

EPF Minutes of January 8, 2015 Meeting

Attendees: Frank and Blythe Baldwin, Nancy Siemon, Joey Cardamone, John Jackson, Linda Gaither

Opening Prayer

Linda and Frank read response letters from prison inmates they had written. Very moving.

Jim Murphy stopped by and invited our group members that he is trying to start up and/or revive a local chapter of Fellowship. He hoped we would be interested in joining.

1. Frances Gaudet New Year's Eve service wrap up: Approximately 25 people attended; over one hundred letters to state officials signed. We gave Joey \$12 to help with postage. We will put out a donation basket at future events to cover postage costs.
2. Lenten Study of Prison Issues: Nancy said that Father Rich may be interested in having prison issues as a theme of a Lenten study at St. John's church. We brainstormed possible activities in congruence with the EPF focus of "Pray Study Act" for the class sessions. They are as follows:
 - Reading (with permission) prisoner letters and writings. There is a website, www.prisonsfoundation.org, which prisoners use to publish their writings.
 - A one-woman show about solitary confinement which is sponsored by Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement, CAIC.
 - A book for study and discussion. A couple of ideas include Mass Incarceration: the New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander, Locked Down, Locked Out by Maya Schenwar.
 - Former inmates as speakers; we know of some local people willing to speak.
 - Possible speakers from CAIC, based in NYC.
 - Video
 - Write letters to inmates

Nancy agreed to write an email to Father Rich about these ideas.

3. Bread for the World: We discussed doing a letter writing action after Easter, April 12, because the Lenten study will take time and energy to plan and execute. We want to be realistic about what we can accomplish in the next couple of months.

4. Celebrations of Saints:

a. Frances Perkins: This year is the 50th anniversary of her death and we would like to do a commemorative service in May. We would like to invite a Cornell person connected with the Industrial and Labor Relations School at Cornell to speak. We have no money to pay them. Maybe Father Clark West could help facilitate getting a speaker. John will contact him.

b. Dorothy Day: feast day is next November.

c. Oscar Romero, martyred in San Salvadore, is in March. Joey will ask if Catholic Workers are interested in a service.

5. Palestine/Israel: Linda is participating in an interfaith group who is planning to educate Greenstar Cooperative, Ithaca, members about Israel. It is hoped that Greenstar members will eventually pass a resolution to boycott Israeli products at Greenstar cooperative.

This group is also planning some educational events about the Palestinian situation.

6. Meeting location: Frank will contact the Tompkins County Workers Center to ask if we can hold our meetings in their office. Autumn Leaves is busy and noisy at our regular meeting time.

Adjourned.

Respectfully,
Nancy Siemon
Convenor/notetaker