

Minutes of EPF Meeting September 1, 2016

Attendees:

John Jackson, Frank Baldwin, Nancy and Ed Siemon, Joey Cardamone, Deb Schmidle, Cathy Lewis, Linda Gaither.

Meditation:

John read a letter from a Jewish girl in a prison camp. It was very moving. He subsequently shared the reading with the group via email.

Treasurer's Report:

None.

Ithaca Prisoner Justice Network

Joey reported that NYS has told Tompkins County that TC must enlarge the jail because double bunking not acceptable. NYS has given TC until January 1, 2017, to fix the problem. TC is not interested in building more space and is trying to lower the jail population by using programs, and doing away with cash bail.

Palestine/Israel:

Linda asked if the group would be interested in a group study, Zionism Unsettled, which is a study sponsored by the Presbyterian Church. The response of the group was positive. Linda also offered to show a video "The Occupation of the American Mind" at her house with an accompanying potluck. No date was set. Lastly, Linda reported that about the BDS movement and the pushback by Jewish groups pressuring state governments to pass laws against the BDS movement. Gov. Cuomo said that anyone receiving state funds could not boycott Israeli goods. The group commented that this is against our democratic rights.

Prayer Card Project:

Discussion about the first panel of the prayer card with the icon of Mary and the words about hunger from the Magnificat. Nancy said the words don't seem to go with the icon. Discussion ensued as we struggled for a solution. John will send out two versions via email: one with the words of the Magnificat and the icon as is and another version with the icon and the opening words of the Magnificat..

New Business:

Deb had a conversation with Susan Boutros about a group of progressives in Ithaca, Tompkins County Progressives, who want contact with us because she feels our issues and interests overlap. Deb said they discussed having a joint meeting of various groups to share information and activities and maybe have public invited. Deb will continue communicating with Susan.

The group would like to have a retreat as our next meeting which is scheduled for

October 6. John suggested that we focus on Pray Study Act and how that structure will work for this coming year. We will have a dish to pass dinner at Deb's house and have an extended meeting. John also mentioned that this summer at the focus groups at St. John; nobody mentioned the offering of letters. We need to make the offering of letters more of a communal activity, more regular, more ritualized as a practice.

The meeting closed with John reading from Thursday of our prayer card.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:45 PM.

Respectfully,
Nancy /Siemon