

CARBONDALE INTERFAITH COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes for December 3, 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 Congregation Beth Jacob by Luke Tolley, President of the Council.

Carbondale in Thanksgiving was held at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) this year. The event was well-attended, included representatives of many faith communities, featured a talk by SIU Chancellor Rita Cheng, and raised several hundred dollars and some dry/canned food for Good Samaritan. Anyone who has photos of the event is encouraged to submit these photos to Treesong for inclusion on the website. Pastor Katherine Graves said that she might know of someone who took photos and would see if the photos are available.

Mike Heath, Director of Good Samaritan Ministries, was unavailable due to a schedule conflict. This year, instead of giving out Christmas baskets, Good Samaritan gave more food. "Souper Bowl Sunday" is coming up on February 2 with Good Sam and the Murphysboro food pantry doing collections.

Harry Treece, Treasurer of the Council, reported that there was no major treasury news. Recent outgoing payments have consisted of the online outreach (website/newsletter), money moved to the Ralph Anderson Interfaith Dialog fund, and a payment to Good Sam. Recent incoming payments have included dues from member faith communities. This led to some discussion of several faith communities that drifted away from the Council over the past year or two and how we can reach out to them to address any concerns and invite their renewed participation.

Betsy Herman reported that she had checks and coins from UNICEF totaling \$639.86 from the Trick or Treat For UNICEF event. There is another \$98 or so on the way.

Spirit of Christmas has been preparing for the big day when the gifts are distributed. They received 761 names this year. Lowes indicated that next year, they would be willing to donate the bags used for the gifts if we submit a letter on Council letterhead. Congregations (and other faith communities) are welcome to take names next year and provide more children with holiday gifts. Dia Parr will have a full report about Spirit of Christmas in January.

Upcoming events include a Hanukkah event on December 4; a Call for Artists for the For Kids' Sake art auction; the Southern Illinois Alternative Gift Fair on December 8; a "Christmahanukwanzadan" holiday part at Gaia House on December 8; a Marriage Equality forum at Church of the Good Shepherd on December 12; Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (local observance January 23); and the Souper Bowl collection for Good Sam on February 2. Members of the Council are invited to submit details about these and other interfaith events to Treesong for inclusion in the Council newsletter.

The next meeting of the Carbondale Interfaith Council will be on Tuesday, January 28 at 6:30 pm at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

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