

## Hickory Neck Church Outreach Committee Minutes July 2008

Present: Laurie Brown, Lauris Zeni, Harry Brown, Gay Forloine, The Rev. Lauren McDonald, Rick Garfield, Gary Harvey, John Greenman, Bill Teale, Tom Gee, Anne Johansen, Patty Kipps. Absent: Linda McGee and Chuck Jundt

Lauren opened with a prayer.

Gary reviewed organizational guidelines and noted the need for more structure. A sub-group of Gary, Lauren, Bill and Michael Delk, Rector, met recently and made this decision.

Discussed the two books by author Ruby Payne. One is more academic and theoretical, the other more readable and personal, and is directed specifically at churches. Hickory Neck Church (HNC) already has copies of the academic one, but Patty and Gay expressed that we should use the one specifically for churches as a discussion and learning experience to assist us in working more effectively with persons who live in poverty. No decision was made about this.

The group approved a new meeting day: it will now be the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month.

Hickory Neck Church Bylaws state that committee members shall be appointed and serve for one year. We presently don't follow this, and will continue to do as we have been doing for the time being. The present members, as listed above, are the official committee; they are the ones that come regularly. Regular attendance is required to be a committee member or to vote. Others can attend if they wish, to provide input or to observe. Each member needs to be willing to be a liaison to an outside agency, if needed.

An agenda will be sent out each month. If a member wants to speak about an issue, ask Gary to put this issue on the agenda. There will also be "other business" on the agenda.

If presenting a new agency for financial consideration, members should do some homework first, with background information, and be prepared to ask someone from the agency to speak to the group (either same time, or later). Any agency which receives a substantial amount of funding from HNC must have a liaison from the committee and the agency must provide a semi-annual report to the committee. This does not apply to agencies which receive small amounts (under \$300 was mentioned) from the committee.

We prefer to "stay local" with financial assistance, but can venture farther away for service projects. Local was mentioned as Williamsburg, James City County, and upper York County.

Gary spoke of the recent meeting of the Homeless Task Force. It was attended by representatives from the 3 counties mentioned above and the 3 local Episcopal churches, plus Colonial Services Board, Salvation Army (SA), United Way, and others. The three

Episcopal churches agreed to support the task force as a unified body. No other churches are doing this at present. Task force is forming a pilot program and working on one church at a time to join in. They have created a Memo of Understanding and an official intake form which has been approved by the State (necessary for privacy issues). The form can be completed anywhere, but will then go to United Way to be put in their central database. SA will be the gate keeper for clients. They will provide case management services, and will partner with both public and private sources for financial support.

SA would like for churches to provide mentors for clients. Capt. Debbie Bowers will teach a mentoring class in September. Also, churches will be encouraged to “adopt” a family. Mentoring and church “adoption” will continue after government agencies (e.g. Social Services) stop their assistance. Mentors would have to commit for a year, and 3 years might be needed for ongoing mentoring assistance.

Discussion about present function of Vibrant Life Ministries (VLM). They rent a home now near Centerville Road, may house around 20 men. They are applying for a special license of occupancy to request the county to approve this. Discussion as to whether HNC might consider some financial support to them again, esp. for the winter months. John will be liaison to VLM, and will report next month on what their current situation is.

Discussion about “what is a homeless shelter”. County says anything where people stay overnight (along with other criteria) qualifies. This, if true, could be changed with pressure from citizens who want it changed.

Ann noted there are 85 faith communities in this area. Approximately ½ of them are active in Faith in Action services. However, it takes about 2 years of “courting” to get some faith communities to come on board.

Rick noted recent changes in staffing and budget for Angels of Mercy Clinic. He will present an update us on this at our next meeting.

Patty spoke of her contacts with Burnt Ordinary low income apartments. She will follow up with at least one more person there. HNC could duplicate ministry of Stonehouse Church, and serve lunch one day a month, along with a social activity like bingo, if we wanted to. It would under the auspices of From His Hands. There was no further discussion about this.

Short discussion on: How do we pick charities to support? To answer this, new members of the committee need to read our guidelines and be informed of our history in making decisions about this. A small group stayed after to meeting to do some of this.

Lauren closed with a beautiful litany from *The Wideness of God's Mercy*.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, August 26.

Submitted by Patty Kipps