

**Park Avenue Faith Community
Collaborative Meeting
May 22, 2008**

Attending:

1. Brenda Banks, *Angels on Wheels*
2. Jodi Cooper, *Mosaic Community Development*
3. Rita Forney, MOSAIC (www.mosaicinfo.org)
4. Christian Gray, *Mosaic Community Development*
5. Brittany Hanson, *Mosaic Community Development*
6. Kevin Marik, *Metropolitan Community Church member & deacon*
7. Pastor Kip Mickelson, *First Baptist Church*
8. Fr. Peter Pappas, *St. John's Greek Orthodox Church*
9. Carla Petersen, *Metropolitan Community Church member & deacon*
10. Pastor Judith Rainforth, *First Lutheran Church*
11. Stephen Stout, *Good Neighbor Ministries*
12. Wanda Selzer, *First Lutheran Church member*

Overview

Members of the faith community in the Park Avenue area met on May 22, 2008. The meeting marked the implementation of the group's new format: the first hour utilized for focused task force work, and the second for updates, reports, and larger group discussion and planning.

The meeting was held at First Lutheran Church from 11:00 - 1:00 p.m. The meeting was facilitated and notes were taken for reporting back to participants. Twelve people participated in the meeting and planning session.

Copies of the previous meeting's summary (April 10, 2008) were available, as well as the summer schedule of collaborative Faith Leader Meetings. A couple of newcomers were welcomed and the meeting began with the participants breaking off into task forces. Participants worked in task forces for 50 minutes before reconvening for more thorough introductions and reports.

Task force participants were as follows:

Community Events: Brenda Banks
Brittany Hanson
Pr. Judith Rainforth
Wanda Selzer

Community Meals: Christian Gray
Kevin Marik
Pr. Kip Mickelson
Fr. Peter Pappas
Carla Petersen
Stephen Stout

As participants reconvened in the larger group during the second hour, Brittany Hanson reviewed the agenda and there was a round of introductions. As host of the meeting, Pr. Judith Rainforth, offered a few words of welcome and shared a bit of her recent journey of self and congregation examination, focusing on the importance and necessity of authentic relationships in the context of service and charity.

The previous meeting (April 10, 2008) was briefly reviewed. Having taken last month's discussions into consideration, a few developing details were outlined:

- (a) A calendar of the FL meetings scheduled through the summer is now available (fourth Thursday of each month)
- (b) The group will explore the previously discussed educational component on an *as needed basis*. Participants are asked to communicate any perceived areas of weakness or lack of knowledge within the collaboration that, if addressed via brief educationals, could be instrumental in increasing the success of the collaboration to Brittany Hanson (brittany@mosaiccd.org).
- (c) A purpose statement for the collaboration has been drafted, and is in need of critiques, feedback and suggestions. We want to ensure that all participants are on the same page in terms of understanding the purpose of the group's efforts. It was noted that this is only a beginning draft and feedback is crucial in working toward a dynamic way of communicating the who, what, and why of the collaboration. The drafted statement is listed below and also on the bottom of the meeting agenda.

***Purpose:** Bringing the area faith community together in service to the local neighborhood, each participant motivated by his or her faith perspective to respond relationally in service to pressing local needs and concerns.*

Task Force Reports & Feedback

Community Meals Task Force

The task force began their report by announcing an anticipated launch date: September 13, 2008. The group focused heavily on solidifying general logistics and identifying key information that will be included in a brochure used to gain support and recruit volunteers; this may include elements on the neighborhood context, defining the program, and expectations of commitment.

The location will be First Baptist Church and the meal will occur every Saturday at noon. St. John's Greek Orthodox Church may potentially stand in as the back-up location in the event of conflicting events (weddings, funerals, etc.). It was mentioned that in mid-summer, the task force will begin making media contacts to raise awareness of the launch and gain further support.

The parameters for faith community, organization, and volunteer involvement include varying levels of commitment. Twelve churches, each placed on a rotation schedule, will host (plan, prepare, and serve) a meal on a quarterly basis. Ten or more volunteers will be recruited to commit to regularly (monthly or more) attending meals for the purpose of building relationships and establishing a sense of continuity.

There was also a discussion on what and how the community meal times will be named; several ideas were put forth, including a naming contest for local kids. Going forward, the task force will be working on developing the above-mentioned brochure, determining more specific guidelines and commitments, and developing both training sessions and a comprehensive information packet for volunteers.

Community Events Task Force

The task force reported that it did a bit of regrouping and redefining this month, and would like to provide an opportunity for community and relationship building in the neighborhood later this summer. Like the Community Meals TF, this group set a date for an anticipated 'block party': Sunday, August 3. The block party's planned location is Hanscom Park and will kick off at 2:00 p.m. and end around 6:00 p.m.

The event will include serving food, live music, vendors (local service providers), and creative family activities. All churches and organizations involved in the collaboration will have the opportunity to set up a small booth with information about their parish and available resources; the 'vendor fee' for these participants will entail incorporating or setting up a children's or family activity at or near their booth.

The task force will be developing fliers and other forms of publicity to get the word out about the event, solicit donations, and recruit volunteers. Good feedback was given related to resources participants would be able to loan, specific creative activities for children, as well as service providers to invite, specifically related to the possibility of free health and wellness screenings.

Wrap-Up

Some task force participants will be working to accomplish specific action points before the next meeting, and will plan to report back in June. A sign-up sheet was made available for those interested in hosting a meeting at their location this summer. If interested in hosting, please contact Brittany Hanson (brittany@mosaiccd.org) for scheduling.

The next meeting is on Thursday, June 26, 2008 (11:00 am – 1:00 pm).