MINUTES

WIB Faith-Based Meeting

March 4, 2018
Attendees: Pastor Carolyn McCombs Chair, Duwan Bogert Executive Director, Cynthia Miller, Walter Toombs, Pastor Michael Odom, Elder William Henry, Andrea Newton, Jo-Anne Cummings, Cheryl Walters, Rosa Williams-Hopkins, Deiby Martinez, Johanna Prado, Lynda Gallashaw, Rick Prince, Diane Williams, Gino Arwalo, Frances Harris, Sam Kotegawa, Kate Duggan, Wanda Moore

Welcome and Introductions
Pastor Carolyn McCombs called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Minutes
Minutes were reviewed and approved.

Pastor Carolyn apprised the committee of our new Executive Director Duwan Bogert who will be joined our meeting later. She noted how excited we are to have him as our new leader.

Kate Duggan from Family Promise of Bergen County was introduced who shared information relevant to the work we do.

Presentation Family Promise of Bergen County
Kate Duggan presented the following:

- Family Promise is the only organization in Bergen County dedicated to providing shelter and support to working families who become homeless. Since 1986 Family Promise has sheltered thousands of adults and children adapting to their changing needs by creating programs to help them become self-sufficient.
- Family Promise is a network of sheltering congregations and transitional apartments. They provide stability while the families receives intensive individual case management to help them realize their goal of true independence.
- Family Promise was previously called Inter-faith Hospitality Network.
- Family Promise offers a variety of wrap around care through its network of volunteers who fund and serve dinner at the faith partner facilities. Family promise can shelter at least fourteen families who are transported from congregation
to congregation every two weeks. There are no paid staff. Volunteers provide all the meals.

- Family Promise has discovered just providing safe shelter is not enough, so the program has been fortunate to get private donations not tied to government funding. The agency also has four transitional housing programs and rapid re-housing with limited requirements since the money is private.

- Family Promise requires that families participate in a mandatory savings program since families are not paying for food or rent. Depending on the job and their salary, they are asked to give Family Promise at least 30%-40% of their wages. The savings go into an escrow account and which is returned to the family at the end of the program. Many of the families have left the program from $5000-$8000.

- Family promise helps the family with job training and helps to pay for after school care as well. Family Promise is not a band aid but are in it for the long hall to support the needs of the family. It is all about empowerment. Family Promise will not do for a Family what a family can do for itself.

- Family promise has 25 hosting congregations and each has a network of other congregations with a network of volunteers that they can draw from volunteer resources such as lawyers, life skills trainers, workshop trainers in financial literacy and diversity training.

**Q&A**

**Does Family Promise help people who are undocumented?** The program helps people with self-sufficiency and does not discriminate against people who are undocumented. However, due to the size of the program, Family Promise has to make a judgement on who they think has the desire and possibility of becoming self-sufficient. We have to see a clear path.

**Are men included in the family unit?**

Yes, men are included but the majority of the families are either two parent families or families led by a single adult. All families are screened and background checked.
and having a criminal past does not exclude anyone from the program unless it is of a violent nature.

**Does Family Promise collaborate with Bergen County One-Stop for training or other services?**
Yes, Family promise collaborates with the Bergen County One-Stop on an as needed basis because many of the families that come to us are already working.

**Is the Program just for Bergen County residents?**
The reason for presenting to the Faith-Based meeting in Passaic County was to share that there are openings to assist Passaic County families. Remember, all of the hosting and support sites are in Bergen County.

**Does Family Promise give assistance to the churches that host the families?** Kate noted that churches participate totally on a volunteer basis. Kate distributed flyers and brochures with the contact information.

**WDB Director’s Update**
Pastor Carolyn introduced Duwan Bogert, our new Executive Director, and the following highlights were reported:

- Duwan noted for the first time in about twelve years the Faith-Based has been included in three grant opportunities through Eddie LaPorte and Charles Featherson. The grants will be coming up in May 2018. We will be reaching out to organizations electronically.
- Mr. LaPorte will be visiting the Faith-Based meetings to inform the committee of any upcoming grant opportunities.
- Duwan noted he has been privileged to have a friend and colleague, Dr. Chris Irving, who has provided tools. He has had the privilege of working with the staff, Dorothy and Cynthia, through the One-Stop and now as the WDB Executive Director.
- Duwan noted that he will continue to support the Faith-Based Committee bringing innovative opportunities. Duwan extended a thank you to the committee.
Pastor Carolyn noted that the Faith-Based Committee is excited about Duwan joining the team and how he will help the committee expand beyond its current borders in what we have already been doing.

**June 2018 Conference Discussion**

Pastor Carolyn introduced Wanda Moore, Sam Kotegeawa from the Global Peace Foundation and Rick Prince from the Safe City Initiatives. She asked for a brief overview of the Global Peace Initiative. The following was reported.

- The Global Peace Foundation helps communities around the world identify some of the indicators for gang violence. Global Peace has taken a broader approach in looking at family and domestic violence and shootings.

- The program has offers a series of train the trainer opportunities by hosting 24 community trainings and 24 Law Enforcement trainings. A series of 15 community engagement activities targeting three cities: Paterson, Camden and Jersey City will be held. Each city will host five different events engaging the community as a strategy for building trust between community and law enforcement. They are also designed to build opportunities for networking with our youth to foster community cohesion.

- Wanda noted that she and Sam were introduced to Carolyn to help Global Peace come alongside the Faith-Based community to assist with the work that they are already doing, offering training as well as other opportunities.

Pastor Carolyn reiterated that when Global Peace contacted her and described their focus, she realized how closely their work aligned with the Faith-Based Committee. She noted that the Faith-Based Committee will be hosting their Annual Conference this year and thankfully Global Peace has funding to assist us. As a committee, we have done much of the ground work in terms of what was done in September. With all of the resources to support the youth now, we will take our efforts to the next level.
Pastor Carolyn noted the theme for our conference this year is "Where Faith & Health Connect: Serving the Whole Person." Similar to last year’s model, we are targeting the youth and engaging service providers who are working with out-of-school youth ages 16-24 or up to 30. Rick Prince from Paterson’s Safe City Initiative shared that the majority of the unengaged individuals are between ages 15-30. We will continue with the current template and encourage the faith-based leaders in the pews to be present to hear the needs of the youth while also connecting with resource providers who will be there. The Faith-Based has also committed to providing technical support for Faith-Based leaders to be effective in what they are doing.

Pastor Carolyn noted that the goal is to connect the youth with opportunities for summer work and Lauren Murphy, the Director of the One-Stop Career Center, heard our call and graciously extended 15 slots for youth involved in our community engagement Faith Based conference event. Youth will be recruited for work opportunities. Carolyn noted she and Rick Prince met with Jamie Dykes, President of the Greater Paterson Chamber of Commerce, and he is open to the proposal of recruiting businesses willing to hire youth in a summer work or other work activities. Jamie will open up his network of a thousand plus employers and allow the Faith-Based/Global Peace Program to put an article in their upcoming newsletter. The goal is recruit employers who are open to the concept of hosting youth for summer or other work opportunities.

Pastor Carolyn noted something similar to what we are doing was done in Asbury Park called "Go For The Gold" where youth were trained and oriented into for the work environment. After the work readiness training was completed, the youth received a gold card. The business owners recognized the gold card as something of value qualifying the youth as having received training and life skills needed for the work place. This gave the youth a leg up compared to other candidates. Pastor Carolyn asked the committee to consider incorporating the "gold card" concept with the work we are already doing.
Andrea followed-up with the summer work program by informing the Faith-Based Committee of the form included in the packet for anyone interested in becoming a worksite. She noted this year that the salary will be $10.00 per hour instead of minimum wage.

A form with the criteria for youth to apply for the summer program is included in the packet and the hope is that work could potentially be available for youth after the summer program in partnership with employers connected with the Greater Paterson Chamber of Commerce. Pastor Carolyn mentioned maybe the youth in the summer youth program could also receive the gold card. Andrea noted the program is really a year round program. After the six weeks of employment, youth must still participate, whether it be meeting with a counselor visiting the schools to see how the youth are doing or to connect them with training opportunities at the One Stop.

Pastor Carolyn noted that New Destiny Family Success Center is offering adults in the 4th & 5th Wards a program called “Getting Ahead” which is a soft skills program helping young adults understand mindsets that have hindered them. The program is composed of 10 sessions where participants are paid $25 every time he/she shows up. Pastor Carolyn suggested we open the program for our target group (ages 16-24) and get them enrolled in classes starting next week. This group could also earn a “gold card” like status as well. They must be 18 or older to sign-up.

Conference Site & Date
William Paterson University gave the committee available dates for the Faith-Based Conference: 6/11, 6/12, 6/13. Pastor Carolyn & Duwan suggested we put together a sub-committee to determine the location/date and report back to the committee. The volunteers for the sub-committee includes: Pastor Carolyn, Andrea, Rosa, Johanna, Walter and Cynthia

Wrap-up

Meeting concluded at 2:50pm
The schedule for the next meeting: TBD