

Bethel Women's Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2011

The meeting was attended by 18 Bethel members. The following circles were represented: Blessings, University Hill Farms, Inspiration, Celebration, Evelyn, Beth Keyes, Dorcas, Rejoice, Abigail, Seekers and Compassion. In addition the following position/group had a representative present: WCC Secretary, President and Treasurer, Pastoral Advisor, Church Ladies, Lydia's House, Bethel Archives, and Bethel Book Club.

I. Opening Prayer

The meeting opened with a prayer by Pastor Swanson.

II. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at noon and attendees sang *Good Soil*.

III. Approval of Old Minute

The meeting minutes from July 12, 2011 were approved.

IV. Old Business

I. LWR Report-Bev Hanson

Bev distributed a handout with LWR Kit donation totals from 2003 to 2010. She thanked Bethel women for their support of LWR and for aid in packing kits. Unfortunately, totals for kits are down this year. School and Health Kits are down 16% and Layette Kits are down 35%. Soap donation was strong with 90 lbs. of soap collected.

Ideas to increase donations for LWR kits were discussed. The goal is to increase participation from more women in the church. Some circles collect items for kits as a group and this method is very efficient. Circles may want to consider this as an option. Helen Kruse from Celebration Circle put together the following tips that works well for her circle when assembling Health Kits.

- ❖ Places to Shop: Dollar Store, Wal-Mart, Sam's, Walgreen's with a coupon, or look for special deals at area stores.
- ❖ When to Shop: It is best to plan ahead and buy items over a period of time. For example a store does not stock 60 fingernail clippers at the lowest price so shop over a few months for the best deals.
- ❖ Assembly: Purchase all items and bring to a location. Bring scissors to open packages. Have a couple people open packages that need to be opened, have a

couple people assemble kits, have a couple people cut pieces of yarn and have a couple people tie up the packages.

Another idea discussed was to collect items for kits similarly to how items were collected during Lent last year for the food pantry. Items would be assigned to a given Sunday to be collected and after all items are collected a group of women would meet and assemble kits.

Discuss these ideas within your circle and brainstorm ideas as well and bring them to the next WCC meeting held in January.

The WCC would like to offer a **BIG** thank you to Bev Hanson and Blessings Circle for taking on the enormous task of organizing and coordinating our LWR efforts!

II. Women's Triennial Gathering –Financial Report-Jeanne Gill

Jeanne shared a handout highlighting information on the Triennial in Spokane. As a first-time attendee Jeanne said attending the Triennial was an incredible experience and with 2000 plus attending it was a powerful gathering. She said “The speakers were wonderful and the workshops fantastic.” The attendees had the opportunity to visit many vendors and pick up information on available resources and new ideas. Along with Jeanne, seven women attended from Bethel. The total cost per person was \$1,306, which included fees for registration, hotel and air transportation. An amount of \$5,200 was used from the \$9750 grant and \$4,942 was used from the Triennial Account.

Gifts from our congregation to the gathering included \$300 in In-Kind gifts, \$300 toward the Worship Offering and three prayer shawls. Bethel attendees participated in the Run, Walk and Roll and collected donations and pledges. The money collected to be used for a seed grant program created to improve the spiritual, physical and emotional health of women.

Some highlights of the Triennial follow:

- ❖ Leymah Gbowee , 2011 Nobel Peace prize recipient was a featured speaker and gave a powerful speech on her efforts that mobilized women to help bring an end to the long war in Liberia. Her story is portrayed in the video “*Pray the Devil Back to Hell*”.
- ❖ Gathering participants gave \$47,786 at the Thank-offering service.
- ❖ Gathering participants gave \$36,189 as a Worship offering.
- ❖ In-kind Gifts-An amount of \$10,420 in gift cards and additional other items were given to support organizations in the Spokane area.

Stop by the Triennial table on Women's Ministry Sunday (Nov. 6th) to pick up a copy of the Triennial report and also view slides and pictures taken at the Triennial.

III. Treasurer's Report- Jeanne Gill

Triennial Account

Beginning balance in Triennial account: \$6206.68

Current Balance after disbursements for Triennial : \$1058.28 (Disbursements were made for In-kind gifts, worship offering, and 8 attendees.)

Deposits: \$1053.00 (monies from remaining grant funds and special projects)

Lutheran World Relief

A check for \$740 was sent for LWR which included a beginning balance of \$330 and a deposit of \$200 from the Blanket Workshop and \$20 for an anonymous donor and \$190 from Evelyn Circle.

Special Projects

Balance: \$892.66

Oakwood Service League

A total of \$210 was given from 4 circles that participated. This money is put into an endowment fund at Oakwood. Last year endowment funds helped to fund such items as a TV in their fitness room, a camera for their Tree of Life Chapel, chairs, and a coffee maker just to name a few.

Blessed to be a Blessing

This account has a balance of \$1174.13 and will be sent in November. Alice Hansen, Sherri Hahn and Jeanne Gill volunteered to form a small committee to decide on allocation of the funds. This is our local mission fund and will be disbursed to local charities.

Worship Offering

This account has a balance of \$593.50, with 5 circle participating. It is sent at the end of the year. In the past we have sent \$1000. A large portion of this is used for the Core work of the women of the ELCA. This helps the budget by contributing to operational costs and programs and resources to support the larger church, other women of faith, and those in need around the world. Please consider making a contribution to this offering before the end of the year.

Thank Offering

Currently we have no funds in this account. This offering is collected in November and sent in December. A total of \$968.00 was sent in 2010. Thank offerings show gratitude for God's blessings and give us an important and tangible way to express that gratitude. This makes up part of our annual gift to the National ELCA to support Women of the ELCA programs and service worldwide. Unfortunately, the National budget has a 15% shortfall. In hopes to provide more support for this offering from Bethel, Jeanne proposed opening up this offering to all women of Bethel as other congregations do. Pastor Swanson will check to see if it may be possible to collect for this offering by putting a special offering envelope inside Sunday bulletins. In addition, please prayerfully consider the opportunity to participate in this offering during circle meetings in November.

IV. New Business

A. Women's Ministry Sunday-November 6th

Jo Thomley is coordinating the event to be held in November. Nancy encouraged participation. Look for informational emails in the near future for details on the upcoming event. Also remember to pick up the new Women's Ministry Resource Guide that day.

B. Advent by Candlelight-Wednesday, Dec. 7th-Sherri Hahn

Advent by Candlelight will follow about the same format as last year with circles and other interested women decorating tables and providing desserts for the table. It is hoped that this will be more than a circle event and reach out to all women of Bethel. A speaker has not yet been chosen. The ticket price will be \$5 a person. Jeanne Gill will help with ticket sales. Emails will follow with more information and details as they become available. For now, save the date!

C. Women's Ministry Webpage Information-Patty Saxe

Bethel women now have access to the quarterly WCC Meeting Minutes on Bethel's website. The meeting minutes can be found on the Women's Ministries page. In addition a link to the website of the South Central Synod of Wisconsin-Women of the ELCA will soon be added to the Women's Ministries page.

D. Marcia Thompson -Trumpeter Newsletter-Patty Saxe

Marcia Thompson is the woman responsible for sending out the Trumpeter newsletter. She is also the contact person for submitting articles to the Trumpeter. Her email address has changed to marciathompson57@yahoo.com.

Nancy encouraged women to submit articles to the Trumpeter newsletter about events and mission work at Bethel. The deadline for article submission is the 15th of the month prior to the month of release of the newsletter.

E. Lydia's House-Lynne Krainer

Lydia's House will start again Monday, the 24th of October. Pastor for Latino Ministries Jaime Dubon will be the guest speaker. This will be an opportunity to meet the new pastor, ask questions and find out what is happening in the Latino ministry. There will not be a Lydia's House in November. Lydia's House in January or February hopes to feature our new senior pastor Scot Sorensen. The date has yet to be determined.

F. Introduction and Welcome to Normajean Strommen

Nancy introduced and welcomed Normajean Strommen, the wife of interim senior pastor Peter Strommen. As a trained spiritual advisor Normajean will be assisting in Bethel's Grief Support group and shared with attendees her faith journey. Her faith was influenced early in her childhood by her parent's Bible that was kept on the kitchen table to daily welcome the Word of God. Normajean learned the "power of God" in her early 20's and has focused her teachings on spiritual practices. She has traveled extensively and describes herself as a "nomad". We are fortunate that her nomadic journey has brought her to Bethel. Due to enrollment numbers Normajean will not be teaching classes but wanted to share some recommended readings with Bethel members. The first book is entitled *Creating a Life with God, The Call of Ancient Prayer Practices* by Daniel Wolpert. Wolpert introduces 12 prayer practices in this book to help readers nourish a deeper and more satisfying prayer life. A second title by the same author, *Leading a Life with God, The Practice of Spiritual Leadership* provides help and encouragement for those transitioning from personal spiritual practices to group leadership. Norma Jean also recommended the *Companions in Christ* series. This multi-volume series provides books well suited for Bible study.

G. Women's Retreat-May 4-6, 2012

The date of the Women's Retreat is May 4-6, 2012. Many of the detail are still in the planning stages but save this date on your calendar.

H. Homeless Support Group-Alice Hansen

Alice thanked Bethel members for their support of the Homeless Ministry. This ministry is enriching the lives of those homeless in our community. Alice encouraged Bethel members to greet and welcome the homeless when at Bethel and remember them in prayer. The Homeless Ministry needs financial support with *Project Bubbles*-a program that provides the homeless an opportunity to bus to a laundromat to wash their clothes. The program provides a bus pass and money for laundry-about \$4. Those

wishing to support this ministry should write checks to Bethel , and use the memo line of the check to write "Homeless Ministry-Project Bubbles".

I. Church Ladies Ministry-Alice Hansen

This group meets monthly with women who are transitioning from the correctional system back into the community. Their meetings consist of fellowship, Bible study, crafts, singing, eating and conversation. A December Christmas party for this group of women is planned. They will be playing bingo. Donations of small items to be used as bingo prizes are needed at Bethel by December 5th. Examples of these small items are nail polish, lotions and any other items these women would not be able to buy for themselves.

J. Closing Prayer

The meeting adjourned at 1:05pm and Pastor Swanson closed in prayer.

Next WCC Meeting January 10th, 2012 at noon

Respectfully submitted by Patty Saxe-WCC Secretary