

**WESLEY CHURCH SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES, JANUARY 25, 2010**

Wesley United Methodist Church • 1212 West Calhoun Street •

Macomb, Illinois, 61455 • 833-2153

▪ **Committee Contact Information:**

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Present: Tom Alton, John Carter, Laurie Black, Hunt Dunlap, Kathy Fischer, Becky Lembke, Sandra Nelson, Mary Ann Troyer, Dana Walker.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Tom Alton.

November 30th Minutes: The motion was made and seconded (John, Dana) to approve the minutes from the November 30 meeting with one correction, the misspelling of Laurie Black's name. Motion carried.

Welcome New Members: The committee welcomed the new members. Tom and John discussed the mission and duties of the Social Concerns Committee. Sandra volunteered to bring the church's "official" brochure to the next meeting. Meanwhile, John read the Social Concerns Committee Guidelines:

1. Education and advocacy on the general church's social justice commitments.
2. Education and advocacy concerning peace and justice issues.
3. Provide members of the church opportunities for direct hands-on involvement.

Election of Officers for 2010: The motion was made and seconded (Dana and Sandra) to re-elect the incumbents: Tom Alton as Chair and John Carter as Co-Chair. The motion carried. Kathy volunteered to continue to serve as recording secretary if no one else wanted the job.

Year 2009 in Review: The incumbent committee members reviewed the committee's focuses and accomplishments in 2009, including the focus on poverty (including newsletter articles and projects), turkey project, Angel tree project, etc. The committee also explored the possibility of making the 2010 focus Parish Nursing and other health issues.

Focus of the Committee for the 2010 Year:

John proposed to the new committee members that one of our main focuses for 2010 will be to explore the possibility of developing a **Parish Nurse program** at Wesley UMC. We could **also explore other health issues** in conjunction with this program. There was general consensus on the part of the new members that this is a worthy goal.

Discussion followed:

- John: Connie Moore was a Parish Nurse a number of years ago. We could interview her to determine the successes and challenges she experienced.
- Duties of a Parish Nurse would include blood pressure checks, answering questions about health and health care, nutrition, etc.
- We could eventually open up the program to the community, especially to those who lack access to preventive health care.

John then showed a DVD which summarized the components of a Parish Nurse program, including the mission of the program and its importance. This DVD was produced by Deaconess Parish Nurse Ministries in St. Louis. Their website is: www.parishnurses.org. (We will see another DVD at a later time, since it deals with the issues that we won't encounter until we lay the groundwork.)

More discussion followed, regarding laying the groundwork for the program:

- There is a regional training center in Quincy (provided by Deaconess), which we could visit. There are over 50 congregations in the Deaconess region that have a Parish Nurse. (To John's knowledge, there are no Parish nurse programs in Macomb.)
- There is also one in Washington, IL, and Ken Dawson could serve as the liaison if we wish to visit there.
- Also, Lea Monahan (Dean, WIU School of Nursing) would be a good resource person as we develop the program.
- More ideas followed, for possible components of the program – e.g., we could have a health fair on a weekday evening, where people could choose from several speakers/programs on topics such as nutrition, physical fitness, etc. Becky said that at SIU they had a Parish Nurse program that offered a variety of programs.
- Tom thinks that mental and dental health should be components of the program.

John asked for volunteers to form a subcommittee to explore the Parish Nurse program – i.e., do the research and start laying the groundwork. Volunteers for the subcommittee include: John, Sandy, Mary Ann, and Kathy.

More discussion and questions followed:

- Becky asked about the financial implications. John said that one part-time nurse and three students to help her would be one possibility.
- Hunt asked about the challenges for such a program in Macomb, since we have a lack of health care providers, etc. Laurie also questioned the possible challenges, considering our doctor shortage. John said that we would need to establish a relationship with the local medical community.
- Becky expressed the need to get the congregation thinking about this issue. She will put a short article in the newsletter, to the effect that our committee is exploring the possibility of such a program.

Food Pantry Discussion:

- Hunt asked how the Food Pantry works. John replied that Dana Walker, Dave Helm, and Dwayne Furman are on the board, so they serve as liaisons from our church. The Food Pantry hours are Monday – Friday from 1-5 pm. Becky said that January was our month to stock and volunteer for the program, but John said that this was already taken care of. People who want to volunteer can sign up at Loaves and Fishes.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

NEXT MEETING: February 15 at 6:00 PM. (Notice the change in time.)