

## MINUTES of October 15, 2015

**Members present (11):** Brian Daugherty, Allen Fisher, Alan Fletcher, Cedric Lofdahl, Brenda Mitchell, Hassan Selim, Jim Siegling, Todd Thalblum, Joan Thaler, Nathan Williams, and Jen Yukl

President Todd Thalblum called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

### INSPIRATION

Brenda Mitchell shared the following reflections, by Erika Marksbury, about transformation.

Artist Pedro Reyes looked hard and listened closely where he lived. He looked hard at the 6,700 guns he had collected, a fraction of what authorities seized in Ciudad Juarez as part of the Mexican drug cartel violence.

He thought about the lives those weapons had taken, the families destroyed. As he looked, he heard in his head a requiem for the loss of life. He began transforming those guns into musical instruments. He said his project was not just a protest, but a proposal to make music because music is the opposite of violence. He wanted his project of transforming weapons into musical instruments to symbolize the transformation he hopes for the people of the world...a transformation to God's new way.

Making weapons into musical instruments is not artist Pedro Reyes's first project like this. He also melted 1,527 donated weapons to make as many shovels to plant as many trees. A vision as old as the prophet, who said one day we would beat swords into farming tools; we would end our study of war. Not protest, but proposal—bringing life from death.

What if it's not swords or shovels that make our gardens grow, but the creative energy invested in transforming them? The energy seeps into the soil and brings forth life. What if it's not the transformed guns that make the beautiful music, but the sorrow of the memory those guns carry? The sorrow is finally heard, as someone holds the instrument gently and calls the notes from it. What if in everything, in everyone, there is a story that needs telling, a soul that needs affirming?

We protest. We say no to violence in our language, in our neighborhoods, in our investing, in our theology. But transformation doesn't happen just by saying no. A new world doesn't come about through denial. Saying no to violence is only part of it. Saying yes to one another—to creativity, possibility, and divine imagination—is the life-giving part.

So, instead of protest, a proposal: Let's stand up and look around. Let's listen closely and see deeply. It will be the exception when someone says that peace is impractical, that hope is naïve. When that happens, we'll turn to practical matters. We'll ask, "If we look deeply, what can we discover? What in our own lives can we transform? If guns can become flutes, can hurts become compassion? Can anger become energy? Can fatigue become stillness? Or doubt, openness? Or clutter, generosity?"

With all the faith and courage we can summon, may we embrace God's new way.

Erika Marksbury, *Daily Bread*, August 18 and 19, 2015

### MINUTES of September 17, 2015

Motion made by Cedric Lofdahl to approve as submitted – Second by Joan Thaler – Carried.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE – Alan Fletcher, Treasurer**

- Financial Report:** Itemized Receipts & Disbursements – 9/17/15 thru 10/15/15 – reviewed.  
Cash balance as of 10/15/15: \$17,402.62 [Checking = \$891.47 / Money Market = \$16,511.15]  
Motion made by Nathan Williams to approve financial report – Second by Brenda Mitchell – Carried.
- Approval of new delegates/members:**  
There was one new individual added this month, as listed under "Receipts" in the financial report. Also, two new faith community checks were received today (not listed in tonight's financial report).  
Motion by Alan Fletcher to approve these three delegates – Second by Nathan Williams – Carried.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE – Brian Daugherty, Chair

### 1. **Children of Abraham:** Brian reviewed plans for the following programs:

#### **Among the Traditions:**

- “Kingdom of God” – Sunday, Nov. 15 (2-4 pm) – Coe College, Keslar Auditorium, Hickok Hall  
Presenters: Todd Thalblum, Taha Tawil, and Fred Shaheen

#### **Between the Traditions:**

- “The Crucifixion of Jesus? The Messiah? Who Died on the Cross & Why?” – Sun., Nov. 8 (2-4 pm) – Coe College, Keslar Auditorium in Hickok Hall – Presenter: Brian Daugherty
- “Trinitarian & Unitarian Views of the Divine” – Feb. 21, 2016 (2-4 pm) – Mount Mercy Univ., Flaherty Community Room, Basile Hall – Presenter: Brian Daugherty

#### **Within the Tradition:**

A program is being planned. The topic being considered is “Marriage Today” from Roman Catholic, Lutheran (ELCA), and Orthodox Christian perspectives.

### 2. **Ethical Perspectives on the News:**

Cedric Lofdahl noted that 70 programs are now available on YouTube (over 3000 views). The most popular program at this time is “Prayer in the People’s House”.

EPON program schedule (Oct. 18 through Dec. 6): “Wealth Disparity” (10/18); “No Labels: Principles vs. Compromise” (10/25); “The Safety and Risk of Children” (11/1); “Cedar Rapids Gun Violence” (11/8); “The Ethics of the Selection Process at the University of Iowa” (11/15); “The Right to Die” (11/22); “On Line Education” (11/29); “Pharmaceutical Pricing” (12/6)

### 3. **University of Religion:** Nothing currently scheduled. Please send suggestions to Brian.

## EVENT COMMITTEE – Charles Crawley and Allen Fisher, Co-chairs

### 1. **Thanksgiving Service: Monday, November 23 (7:15 pm) – Islamic Center of CR** **“Gratitude & Hope in Violent Times” / Guest Speaker: Dr. Carlos Grant, Metro HS Principal**

Planning details from last meeting were reviewed with the following updates.

- Time change: Note that previously announced start time has changed to 7:15 pm, due to daily schedule at Islamic Center.
- Reminder of deadline to submit faith tradition readings to Todd: November 1.
- Flyer: Draft reviewed and a couple revisions suggested. Final version will be emailed soon.
- Offering: In our last meeting we considered donating proceeds to Family Promise of Linn County (FPLC), a nonprofit and non-denominational organization for families in transition. Since then, their Linn County branch has temporarily shut down. Decision was made to give proceeds to the Linn Area Community Food Bank, as we have in past years.

### 2. **Annual Meeting & Dinner: Thursday, December 17 (6 pm) – Mount Mercy University**

- Cost of dinner and exact location at Mt. Mercy are not yet determined.
- Email notification will be sent out when these details are confirmed.
- Further annual meeting discussion regarding bylaw changes and formation of nomination committee is found in these minutes under “Other Business” on page three.

### 3. **Holocaust Commemoration: will be in April 2016 at Christ Episcopal Church**

Todd is working to get the date and speaker confirmed.

## COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE – Brenda Mitchell and Jen Yukl, Co-chairs

1. **Welcome letter for new members/delegates:** Brenda will email draft to board for review.
2. **Newsletter:** Printed today at Christ Episcopal. Folding and labeling is planned for tomorrow.
3. **Website:** Nothing new to report. Jen continues to update this.
4. **IRCLC Facebook page:** No update. Hassan is to create and make posts.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. Annual Meeting items:**

- **Bylaws:** The assembly at the 2015 Annual Meeting will vote to ratify the proposed changes accepted by the board at our March meeting.
- **2-year officer terms ending:** It was noted that officer elections for vice-president and secretary will be voted on this year.

- **Another proposed bylaw change suggested:**

Make these changes (in bold below) to Article VIII - Committees, Number 1:

A Nominations Committee of not fewer than **three (3)** ~~five (5)~~ members shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors. No more than **two (2)** ~~three (3)~~ members of this Committee shall be members of the Board of Directors.

Motion was made by Cedric Lofdahl to accept this change to the number of members required to serve on the nominations committee and to present this for ratification at the annual meeting in December – Second by Jim Siegling – Carried.

- **2015 Nominating Committee chosen:** Members from the board will include Todd Thalblum, Joan Thaler, and Nathan Williams. Todd will contact Bill Mulcahey and Fred Shaheen to confirm them as non-board representatives on this committee.
- ### **2. Request from Dr. Joy Lapp, Associate Professor of Religion, Iowa Wesley University:**
- Dr. Joy Lapp will be teaching an “Introduction to Religion” course in the spring and would like to develop a service-learning project for her students. The students could assist with newsletters, programs, publicity, research, etc. It would be a small class and would be able to travel to Cedar Rapids regularly throughout the spring semester. Todd noted that he has worked together with Joy on projects like this with Temple Judah. Consensus of those present was to reply affirmatively to this offer. It was also suggested that we invite Joy and any students that will be taking her class, if she has student information yet, to our annual meeting. We would cover the cost of dinner. Jen will contact Joy to let her know.
- ### **3. Inspiration for next meeting:**
- Ashok Chawla has volunteered to provide the inspiration at our annual meeting on December 17.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS of events, sponsored by other organizations, in the Cedar Rapids area**

- **Intersections – Fri., Nov. 6 (11:45 am to 1:00 pm) – First Presbyterian Church – Cost, \$10**  
**Topic:** “A Proud Tradition” **Presenter:** Chief Justice Mark Cady, Iowa Supreme Court  
**Registration required:** Email [crintersections@interfaithallianceiowa.org](mailto:crintersections@interfaithallianceiowa.org) or call 319-364-6148  
[See <http://interfaithallianceiowa.org/events/intersections/> for more details about topic and presenter.]

### **Next Meeting: Annual Meeting & Dinner on Thurs., Dec. 17 at Mt. Mercy University (6:00 pm)**

There is no November meeting because of the Thanksgiving Service at the Islamic Center on Nov. 23.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Yukl, Secretary