

Unity in the Community
General Membership Meeting
6:30 P.M., Sunday, June 17, 2012

Buckhall United Methodist Church
Moore Drive & Prince William Parkway
Manassas, VA 20111

Members Present: Dexter Fox, Illana Naylor, Kathy Clark, Humaira Ali, and Jim Amaral

The meeting was called to order at 6:44 P.M. by Chair Kathy Clark. A quorum was not present.

1. **Secretary's Report.** Paper copies of the minutes for the May 20, 2012, meeting were distributed for review. The minutes were accepted as presented.

2. **Treasurer's Report.** Gregg Reynolds was not present to give a report; however, he submitted a report in advance of the meeting. Unity in the Community (UITC) has a balance of \$1,623.50, \$878.53 of which is in the general fund, \$150.00 in the humanitarian fund, and \$594.97 in the study circles fund. The report was accepted as presented.

3. **Vice Chair's Report.** Lydia Gonzalez was not present to give a report this month.

4. **Chair's Report.** Kathy Clark remarked on United States President Obama's announcement this past Friday that his administration will halt deportation proceedings for up to 800,000 undocumented immigrants who were brought into the country as children. The policy will apply on a case-by-case basis to those who came to the U.S. under the age of 16, and who are currently younger than 30 years of age; have lived in the U.S. for at least five years; are enrolled in school, have graduated from high school, have obtained a general education development certificate, or are honorably discharged from the Coast Guard or Armed Forces; and have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, multiple misdemeanors, or pose a threat to national security.

Kathy also reported that she spoke at a recent VOICE (Virginian's Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement) action meeting on June 3rd. At the meeting, representatives from three mortgage companies – Bank of America, Chase Morgan, and G.E. (parent company of WMC Mortgage Corporation) – were in attendance and promised to help Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park homeowners with mortgages that are underwater, in danger of going into foreclosure, are already in foreclosure proceedings, or who have had their mortgages foreclosed. VOICE's next action meeting related to this issue will be held at 7:30 P.M. on Monday, October 1, 2012, at St. Paul United Methodist Church (1400 G Street, Woodbridge). At that meeting, representatives from the financial institutions will sign a statement confirming their promised assistance. It is expected that more than 700 people, including Senator Mark Warner, will be in attendance for this meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5. **International Day of Prayer for Peace (IDPP).** Illana Naylor reported that this year's IDPP will take place from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. on Sunday, September 23, 2012, at the First AME Church of Manassas. The Reverend Carol Rogers is First's AME's liaison for this event with UITC. After discussion, it was decided that the theme of this year's event will be "Sisters and Brothers Praying Together for Ceasefire." Invitations to participate in the event will be extended to the leaders of faith communities who may determine how their community will be represented in the event. Contributions to ACTS (Action in Community Through Service of Prince William, Inc.) and SERVE (Securing Emergency Resources through Volunteer Efforts) will be collected as part of the event. A carry-in potluck fellowship meal will follow the program. The next planning meeting for this event will be held at 1:00 P.M. on Monday, June 25, 2012, at First AME Church of Manassas.

Illana noted that St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church will be hosting an interfaith service at 7:00 P.M. on Sunday, September 30. Father Gerry Creedon of Holy Family Catholic Church in Dale City is the organizer of this event. The planned service has been entitled "Spirit of Assisi," and its purpose parallels that of UITC's IDPP event. Ideas on how this separate event could be coordinated with UITC's IDPP event were discussed for possible consideration by Illana and Father Creedon.

6. **Sharing the Not-In-Our-Town Message.** At last month's meeting, members of UITC were asked to consider the feasibility of planning and hosting a possible Not-in-Our-Town type of event. No attendees had any ideas to share at this time.

7. **Nature's Revival Garden.** Kathy Clark provided information about this program in addition to that which was shared at last month's meeting. The U.S. Forest Service would like to partner with Unity in the Community to bring together a diverse group of ten to twelve youth from Prince William County/Manassas/Manassas Park who would participate in a day's training that would provide them with the skills necessary to organize and complete nature revitalization projects. It was reported that Dar al Noor has volunteered to be a site where such a project could be done to help get the group underway. Kathy Clark stated that, if UITC is interested in sponsoring this activity, Taalibah Hassan may be willing to act as UITC's liaison with the U.S. Forest Service. The consensus of the group was to go ahead with the project if Taalibah is willing and able to coordinate it for UITC.

NEW BUSINESS

8. **VOICE's Agents of Restoration Program.** Kathy Clark reported that she recently participated in VOICE's Agents of Restoration training program which provided her with the information and skills necessary to make informational presentations about the mortgage crisis in Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park. The training also equipped her with skills to help connect families with free housing counselors (as opposed to scam artists) and to identify homes that might be used as part of an affordable housing program. VOICE will conduct additional trainings over the summer. Anyone who would like further information about

the training or who would like to participate in a training session should contact Kathy for further information.

9. **Chinn Library Fall Interfaith Tour.** Prince William County Librarian Carol Ahmed is in the process of coordinating a “Houses of Worship Tour” which is targeted to attendees of the “Building Common Ground” forum that was co-sponsored this past March by Unity in the Community and Chinn Library (Prince William County Public Library System). This event will probably be scheduled on a day in October. Additional information about this program will be shared as it becomes available.

10. **Unity in the Community Nominating Committee.** Jim Amaral reminded all that the positions of UTIC vice-chair and secretary are up for election this September and that a nominating committee needs to be formed. Kathy stated that she will appoint a committee before the next UITC meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

11. **Dale City Fourth-of-July Parade.** Gregg Reynolds will forward details about this event to Kathy Clark as it becomes available. Kathy will then disseminate this information to UITC members who wish to participate.

12. Kathy Clark announced that **Curtis Porter has volunteered to represent UITC** at meetings of the Prince William County Human Rights Commission.

13. Humaira Ali announced that **Ramadan** starts at sundown on Thursday, July 19. The first communal **iftar (breaking of fast) at Dar al Noor** will take place at sundown **on Friday, July 20**. Members of Unity in the Community are invited to participate. A point-of-contact for this event will be announced at a later date.

14. The **next UITC meeting will take place on July 15**. The location of the meeting will be announced at a later date.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Amaral, Secretary