



Social Action Committee Meeting Minutes

Sunday October 7, 2018 -- 10:00-11:30 am at Beth Emet, Crown Room

Attendance: Lisa Levine (co-chair), Jessie Macdonald (co-chair), Bev Groudine, Lisa Sachs, Howard Sachs, Barbara Schoenfield, Mark Schoenfield, David Graham, Lizzie Graham, Judy Caplan, Judy Kleiman, Al Hofeld, Jr., Kelly Austin, Leah Hurwitz, Elory Rozner, Sheryl Bartol, Stephanie Linn, Toby Manewith, Leslie Shulruff, Stuart Shulruff, Barbara Berngard, Leslie Yamshon, Fay Lipschultz, David Aronsohn, Karl Malchut, Ken Gutstadt, Phil Bashook, Nancy Bashook, Jan Iltis, Paul Peterson, Mareon Arnold, Judy Foler, Nancy Glick, Shari Rogers, Rabbi London

1. Welcome & Introductions

- a. Shana Tova and Welcome to Temple Judea Mizpah members
- b. Jessie explained that the purpose of today's meeting was to give an overview of many activities the SAC is involved with.
 - i. In the future, each month will feature an in-depth discussion about one topic or the work of one of the subcommittees.

2. Update on Social Justice Coalition structure and vision

- a. Article in the High Holiday Announcement book (*see attachment*)
- b. Website updating is next on the list, then onto the donor wall display

3. SAC Upcoming Events

- a. Multigenerational Family Service Events
 - i. Jan 20, 12:00-2:30 partnering with Connections, Feb 10 12:00-2:30p TBD, March 9 4:00-7:30p partnering with Advocacy for a letter writing campaign
 - ii. A sign-up sheet was circulated for people who want to work on the Family events; Lisa Levine lisajlevine@gmail.com if interested in getting involved

4. Guest Speakers:

- a. **Sue Murphy- Interfaith Action of Evanston** (*handouts attached*)
 - i. 41 faith communities of Evanston are members; Interfaith Action hosts several community wide events during the year. The most well known is the Interfaith Thanksgiving service on the Wednesday before the holiday. The other programs of IA are:

1. 3 weekly soup kitchens: Monday lunch at Second Baptist Church, Thursday dinner at First United Methodist Church and Friday bag lunch at First Congregational Church.
 2. The M-F Hospitality Center open year round from 7 - 11 am at St. Mark's Church.
 3. The M-F Warming Centers open Nov - March at various churches.
 4. The Produce Mobile distributes fresh produce the 2nd Tuesday every month at the Robert Crown Center.
 5. The Overnight Cold Shelter (see below)
 - ii. The Annual Fall Gathering and Delegate's meeting is October 16th at 7 pm at First Congregational Church- Mayor Haggerty is the guest speaker addressing homelessness, hunger and housing in Evanston.
 - iii. The Friday Warming Center needs a new faith community to house it. The church that sponsored it for many years has closed.
 - iv. The ProduceMobile at Robert Crown served 250 families last year. It provides food for anyone in need.
 - v. The Overnight Cold Weather Shelter will be at BE Feb 10-23, 2019
 1. The shelter goes into effect when it is 20 degrees or colder but the plan is to have it open every night Dec 2018 -March 2019 if funding permits.
 2. Volunteers are needed for any of the 3 shifts: 1st shift: 8:00-9:30 pm to set up and welcome guests; 2nd shift: 9:00pm-7:00am- stays with staff member overnight and the in morning; 3rd shift 6:00am-7:00 am: wake guests and help clean up in the morning.
 3. Volunteers must attend a 1 hour training. We will schedule a training at BE following one of the upcoming SAC meetings.
 4. IA needs a volunteer to handle daily texts during the season letting the volunteers know whether or not the overnight shelter is open. (email Sue Murphy at ia@interfaithactionofevanston.org if interested)
 5. A sign up sheet was circulated for people interested in volunteering with for the overnight shelter.
- b. Paul Peterson- Jewish Council on Urban Affairs (JCUA)
- i. JCUA Summit: October 21st 1:30-4:30 at Anshe Emet Synagogue (*handout attached*)
 1. JCUA is over 50 years old and many BE members have served on the JCUA board.
 2. This is a congregational summit for all JCUA members and member synagogues to bring together people who are involved with JCUA and/or their synagogue's social action endeavors.

3. The focus of the summit is on building bridges and working in partnership to amplify individual efforts and increase involvement and better communication.
4. To register for the summit:
www.jcua.org/congregation-partners-summit

c. Lizzie Graham/Phil Bashook- Beth Emet's Post-Detention Accompaniment Team (P-DAT)

- i. P-DAT is a BE sub-committee formed to work with the Interfaith Community on Detained Immigrants (ICDI).
- ii. Phil and Lizzie gave an update including a brief history of the sub-committee, current responsibilities of the group and how the actual accompaniment procedure works.
- iii. Beth Emet is scheduled to be the 'on-call' group the first week of each month. Our group has helped 25 people since June.
- iv. The group has purchased backpacks for each released detainee, as well as bus tickets that can range upwards of \$100 per ticket. Backpacks cost approximately \$50 each and are stocked with clothing and toiletries.
- v. A fund has been established at Beth Emet for P-DAT support; checks can be made out to Beth Emet Synagogue and earmarked for 'P-DAT Fund/Detained Immigrants' in the memo section..
 1. Phil, Lizzie and Jessie are meeting with Bekki to determine the best way to elicit financial support and whether a targeted fundraising campaign is feasible.
- vi. There may be opportunities for more BE members to get trained to either join the post detention accompaniment team and/or get involved with other efforts through ICDI. Stay tuned!

d. Leslie Yamshon- BE's Evanston Solidarity Response Team, Evanston For All

- i. The Evanston Solidarity Response Team (ESRT) is under the umbrella of Evanston 4All, an interfaith, clergy-led group that supports and stands in solidarity with immigrants in our community.
- ii. Abigail Backer had been BE's representative at the monthly meetings. A new volunteer representative is needed.
 1. When Leslie gets info on next meeting she will forward info to Jessie & Lisa who will forward it to the committee at large.

e. Jan Iltis, Jessie Macdonald- BE's First Steps Program at the Rohingya Cultural Center

- i. The muslim Rohingya people of Myanmar have been the victims of a government sponsored genocide. They have been forced into refugee camps in Thailand and Bangladesh. However, there is a

large population of Rohingya refugees living in Chicago: approximately 450 families.

- ii. The Rohingya Cultural Center is located in Rogers Park in a simple, 'bare-bones' storefront.
 - iii. Beth Emet joined several other congregations last spring to fundraise for a Mom & Tot program at the center geared toward modeling appropriate play and limit setting to young children. The program has been in operation since July.
 - 1. The class, First Steps, is taught by a licensed and experienced early childhood teacher. In addition, there are 3-4 volunteers who interact with the children and moms. The class is on Tuesday and Thursday mornings : 10- 11:30 and is in need of more volunteers.
 - a. Volunteers do not have to commit to attending every class. The schedule covers 2 months at a time and volunteers choose what days they're available
 - 2. About 38 moms and their children come to the program and there has been enormous change in the mom and children over the last 3 months. Children exhibit better social behavior and ability to cooperate. The moms are more engaged with their children and are developing greater trust in the volunteers.
 - 3. Contact Jessie if you're interested in the program or in volunteering (jess22mac@comcast.net)
- f. Stephanie Linn, Sheryl Bartol- BE's partnership with Connections for the Homeless (*handouts attached*)
- i. Connections' mission is to serve and catalyze the community to end homelessness one person at a time. Connections' programs include:
 - 1. **Prevention**, the most efficient way to deal with homeless issue),
 - 2. **Shelter** Hilda's Place- 18 men live there at a time,
 - 3. **Outreach**, including a drop in program 5 days a week at Lake St Church where people can get clothing, do laundry, see a health professional and work with a case manager for long term goals.
 - 4. **Family and Individual Permanent Housing**
 - 5. **Our House**, a residential program for homeless youth ages 18-24
 - ii. Stephanie and Sheryl are co-chairing a new sub-committee geared toward increasing the partnership between Connections and BE. Many BE members volunteer now or have in the past with Connections.
 - iii. Connections has many volunteer opportunities with great flexibility

- a. Individuals, groups, at the office, drives at your location, making meals, etc
- iv. BE is partnering with Connections for the Jan 20th Multigenerational Family Service Event. Email Lisa if you want to be involved with that event (lisajlevine@gmail.com)
- v. An upcoming event that needs volunteer help is the Thanksgiving Meal on November 10th at Lake St Church (corner of Lake and Chicago Ave in Evanston)-people are needed to prep meals, deliver meals and serve meals.
- vi. Connections holds quarterly "Milestone" Events recognizing the achievements of clients. It's an inspiring, uplifting event and Sheryl and Stephanie are working on having one of the events at BE, perhaps in December.
- vii. A sign-up sheet was circulated for people wanting to get involved with Connections.
- viii. A super easy way to send a donation of items directly to Connections is by accessing their Amazon wish list:
<https://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/1GTSP4XNXKY9T>

5. Judy Caplan- Advocacy update (*handouts attached*)

- a. Judy suggested that the cure for outrage fatigue is to DO SOMETHING;
- b. There are many upcoming opportunities to take actions, among them:
 - i. This Saturday, Oct 13th Womens March To The Polls, Grant Park
 - ii. IL- RAC Meet and Greet with the Gubernatorial Candidates- 2 dates (one for each candidate)
 - iii. BE has 15 slots at each meeting, both at Chicago Sanai
 - 1. Bruce Rauner Monday 10/15, 6:00-7:30
 - 2. JB Pritzker, Thursday 10/18, 12:00-1:30
- c. One goal of the Advocacy arm of the Social Justice Coalition is to ensure that Beth Emet is a 100% voter congregation by 2020
 - 1. Shevotesil.org is the best resource
 - 2. Oct 9th last day to register to vote
- d. The Democratic Party of Evanston has lots of opportunities to for volunteers to help, especially with the upcoming midterm election
 - i. www.evanstondems.com

6. Barry Isaacson- Tzedakah update

- a. The goal of the Tzedakah arm of the Social Justice Coalition is to encourage Tzedakah as a family habit.
- b. Collections are held twice a year at Beth Emet
- c. The Committee is considering moving to one grant cycle per year instead of two and potentially eliminating some of the constricting criteria for allocating tzedakah funds.

7. Rabbi London and the Poor People's Campaign

- a. The Poor People's Campaign is focused on reducing poverty and achieving racial equity. It is modeled on Martin Luther King's work to bring forth justice for all people.
- b. The rabbi said that several BE members had walked and gone to rallies earlier in the summer.
- c. The meetings are at Grace Lutheran Church; a schedule for meetings is coming out soon.
- d. A sign-up sheet was circulated interested folks. Rabbi London will contact those who signed up or are interested.

8. Other/Closing

- a. A question was asked about how these opportunities are communicated to BE members at large.
 - i. This is a current discussion that the Social Justice Coalition leadership is having with BE staff.
 - 1. Right now Emet Mail is the primary mode of communication although it only publicizes events in 2-week windows
 - 2. There is a potential for a quarterly Social Justice Coalition bulletin/newsletter or to be the 'lead' article in EmetMail.
 - 3. There is discussion of a winter kick off event (similar to today's meeting) where various Social Justice Coalition groups can speak about the group's mission/activities and where partner organizations share their mission and volunteer opportunities. This is in the early discussion phase.

NEXT MEETING: *Sunday, November 4th from 10:00am-11:30am*