

Minutes from the VPC Mission Committee Meeting:

May 11th, 2021

Room 5 at the Church and at our homes via ZOOM due to COVID 19 quarantine 8:45 am – 10:15am

Present: Doug Clark, Pat Nau, Kay Brouwer, Reed Olson, Joan Bolin, Mary Horn, George Curtis, Mark Horton, Kylene Joplin and Carol Stephens.

Absent: Judy Aguayo, Steve Larson, Patti Bright, Tom Spurlock, Larry Craft and Charlie Ashton

Doug presented our Spiritual Growth lesson on Mercy, a very complex attribute of God. There are two definitions which apply. The first is compassion or forgiveness toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm. This is like God's action to us. The second is compassionate treatment of those in distress. This is like our action to others.

Related terms are **Justice** as getting what a person deserves, **Mercy** as getting not everything a person actually deserves, and **Grace** as getting what a person actually does not deserve. God's **Mercy** forgives the sinner and withholds the punishment that is deserved. God's **Grace** heaps underserved blessings upon the sinner. Christian believers experience both God's **Mercy** and **Grace**. Our group agreed with Reed that this attribute is prominent as we serve our agencies.

Doug opened the business meeting with prayer.

The Executive Director of Hands of a Friend, Colleen Hanson, came to our meeting via ZOOM. She explained in clear detail, the activities and functions of Genesis House in Green Valley. It is a domestic shelter for dangerously abused women and children. Not like other temporary shelters, Genesis House allows residents to stay up to 2 years. Abused women can apply to enter the home and will be screened through interviews by the director. Sometimes friends, relatives, hospitals and law enforcement will recommend a woman in need. Women residents are encouraged to attend classes to enhance their self-concept and gain skills to become a wage earner. Counseling is offered for all women. A new house manager has been hired who has experience in marriage and family counseling and trauma treatment. A vehicle has been donated which will take residents to appointments and/or classes.

There are 36 beds in Genesis House with 5 cribs and some toddler beds. There is a senior wing where no children live. Guests are rarely allowed to visit Genesis House to protect the privacy of residents.

The staff and residents follow strict protocol about COVID 19. There has not been an outbreak of the virus.

Colleen began her one-year commitment to this position a year ago, succeeding Patty and Jenny. Many renovations and repairs have taken place in the infrastructure of the House. There is improved plumbing, new paint, electrical and air conditioning repair, and many other

changes. Colleen will resign as Executive Director at the end of May but will remain on the Board of Directors. Gina Dowsing will become the temporary director until a replacement can be hired.

Hands of a Friend does not receive Federal or State aid so is not required to follow governmental restrictions. Funding comes through grants. Also, Hands of a Friend runs the thrift store, DaZees which sells donated items, providing some funds for Genesis House.

We extend a big thanks to Colleen Hanson for sharing much information about Hands of a Friend and Genesis House. Thanks also to Pat Nau and Doug Clark for helping set up this presentation. We are glad to support this agency.

Business Begins –

Approval of Minutes: Done

Financial Report: The 2021 budget is \$81,250.00 with an addition of \$1,000 from a Transfer of funds. The available Mission Committee emergency funds are \$698.61. Doug explained “Custodial Accounts” to us.

MISSION REPORTS/COMMENTS

Amado-GV-Sahuarita Food Bank – Kylene Joplin met with Vicki who said that in April, Valley Presbyterian Church delivered 14 pounds of food to the Food Bank. \$529.00 was given to each, the Green Valley and the Amado Food Banks.

Lilia is the coordinator of Food Bank volunteers who are not yet functioning because of COVID-19.

Kylene expressed thanks to Gee-Gee Smith who receives our articles and assembles them in each month’s Valley Voice. Gee-Gee also includes interesting illustrations with articles. Doug reinforced the importance of getting information from our agencies to put into the Valley Voice. We want our congregation to be enlightened about the Missions of our church.

Posada Community Services – Mark Horton reported that Bill McCreery sent information: “Overall, things are really beginning to pick up around here! Our Adult Day program has increased its census to about 15 per day and we are continuing to enroll people in the program. Since our numbers are up, we are looking to hire an activities person to round out our COVID-based staffing pattern. Los Niños del Valle preschool is growing back as well. New families are beginning to enroll in the preschool program, and we had to cap our summer program for older children (K - 3rd graders). We are at capacity there. We opened the Community Center for group meetings and our regulars are starting to come back. Some have decided to wait until the fall as many have little summer activity anyway due to snowbird influence. We also are seeing more intakes for counseling. On another note, we have redesigned our Centenarian celebration which we usually have in the Community Center. This year we are taking the

honorarium program on the road and visiting 100-year-old people instead of the reverse. We have already identified more than 20 Centenarians living in Green Valley!”

Casa Vida Nueva para Niños – Reed Olson reported that the Home now has 54 children. They have also erected a 125-meter cinder block wall stretching across the front entrance street of the home because of traffic concerns. COVID hit the home recently sending 8 children into quarantine and Elias – the Director – was sent to the hospital. All are now healthy.

April 30, the Mayor of Nogales, Sonora, coordinated a special kids’ day at the Home. The Nogales Sonora Police, Fire and Health departments participated in a whole day of games, food, in an outdoor party atmosphere. The fire department even brought one of their fire trucks for the kids to climb on. Right now, no one can enter the home and mingle with the kids due to COVID.

Compañeros en Misión – Judy Aguayo sent no report

Crossroads Mission, Nogales, Arizona – Joan Bolin reported the following information as received answering her text to Bert Wenke, Co-Director of Crossroads Mission, on Thursday, May 6, 2021:

- Bert is very busy at Crossroads Mission and taking Ben Wenke, Co-Director of Crossroads Mission, to doctor appointments. Doctors are still trying to figure out the problem with Ben’s headaches and his unsteady gait.
- There was a Mother’s Day luncheon at the Mission. Each mother attending the luncheon received a purse filled with hygiene items, shampoo, brushes/combs, lotion and other similar items. Also, each mother received a red rose. More information will be forthcoming in the next Valley Voice.
- Crossroads Mission statistics will be submitted later, in time for inclusion in the next Valley Voice.

Please keep praying for Crossroads Mission, which is a vital part of Nogales, Arizona.

General Mission Support – No Report

PCUSA Seminary Support – Noisy Offering on May 30 will be given for Seminary Support.

Hands of a Friend – Pat Nau referred us to Colleen’s presentation at the beginning of our meeting.

Pat expressed thanks to the Patio Sale team for the hard work and success they had on April 15, 16 and 17. The net of \$75,000 will benefit our missions. Another sale will be in November which will take more work for the fine Patio Sale volunteers.

Mission Quilts – Patti Bright reported that some of the quilters met this month for the last turn-in of quilt tops done at home and layering of those tops. They will meet one more time this month to cut out squares for Patti to make kits out of this summer. They will go out and eat together after the cutting session. The rest of the summer they won't be meeting to quilt, but

local quilters will try to meet monthly for lunch just to keep up with each other. There won't be any more reports until October.

Operation Mobilization – In a letter to Doug Clark, Dave and Pam say that they're swallowed up in the 24/7 race of missionary work. They applied for a visa but not sure if they can go to Pakistan due to restrictions and lockdowns there. The last few weeks have been particularly stressful because of the COVID crisis in India. Prayer and support teams are organized, but still many people have died. Pam and Dave, with their team members, reach out to the least reached Muslims with love and compassion extending the Good News of the Gospel. They expressed appreciation for the prayers, support, friendship and partnership of Doug and the Valley Presbyterian Church. We look forward to seeing Dave and Pam on Mission Sunday, January 16, 2022.

Presbyterian Campus Ministry – George Curtis reported that the PCM Board has approved a position for an Interim Director of Campus Ministry for 2021/22. The Board is revising the job description for the position announcement. Brad Munroe will be the acting moderator of the PMC Board until an interim director is appointed. The Campus Christian Center Board is in discussion on how to proceed because only the Wesleyan Foundation may be a remaining member. Discussions have not been amicable. The next meeting of the PCM Board is Monday, May 17th.

Bob and Kristi Rice (PCUSA missionaries) – Doug Clark encouraged us to join the blogs of Bob and Kristi so that we can follow and pray for our missionaries. In the blogs, they share the real-life story of how God is working in their lives.

About the same time that Bob received his second COVID shot, his friend and colleague in Juba, Rev. Philip Obang Akway, received his first dose. Rev. Akway reported that the shot was safe and effective. This gentleman is trying hard on Facebook to inform the people of South Sudan of the value and necessity of getting the vaccine. Many are suspicious and resistant because of their mistrust of foreign entities and the frequent harmful colonial realities they have brought to Africa.

Rev. Akway presented to the people of South Sudan positive information about the COVID-19 vaccine:

- It will weaken coronavirus which threatens the church for gathering for worship.
- It has been scientifically studied and is made from physical elements which God has created, citing the goodness of God's creation. The devil did not create anything.
- It is free and no one will be forced to take it.
- It is similar to other vaccines already taken.
- "Being vaccinated will not only bring a level of protection to our own bodies, it will also help slow the spread of this virus which has brought so much destruction to our lives and livelihoods across the globe."

“Tragically, 60,000 doses of the vaccine went to waste in South Sudan because of negative messaging and uncertainty.”

St. Andrew’s Children’s Clinic – Kay Brouwer reported that Director Laura Romero is excited that 2 or 3 Clinics will open this year. The first will be the first Thursday in October to serve 7 children to be selected by doctors and volunteer staff. She’s calling them the “Lucky 7.” Laura and the St. Andrew’s team has much work to do as they plan this first Clinic. The children will all be from Nogales, Sonora because traveling by bus is too risky. Also, the issuing of COVID vaccines has stopped in Mexico. The “Lucky 7” must meet the protocols set up by the Central Border Protection, the state of Arizona and our National Government. Dr. Quiroz is the pediatrician in Nogales, Sonora who has been working with St. Andrew’s Children in that area. He has good advice as to who should come to the Clinic first. They anticipate that St. Andrews’ Episcopal Church will continue to set up as the Clinic.

Laura hopes that two more clinics will be held before the end of 2021. One of her goals is to have a December Clinic which will also be the Christmas party for 15 children and families. This December goal is uppermost in Laura’s mind as the clinic begins to serve the Children of Mexico who desperately need medical attention. She expressed sincere thanks for the prayers and support of Valley Presbyterian Church.

Valley Assistance Services – In Steve Larson’s absence, Chris Erickson sent information reporting that:

- VAS needs more volunteers who can help people with transportation. The need has increased 300%.
- VAS is working for Eviction Prevention because of the number of clients who need rental and utility assistance.
- The Connect-With-U program offers Sahuarita National Honor Students the opportunity to make friendly social phone calls to people in this area. Each month about 1300 calls are made.

Youth on Their Own (YOTO) – Mary Horn reported:

- 1) We will try a something new in our card making ventures for Youth On Their Own. Eloise Frederickson approached me to see if we could use hundreds of donated “single” cards in our card making. When Eloise showed me the cards, I asked if we might package them in groups of 5 or so and sell them at the Rummage Sale. She said the departments did not want “loose” cards, but that I could check with Jewelry to see what they might think? Linda Norman was AOK with the idea of taking a small section of the jewelry area to display and sell cards. (The Catholic Church does something similar in their church thrift store.) Many of these are Christmas cards, so the November sale would be a great fit. Then, in addition, I thought it would also be possible to display our YOTO cards at the Mission Table along with the pre-packaged cards for sale. I would hope that proceeds from these sales could go to purchasing materials for our cards of inspiration – cardstock, Sharpies, stickers, etc. It would be a great way to involve more people in helping YOTO and our Inspirational Card making!

- 2) Five ladies met at church on Wednesday, April 28 to make Inspirational Cards in Classroom 5: MASK FREE because we had all been vaccinated!! Our next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, August 24 in Classroom 5 from 1- 3:30 pm.
- 3) On May 3, we delivered 173 cards of inspiration to Youth On Their Own. These were a combination of cards made at our meeting and by ladies at home.

During this meeting, Mary informed us that there are 1,500 - 2000 kids in 6th through 12th grades (ages 12-22) getting YOTO help. They are attending schools throughout Tucson and Sahuarita. Each school has a YOTO liaison to offer counseling and help for the children who have left their family's homes for any number of reasons. YOTO encourages these children to stay in school and to graduate. Help comes through monthly stipend checks, inspirational cards, and a mini-mall where they can shop for personal items and school supplies without charge. After graduation, other agencies offer further assistance to these young adults.

When asked, Mary provided the following information:

- YOTO HEADQUARTERS: 1660 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson 85712
- YOTO MINI-MALL: 1642 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson 85712

Old Business:

Mission Breakfasts:

- November 13, 2021 – YOTO (Mary Horn)
- January 15, 2022 – Pam and Dave L. (Doug Clark)
- February 12, 2022 – Food Bank (Kylene Joplin/Carol Stephens)
- March 28, 2022 – St. Andrews' Children's Clinic (Kay Brouwer)

Noisy Offering

- May 30, 2021 – Seminary Support -- Larry Craft
- August 29, 2021 - Presbyterian Christian Ministry -- George Curtis
- October 31, 2021 – Nogales Crossroads Mission -- Joan Bolin

One Great Hour of Sharing March 28, 2021 – Donations have increased from \$3,225.00 to \$3,870.00. This is the most collected in recent years.

Mission Sunday is January 16, 2022: A subcommittee is needed to help Doug plan. Mary Horn volunteered to assist via ZOOM during her summer absence. Kay Brouwer may be able to help, too.

Valley Voice articles – Our goal is to have 4 or more per month. There were 6 in April. Good work & keep writing!

Review and Update of Mission TV Assignments - None planned.

New Business:

Doug Clark has composed and read a letter which explains the expectations and responsibilities for our designated agencies. The committee recognized the letter as being very good and

recommended that it be sent to each agency after our summer recess. We will discuss and probably accept the sending of this letter at our September meeting.

The next Mission Committee meeting will be at 8:45, September 14, 2021, in Room 5 with a ZOOM option.

Doug Clark asked if someone would give the closing prayer. With no volunteers, Doug recommended that, in the future, we offer to say a prayer and it will become easier with practice. Doug gave the prayer today and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Kay Brouwer, Secretary