

INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL OF LINN COUNTY

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 15, 2014

Members present (14): Rodney Bluml, Charles Crawley, Brian Daugherty, Allen Fisher, Alan Fletcher, Susan Liddell, Cedric Lofdahl, Brenda Mitchell, Bill Mulcahey, Hassan Selim, Jim Siegling, Todd Thalblum, Joan Thaler, and Jen Yukl

Guest (1): Meaghan Hunter

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

INSPIRATION

Hassan Selim shared the following. He also recommended the book noted below the passage.

According to Salim b. Abi al-Ja'd,

Jesus, the son of Mary, said,

"Work for God and not for your stomachs. Look at the birds: they rise up at dawn and enter into the evening having neither planted nor harvested, yet God provides for them. Now if you say to me,

'Our stomachs are so much larger than those of birds,'

look then at the oxen, the wild beasts and the donkeys; they neither plow nor harvest the earth, yet God provides for them as well. Beware of the luxuries of this world, and fear them, for the luxuries of this world are filth in the sight of God."

[From the book, *Walk on Water –The Wisdom of Jesus*, by Hamza Yusuf]

NATIONAL PREACH-IN on CLIMATE CHANGE

Chasing Ice – a documentary on climate change – Beems Auditorium, CR Public Library

Thursday, June 26 – 6:00 to 8:30 pm [Held in association with the Cedar Rapids Baha'i community]

Discussion and light refreshments will follow the film.

Meaghan Hunter, from the Cedar Rapid's Baha'i community, shared how her congregation is working at the local level with the national organization, Interfaith Power & Light (www.preachin.org). This organization's 2014 National Preach-In on Climate Change campaign is working with many faith traditions to promote positive action in response to climate change. Their website offers a free "Preach-In Kit" with instructions and materials to get involved in this crucial issue. *Chasing Ice* documents the melting arctic glaciers which will affect our future in so many ways (population, economics, etc.).

MINUTES of April 17, 2014

Motion by Bill Mulcahey to approve as submitted – Second by Brian Daugherty – Carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Alan Fletcher, Treasurer/Chair

- 1. Financial Report:** Itemized receipts & disbursements – 4/17 thru 5/15 – provided and reviewed.
Cash balance as of 5/15/14: \$16,343.58 [Checking = \$1,564.18 / Money Market = \$14, 779.40]
- 2. Proposed Budget for 2014:** Draft reviewed and accepted into records. Alan explained that this would normally be submitted at the annual meeting. Three budget line totals include amounts that should have been paid in 2013. These details are included in the draft and noted below:
 - Rent: \$1,400 – includes \$200 past due rent from 2013
 - Closed captioning for EPON: \$3,800 – includes \$900 for services rendered in 2013
 - Linn Community Food Bank: \$824 – collected at 2013 Thanksgiving Service

Budget discussion continued regarding the following:

- Sponsor for EPON closed captioning: Cedric Lofdahl needs assistance in finding sponsor. Charles Crawley will ask Rockwell Collins. Quaker Oats suggested as another possibility.
- Adding budget item line for Thanksgiving Service: Event Committee suggested setting this at \$700 (or \$1,000) to hire a high-profile speaker. Discussion tabled until August meeting.

FINANCE COMMITTEE continued...

3. **Greater CR Community Foundation:** Interest earnings check of \$487 received today, but not yet recorded in financial report of receipts and disbursements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE – Brian Daugherty, Chair

1. **Children of Abraham: Between the Traditions**

It was noted that the May 4th event, *How Each Religion Sees the Other*, was successful with good discussion. Attendance was down a little.

Special interim event: A flyer was provided.

“Hearing the Prophetic Voice” – Reading the Book of Isaiah through Time & Traditions

Presentation by Chris Seeman of Walsh University, North Canton Ohio

Sunday, June 8 – 2:00 to 4:00 pm – Coe College (Kesler Auditorium, Hickok Hall)

Schedule of remaining events: All dates are on Sundays / Time – 2:00 to 4:00 pm

- August 24 – *Schools of Thought: Differences Within Each Tradition* – at the Mother Mosque
- November 2 – *Concepts of God* – at St. George Eastern Orthodox Church

[Speakers at all events: Fred Shaheen, Taha Tawil, and Todd Thalblum]

2. **Within the Tradition:** A new type of series is being planned. Each series will examine the differences within one given religious tradition. Christianity is the first and may occur this autumn, with possible speakers being Bill Mulcahey, Cedric Lofdahl, and Fred Shaheen.

3. **Ethical Perspectives on the News / Sundays, 11 am on KCRG, Channel 9:**

Cedric Lofdahl provided copies of the current program schedule. We have a new moderator, Heather Hayes, and a new member on the planning committee, Leon Tabak. One of the producers will be loading programs to YouTube. Added note from Jen Yukl: The “IRCOF LC” YouTube page can be accessed through a link on the TV Program page of the IRC website.

Addendum: A revised schedule, emailed on May 21, notes some date changes and gives scheduling information through July 6. The following program list incorporates these changes.

Are We Becoming an Over-medicated Society (5/18); *The End of Affirmative Action* (6/1);

When Johnny Comes Marching Home (6/8); *The Ethics of Bankruptcy* (6/29);

No Tolerance Policy in Schools (7/6)

[Note: EPON will be bumped on May 25 by the Indy 500 and on June 15 & 22 by the World Cup.]

4. **University of Religion:** Brian Daugherty plans to make some contacts for this over the summer.

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

1. **Thanksgiving Service – Monday, Nov. 24 (7pm) – at Unity of Cedar Rapids:** Susan Liddell is coordinating arrangements. Unity’s music director, Nina Swanson, will assist with the music. (See note under Finance Committee / Budget discussion regarding proposed plan to hire speaker.)
2. **Annual Meeting – Thursday, Dec. 18 (Dinner at 6 pm) – at Islamic Center:** Hassan Selim confirmed that this date and time works for the Islamic Center.

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

1. **Newsletter:** Plan is to complete in next couple weeks and mail out in June. Tom Capo will write an article about the workshop he and Rodney Bluml led at the April 23rd summit, *Building an Inclusive Community, One Neighborhood at a Time*. Holy day listing, covering June through September, was reviewed to determine those to be included in this section of our newsletter.
2. **Website status:** Members of the Communication Committee met on May 10 to go over the basics of posting items. Jen has started loading information.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Report on workshop titled “Beyond the Pews” – led by Tom Capo and Rodney Bluml – during April 23rd summit, *Building an Inclusive Community, One Neighborhood at a Time:* Rodney shared the following feedback from the 30 participants who attended the workshop.**

OTHER BUSINESS continued...Feedback from “Beyond the Pews” workshop:

- How do newcomers to Linn County get invited to join worshipping communities?
 - What outreach does the IRC engage in, especially with the local media?
 - Hire an overseer for communication efforts to keep consistent and effective.
 - Create information, perhaps a flyer which lists worshipping communities that are LGBT welcoming/friendly. Create a forum for LGBT to share with faith communities what their experience has generally been and how they can be better pastored.
 - Focus on engaging social media in order to attract young people to faith.
 - Have a Twitter Account for Ethical Perspectives.
 - Outreach and inclusion of populations that cannot easily get to worship sites. What resources are available?
 - Create an information source where worship communities self-identify their personality/charism/strengths for distribution to newcomers and seekers.
 - How can persons respond to blatant prejudice? Is the IRC a body that people can appeal to for advocacy?
 - How will worship communities/IRC get involved in conversation on school-to-prison pipeline, as reported in the Civil Rights Commission survey findings?
 - Request made for more IRC/faith community visibility in local community capstone projects, such as Habitat Housing. Let’s keep working side by side; this has been dubbed the “Theology of the Hammer”. Perhaps IRC can sponsor a few of these kinds of projects to promote togetherness.
 - At the IRC Thanksgiving Service, consider adding a challenge/purpose/declarative statement about the need to do interfaith work (its importance and significance). The rite has grown stale. How can we make it transformative for participants: ritually, shared statements, actions? How can the IRC inspire people to want to do interfaith work? Maybe there is a place for art, a film clip, or drama to bring the themes alive. Think outside the box. Don’t fear the creative tension.
2. **Appointment of Vice President:** Brief discussion about filling this vacancy until the end of the current VP term (Tom Capo moving). Tabled until August meeting.
 3. **Inspiration for next meeting:** Brian Daugherty volunteered.

ANNOUNCEMENTS of other events in the Cedar Rapids area

1. **Experience the Word Come to Life – a Presentation of The Saint John’s Bible – Viewing through June 8:** Prairiewoods / Details and hours at www.Prairiewoods.org
2. **Healthy Congregations Facilitator Training – Thurs., May 29 & Fri., May 30 (9am–5pm):** Unity of CR, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE / Register by May 15 at www.MarthaCreek.com
3. **Extraordinary Leadership in Healthy Congregations – Saturday, May 31 (10:30am–4:30pm):** Unity of CR, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE / Love offering; no registration required / See www.MarthaCreek.com
4. **“The Work” of Byron Katie, *Living in Joy – Loving What Is* – Sunday, June 1 (Noon to 3pm):** Unity of CR, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE / No registration required; donation / See www.MarthaCreek.com
5. **Intersections – next civil dialogue & luncheon – Friday, June 6 (11:45am–1pm):** *Unpacking Iowa’s Civil Rights Law* with Beth Townsend, Iowa Civil Rights Commission Executive Director See <http://interfaithallianceiowa.org/events/intersections/> for details about registering for lunch.
6. **Middle Eastern Lunch (\$5) & Presentation, *The Egyptian Revolution of 2011: Then & Now*, given by Hassan Selim – Noon, Sunday, June 8:** Christ Episcopal, 220 40th St. SE (lower level of church)
7. ***Chasing Ice* – 2012 documentary on climate change by Jeff Orlowski – Thursday, June 26 (6 to 8:30pm):** Beems Auditorium, CR Public Library / Held in association with the Cedar Rapids Baha’i community / Discussion and light refreshments will follow the film. / More details found in these minutes under “National Preach-in on Climate Change” with guest presenter Meaghan Hunter.
8. **6th Annual Prayer-a-thon Consciousness and Fund Raiser – 6pm, Fri., July 11 to 10am on Sun., July 13:** Unity of CR, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE / Theme: “Let Your Light Shine”

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, August 21 (7:00 pm) at the Ecumenical Community Center

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm: Motion to adjourn by Allen Fisher – Second by Charles Crawley – Carried

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Yukl, Secretary