

CARBONDALE INTERFAITH COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes for August 27, 2013

*The purpose of the Interfaith Council is to make God's love visible in our community by fostering interfaith cooperation, sharing religious experiences, engaging in service, discovering unity while respecting differences, and speaking with courage and strength for justice.
(Statement of Purpose adopted c. 2001)*

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm at the Church of Saint Francis Xavier by Luke Tolley. The minutes for May were approved. There were no June or July minutes to approve because the Council did not meet in those months. There was no treasurer's report available for review. No major financial news is expected, but for informational purposes, the other officers will contact the treasurer for an update on the Council's finances.

The Peace History Society is holding its annual conference in Carbondale this year. The conference will be held on October 24-26 with a theme of "Envisioning Peace, Performing Justice: Art, Activism, and Cultural Politics in the History of Peacemaking". Registration is required for most of the conference, but several events are open to the general public such as the opening ceremony, the keynote address, and a University Museum exhibit.

Nonviolent Carbondale is organizing an 11 Days for Peace series to coincide with the Peace History Society conference. This series will run from October 18 through October 28 with the conference itself filling three days of the schedule. The Carbondale Interfaith Council, our member faith communities, and the general public are invited to participate by submitting event proposals online at nonviolentcarbondale.org. The deadline for proposal submissions is September 12.

Diana Brawley Sussman, Ron Naverson and Betsy Herman will participate in a panel presentation as part of the Peace History Society Conference, focused on the 11 Days for Peace, Compassion and Food Justice programs coordinated by Non Violent Carbondale in the past few years. This presentation, titled "Compassion and Mask-Making: Putting a Face on Carbondale's Community" is scheduled for Friday, October 25 from 2:45 to 4:15 pm in the University Museum Auditorium. All are invited to register at the conference and attend this special local presentation.

Mike Heath from Good Samaritan reported on changes in the number of individuals and households served between last fiscal year and this fiscal year. The most significant change was that numbers for the program to prevent homelessness increased by 72%. Shelter provided also increased by 1.8%, but this number tends to fluctuate 1-2% in either direction because the shelter is always full. Upcoming fundraisers include a golf scramble on September 21 in Murphysboro and a two day talent show / talent search for Southern Illinois which may be donating proceeds to Good Samaritan.

For Kids' Sake is now accepting registrations for its 3rd Annual 10K/5K Run/Walk-a-Thon. The event will be held on Friday, September 27 at 5:30 pm for the 10K participants and 6 pm for the 5K participants. Individuals or teams that raise or donate \$200 or more will receive For Kids' Sake athletic pants. All proceeds benefit orphanages and schools in Bangladesh. For more information, call 618-525-5044 or email info@forkidssake.net.

The Council discussed finding ways to encourage dialogue among our members about our faiths and beliefs so that we may learn more about each other and our diverse traditions. This was done at times in the past but has since fallen out of practice. This could take the form of one person at each meeting

taking a few minutes to share a few words about their tradition. One way to do this would be to have someone from the meeting's hosting community offer a tour of their facility and give a brief talk. Someone expressed concern that this may leave out groups that have no space of their own or a space that isn't well-suited to a meeting of the Council. In such cases, one option would be to have a meeting at Gaia House Interfaith Center since hosting groups without their own building is one of the services that Gaia House provides to the local community.

The Council also discussed reinstating a monthly calendar that lists when member organizations volunteer to collect canned and dry foods, tarps, blankets, and other donations to Good Samaritan. The current list includes Church of Saint Francis Xavier (February); First Christian Church (March); Congregation Beth Jacob (September); Church of the Good Shepherd (October); Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship (November). Smaller groups may wish to share a month to ensure that more donations are collected and delivered during that month.

The "Duffers", in collaboration with the University Honors Program and the Department of Philosophy, are pleased to announce the upcoming visit of John Caputo to Carbondale and the SIU campus on October 7-9. Caputo is a post-modern thinker who explores the very roots of religious thinking and asks compelling questions along the way. He will be lecturing on October 7 and 8 and will be available for lunch and dialog at noon on October 8 at First Christian Church. This event will be particularly oriented to the interfaith community and may have a limited audience. For more information, contact Ken Starbuck at 618-942-3986.

The Council paused to reflect on the conflict in Syria and send our hopes and prayers for an end to suffering and the coming of peace.

As discussed at a previous meeting, the Spirit of Christmas program was recently unable to serve the Women's Center due to insufficient donations. Spirit of Christmas is talking to local churches about additional support in the hopes of bringing the Women's Center back into the program.

Matthew Bearden invited the Council to learn about and participate in Interfaith Power and Light, an interfaith project promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and ecological sustainability.

The Hindu temple will soon be having a celebration. The event earlier this year celebrated the opening of the temple proper. This celebration will be a fundraiser for the construction of the community center associated with the temple. People interested in attending are invited to contact the Hindu temple or talk to Betsy Herman (who informed us of the event).

Gaia Houe Interfaith Center will be having a special event in honor of its 70th Anniversary on October 12 at their building and grounds located at 913 S. Illinois Ave. The details are in the process of being finalized and will include a dinner, live music, and a dialogue about the history of the organization. For more information, contact Treesong at treesong@ourgaiahouse.org or 618-525-0625.

The next meeting of the Carbondale Interfaith Council will be on Tuesday, September 24 at 6:30 pm at Church of the Good Shepherd. Future meetings are scheduled for October 29 at Gaia House (potluck) and December 3 at Congregation Beth Jacob. The November meeting will be replaced by Carbondale in Thanksgiving on November 19 (Location TBA).

Meeting minutes submitted by Treesong, secretary of the Carbondale Interfaith Council.