

Minutes of EPF Meeting of January 5, 2017

Attendees: Blythe and Frank Baldwin, Nancy and Ed Siemon, Joey Cardamone, Cathy Lewis, Rhonda Bickford, Linda Gaither

Opening Prayer: Nancy

Kingdom of God Meditation: Linda read a statement by a Palestinian about fear. Cathy quoted a statement she had received from a Buddhist, "To forgive is to acknowledge that we can never have a better past." There was brief discussion.

Reports: **Treasurer's report:** Nancy reported a balance of \$176.30 in checking and \$24 available in savings. A donation of \$50 was sent in December for support of Standing Rock protestors to a Jewish Voices for Peace chapter in Washington state. A donation of \$40 was sent to Leaves and Fishes in December. Nancy mentioned that our chapter has not paid dues to the National EPF in recent years and that EPF is having financial problems and may have to lay off the only staff of two part time employees. Decision was made to send \$50 to EPF for dues of which \$10 will go to the Palestine/Israel Network subgroup. Linda will find out what are the actual dues for chapters and we will make up any difference later.

Prisoner Justice Network: Joey reported that the network is currently focused on jails. She reported that the jail population is increasing while the prison population is decreasing around the state. The main reason seems to be people accused of a crime cannot make bail. OAR has some funds but they don't cover everyone who is arrested.

Action: EPF will sign onto a statement saying that we support mental health treatment and facilities as the better approach rather than incarcerating people. We do not support the expansion of the TC jail.

Islamophobia: Cathy attended an event sponsored by Jewish Voices for Peace on the Ithaca commons in December to bring attention to fear of Islam and the injustice Muslims are facing in our society. Attendance was small but enthusiastic.

Action: Our chapter will donate a small amount of money to the local Muslim community to show our support of them in the building of a mosque. The specific amount will be discussed at the February meeting.

Nuclear Abolition: Frank requested that individuals contact Pres. Obama asking that nuclear weapons be taken off high alert before he

leaves office. He also recommended that folks watch “Command and Control” on PBS on January 10 at 9 PM.

Action: Future visit to Senators Schumer and Gillibrand staff to request a ban on nuclear weapons.

Israel/Palestine: Linda asked if we want to get action alerts. Attendees said yes and agreed that these alerts should go out to all people on our mailing list with a note that they should notify us if they want to opt out. Linda liked Frank’s format: Start with the issue; give the information about the issue; designate who to contact and how.

Linda also requested that we contact Rep. Reed within 24 hours in support of the UN condemnation of Israeli settlements.

Next Meeting: Ed will do the opening and closing prayers; Joey will do the Kingdom of God meditation.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:45 PM..

Respectfully,
Nancy Siemon