programs for the parish in the coming year, perhaps in the form of a Sunday Seminar in conjunction with coffee and donuts, on the general theme of Church Reform. Chris will seek to have Joe Weyers attend a meeting to discuss format, audience and topics. Dave recommended the book "It's Not Necessarily So" by Rents as being very interesting and a source of topics that might be used. Some others had or were reading the book and agreed – Dave has an extra copy or two that he could provide to committee members.

An early August meeting date will be set after Chris determines when Joe could attend.

Submitted by Chuck

Saint Thomas Aquinas Social Justice Committee June 4, 2019

Present: Chris Rehmann, Kathy Trahanovsky, Fr. John Herzog, Chuck Glatz, Mary Ellen Wishart, Francis Todey, Jean Prestamon, Paula Friederich

Guest: Shari Reilly (Staff)

Prayer: Chris

Minutes of May 8: Approved

Student Trips: Shari led a discussion of current difficulties with planning and arranging immersion trips. Transportation is difficult and expensive because of various restrictions imposed by the Archdiocesan insurance policy covering these trips. It is difficult to find drivers who are 21+, and most rental require drivers to be 25 or older. Staff is not always available to accompany these trips. Also, by policy, a group may not travel more than 500 miles in a 24 hour period.

Chuck and Shari will gather information of what are all the specific requirements in order to help plan what locations for trips may be feasible in the future. Any such trips must be planned many months in advance.

Shari also discussed that there is currently no coordinator for the TOMS event. In the past, she has supervised student coordinators who planned these events. No students or residents are currently

identified to plan the TOMS event. Some of the previously collected monies will go to support NCYC participation.

Co-chairs for the student Social Justice Team have been identified, and ideas are being discussed as to what activities they will pursue.

Clerical Sexual Abuse: Mary Ellen drafted a statement which Fr. Kyle may use as an outline to update the parish. Chris will submit this document to Fr. Kyle and invite him to the next SJC meeting for further discussion.

Social Justice Grants: Approved funding for the grants will be mailed soon to the recipients. (Discussion of further agenda items was postponed due to time restrictions)

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 2

Respectfully submitted by Paula Friederich

Wednesday, May 8, 2019 6:00 PM St. Catherine's

Present: Tom Budnik, Dave Dirks, Chuck Glatz, Fr. John Herzog, Jean
Prestemon, Francis Todey, Kathy Trahanovsky,
Nicole Trice (new member), Mary Ellen Wishart

Absent: Chris Rehmann, Paula Friederich, Annette Forbes, Linda Shickell

****Early alert: Our next meeting will be Tuesday, June 4, 6:00 p.m. (THIS IS A CHANGE FROM WHAT WAS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING.)**

Dave Dirks was **acting chair** for this meeting.

April minutes were approved.

Social Justice Grants

The social justice grant selection committee met this month. Francis Todey distributed copies of their recommendations for 2019. He answered questions regarding some of the agencies unfamiliar to SJ committee members...St. Paul Parish (Fr. Charlie), Attat Our Lady (hospital), Martha's House of Hope (home for pregnant women without families). JKLW is the one applicant still pending. The applicant been asked to provide information about the agency's use of previous grant dollars.

Proposed allocations (without JKLW) are \$24,750. Social justice grant funds not allocated (between 5 and 10%) will be held in reserve for emergency requests. It was noted by both the subcommittee and the SJ committee that ERP had not submitted an application. **Dave** will bring that to the attention of one of the board members (who is an STA parish member) to alert him for next year.

To conclude, the SJ committee agreed with the recommendations of the grant subcommittee and asked Tom to proceed with the distribution of funds.

Tom, with the help of Net, will prepare award letters and checks by June 1. He will compile agency descriptions and amounts awarded for publication on the website and in the bulletin.

Francis will review this information with the Pastoral Council in June and give them a "heads up" that the SJ committee may be proposing that AMOS dues be made a line item in the 2020 SJ budget rather than seeking money from the grant fund. **(SJ committee will need to follow through on meeting with PC regarding this request.)**

Clerical Sexual Abuse

Tom presented information from Joe Weyers on how volunteers and youth are educated/screened. He talked with Lynn at the diocesan office seeking information about the diocesan review board. In response to committee questions, **Tom will recontact** Lynn to find out how the diocesan review board is selected, what their brief bio's are, and how they function. Have they been needed recently? What have they done? When?

The idea was raised that we might create posters or bulletin board summarizing the main points and contact information on this topic...possibly the lower lounge bulletin board.

Mary Ellen was asked to propose an outline/document for Fr. Kyle of what the committee feels needs to be said to bring the parish up to date on this issue. She will include the information/websites we have gathered so far and will send this document to SJ committee for review at our next meeting.

(Proposed schedule...my ideas, not discussed at the meeting. Create the outline by May 17. Email to SJ committee asking them to respond with suggestions by May 24. Make corrections/additions. Bring to next meeting June 4 for committee approval.

Central Iowa Community ID drive is May 11 at St. Cecilia.

AMOS

Kathy continues to attend the mental health housing research team meetings. Progress is forward, but slow.

Mary Ellen reported that there will be a "free" AMOS fundraiser on June 28. Purpose is to spread the word about what AMOS has done and is doing locally and to meet others who support the mission of AMOS. Donations will be encouraged but not required. Goal for Ames is \$5,000. Evening program, games, refreshments to be held at UUFA. Time to be announced.

SJ will try to get on the PC agenda in fall to discuss funding AMOS dues as a line item in the SJ budget rather than an SJ grant.

There needs to be an effort to create an active AMOS core team for STA.

Next meeting possible agenda items

Shari Reilly would like to be on the agenda to discuss spring trips.

Approval of clerical abuse document for Fr. Kyle

Plan for creating an AMOS core team and for funding proposal to PC

Date: JUNE 4

Notes by Mary Ellen Wishart

Tuesday, April 9, 2019 6:00 PM St. Catherine's

Present: Chris Rehmann, Jean Prestemon, Mary Ellen Wishart, Kathy Trahanovsky, Mia Powers (student), Fr. John Herzog, Tom Budnik

March 9 minutes were approved. (**NOTE** Chris Rehmann should be listed as present)

Discussion of actions to be taken regarding clerical sexual abuse

It was agreed that policies and guidelines should be published in the Bulletin. The content of articles would be based on Archdiocese of Dubuque policies and information from the Kentucky diocese. Fr. Kyle would like to have ownership of these articles which would be published with his signature. SJC will submit drafts to him. Committee members will prepare drafts based on the agenda items labeled as Weeks 1-6. Mary Ellen and Annette will discuss what is in place in the Archdiocese (weeks 1 and 2); Tom Budnik will ask Joe Weyers about requirements to be a volunteer and how youth are educated about this topic (weeks 3 and 4); Chris Rehmann will contact Fr. Seda to inquire how seminarians are screened, educated and mentored (week 5); and he will also look into who to call about suspected abuse (week 6). Jean Prestemon suggested that there should be a local Victim Assistance Coordinator.

Drafts should be available for discussion at the May meeting. The finished product will be placed on the website as well as in the Bulletin. Tom Budnik suggested that it be shared with St. Cecilia's and St. Peter and Paul.

Members present agreed that there is still a need for broader discussion or action with respect to loss of trust and the need for church reform.

Social Justice Grants

Tom Budnik distributed packets of Social Justice Grant applications for review. A subcommittee will meet in the next couple of weeks to decide on allocation of funds. \$32,250 has been requested; there should be at least \$25,000 to give out.

Community ID Drive

Chris reported that the March 30 session at St. Cecilia's went well. 101 people received the IDs. Law enforcement gave a presentation on what the IDs may be used for. The next session is scheduled for May 11 at St. Cecilia and another will be held in June in Marshalltown.

AMOS

Chris met with AMOS organizer Liz Hall to discuss STA's dues obligation. This year we are asking for a Social Justice grant to pay our dues. Next year we will ask for a line item in the budget for the dues. Liz suggested house meetings to generate a core team. Chris will invite Liz to a future SJ meeting.

Other topics

Fr. Herzog brought up the possibility that some parishioners might find it useful to have resources or presentations to help with budgets and financial planning.

Some members expressed an interest in knowing what the parish is doing in the area of energy conservation.

Next meeting

It was decided to move the next meeting to the first week in May and to meet on May 7 at 6 PM.

(Note: The meeting day has since been changed to Wednesday May 8 at 6 PM)

Social Justice Committee Meeting MArch 12, 2019

Present: Tom Budnik, Chuck Glatz, Fr. John Herzog, Francis Todey,

Kathy Trahanovsky, Mary Ellen Wishart

Absent excused: Dave Dirks, Paula Friederich

Guests: Fr. Kyle, Annette Forbes, Linda Shickell, Jean Prestemon (representing Ames Interfaith Refugee Alliance {AIRA})

Feb 12 minutes were approved.

Discussion of what actions to take locally regarding church sexual abuse topic

Mary Ellen presented a summary of what has been done in the Lexington, KY diocese and what is in place in the Dubuque Archdiocese. While they are similar, the information in the Dubuque Archdiocese is relatively hard to locate, while the KY diocese has an excellent publication and website. Fr. Kyle was open to suggestions from the group regarding trying to repair broken trust and also be clear about what procedures are to be followed in case of current issues.

Three recommendations: *****Note. The tasks below include several ideas (in italics) which were spoken informally after the meeting.**

1. Develop a series of bulletin announcements about various topics (*which would probably be drafted by SJ and then edited and published by Fr. Kyle*) Also have the small business card of the Victims Assistance Coordinator (VAC) in weekly, if possible.
2. *Publish the letters from Fr. Kyle in a very visible place on our website.* (Diocese website very hard to navigate)
3. After the series is completed, schedule a staff person from Dubuque to facilitate a discussion (possibly to include St. Cecilia's and St. P & P) about the issues. *This might be held in church between Masses to capture the most people and not impose on the already packed building use.*
4. Should St. Thomas remain a member of AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy)? How should membership be funded?

Kathy T and Mary Ellen attended a leadership conference and were challenged to seek approval by the Pastoral Council for continuing membership in AMOS. Since the budget is already determined, we will need to apply for a SJ grant to fund for this year. **Chris and Mary Ellen will work on the application.** The next step will be to present the case to Pastoral Council for having AMOS be a line item somewhere in the parish budget. (*For next meeting, need further discussion, consensus by SJ about membership, and what happens next, depending on the "vote." Then, if "yes," need to form a core committee.*)

Bowl-o-rama benefits social justice grants

The 4:45 music group held its annual "fun-raiser" and will be contributing \$5,072 to social justice grants.

Community ID

Chris reported that March 30 at St. Cecilia's is set for the first push to assist people in getting an ID if they have none. This is in cooperation with and supported by the sheriff, police, hospital. The ID cannot be used to board a plane, but it will serve as verification that you are who you say you are for medical purposes or if needed in civil situations. Those who attend will be expected to go through an orientation to what the ID means and will need to provide several pieces of identification in order to receive the ID. Other sessions are scheduled on April ___ in Ames and on May 11 in Marshalltown.

Immigration talk sponsored by UCC at Memorial Union

Several SJ members attended and felt it was very informative.

Next meeting: April 9, 6:00 p.m., STA

Notes by Mary Ellen Wishart

Social Justice Committee Meeting: February 12, 2019

Attendees: Chris Rehmann, Chuck Glatz, Dave Dirks, Tom Budnik, Kathy Trahanovsky, Mary Ellen Wishart, Mary Ann Today, Francis Today

Approval of Jan 2019 meeting minutes: approved

Mental Health First Aid – program was well attended. Mary Ellen and Kathy attended from SJ Committee. ERP, YSS, Friendship Ark, some students, etc... were also represented. Total attendance was 25. This course could be good for STA staff and LYN interviewers (at least a short course). Comments were generally very positive.

Housing First Program – Permanent Supportive Housing – Program will be held to begin to discuss where we are at in Ames, and where we might go. At the Gateway Hotel, Feb 20. Registration 9:30. Meeting 9:30-11:30am. This is sponsored by Amos. Both Kathy and Mary Ellen plan to attend. Amos is requesting some monetary help to differ expenses. We would suggest \$50 be taken from the SJ budget

for this. This was motioned and approved. **Action: Tom will take the action to have this money transferred to Amos for the event.**

ERP Homeless Outreach. – Tom was going to put something in the bulletin relative to collecting items for “care packages”. Tom did not receive a response from Carrie. He will continue reaching out to her and put it in the bulletin if we get the proper information.

Poverty Simulation – There is a group that has the materials available to do this. SJ needs to understand if we would want to do this. Action: Chuck will gather more information and come back.

Refugees – Ames Interfaith Refugee Alliance. Jean Prestemon has volunteered to represent STA. We have asked Jean to give the SJ committee periodic updates. Chris has added Jean P. to our SJ e-mail list.

UCC Theologian in Residence Program – Chuck believes that the Library will be showing the Postville documentary film on Tuesday Feb 19, 6:30pm. Tom got approval for use of our parking lot for their Friday Dialog event with Attorney General Tom Miller at the Union (Friday March 1, 7-9pm).

AMOS Civic Academy – This will be an AMOS event to educate people on immigration. Chris will give more details in future meetings. The event would be after Easter.

Abuse in the Church – Mary Ellen sent out a link to a paper from the Diocese of Lexington. This Diocese has taken some innovative actions. This is a good potential reference for other diocese's. As a committee we are waiting to develop actions until the Bishops meeting is finished (it starts next week). Father Kyle is taken some actions at STA. **Action: Chris will invite Fr Kyle to attend our next meeting on March 12 to get his view on Bishops meeting and actions for STA.**

Budget – Tom working on SJ budget with the budget committee. LYN, Honduras, and SJ grants will be moved out of the SJ budget and moved into the charitable giving budget. The percentages are not expected to change, just the category in the budget that these items fall under. AMOS has been funded by grants the last few years. Mary Ellen would like to see our membership dues put back in as a line item in the budget (we think this is \$3000). We can put it in as budget line item for SJ but it may not get approved. **Action: Tom will add a line item for AMOS at \$3000. Action: Mary Ellen will investigate what is requested by AMOS to remain a voting member, etc...** Tom has put in for slightly more SJ funding (office expenses 1770à 2000, workshops 200à400, lay leadership 300à500).

LYN fund – It is in good financial shape. About 30,000\$. Strong donations in December and January.

SJ Grants – We currently have ~\$16,000 built up.

Next Meeting – Tuesday March 12

Social Justice Committee Meeting: January 15, 2019

Attendees: Fr. Herzog, Chris, Chuck, Dave, Tom, Paula, Kathy, Mary Ellen, Felicity,

Approval of Dec 2018 meeting minutes: approved

Charles Kniker from UCC – “Immigration Matters Journeying Together, Responding to Crisis”

· Rev Dr. David Vasquez-Levy (President of Pacific School of Religion, and Theologian in Residence at UCC) will do a dialog with Attorney General Tom Miller on Friday March 1, 2019; 7-9pm at the Pioneer Room ISU Memorial Union. The title is “Love and Story: Reframing the National Conversation about Immigration”

· Saturday March 2, 2019; 9:15am – 3:30pm at the Ames United Church of Christ there is a program called “Immigration Matters: Joined Together, Finding Solutions”. David Vasquez-Levy, Luis Argueta, Sonia Parras Konrad, Erica Johnson, and Violetta Aleman will be presenters. This is free and open to the public.

- The UCC group would like to help other congregations get more involved in immigration issues.
- They would appreciate using our parking lot the evening of the Friday dialog at the union. They would also like us to publicize the programs in our bulletin. **Action: Tom will check with Bobby about using the parking lot and including a note in the bulletin.**
- Info is also on the UCC website. www.AmesUCC.org/TIR

Refugee Presentation on January 8. Attendance was fairly small, about 25 people (probably 10 students and 15 parents). But the presentation was very impactful. Also the presentation was videotaped. The second presentation will be at STC March 13th. Planned to start at 7:30pm. Chuck is coordinating for the social justice committee. Chuck is also communicating this to the STC social justice committee and to the Amos Interface Refugee Alliance.

Ames Interface Refugee Alliance: We would like to have a volunteer to be our representative to the Amos Interface Refugee Alliance. **Action: Chris and Tom will send the list of e-mail addresses from Time and Talent and our Ministry Spotlight to Chuck. Chris will send out the request to this list of names.**

Mental Health First Aid: Currently we have 8 people signed up. We believe 3 more will come from ERP. We need 10 minimum and it will appear in the bulletin again this week, plus some staff may still sign up. It's also posted in the lounge. Tom says we have money to pay for lunch. Room is ready and will work well (Prophets and Martyrs).

Clergy Abuse Crisis: **Action: Chris will send out a list of actions being taken by a very proactive diocese in Lexington, KY.** The Bishops meeting is Feb 21 – 24th in Rome.

ERP Homeless Outreach Program: ERP is collecting donation items for “care packages” for a homeless outreach program. STA is being asked to donate hygiene items and some specific food items. We'll try to put it in the next bulletin and set a donation for the Feb 2/3 weekend. Dave volunteered to drop donations at ERP once collected. **Action: Tom will get this put in the bulletin and verify with Carrie that our dates still match with her deadline.**

Next Meeting: February 12, 2019 6pm