

NOTES

St. Luke's Public Policy & Environmental Action Team (PPEAT) meetings

Tuesday, 11 February 2020

6:00 PM, Upper Parish Hall

In attendance: Sarah Braik, Joyce Cassidy, Ralph Cordes, John Hennessy, John Leddy, Mary Linneman, Seth Nelson, Lin Parsons, Liz Parsons, Barbara Ryland, Charles Skold

Legislative and Diocesan Updates

- John Hennessy recapped highlights from the just-released MENJ weekly update below.
- The attempt to override Governor Mills' veto of the sports betting bill failed in the House. The Episcopal Church does not support gambling generally.
- Despite the Governor adding additional funds to hire more DHHS workers, the state faces challenges in recruiting and hiring.
- We discussed the campaign to overturn a new law eliminating the religious and philosophical opt-out exemption for childhood vaccinations. See the MENJ newsletter below for information on the Diocese's stance on *not* overturning this law.
 - For additional public health information on vaccines generally, check the [Centers for Disease Control](#) website.
 - Suzanne Roberts is writing an op-ed in support of keeping the enacted legislation for the *Press Herald* based on her credentials as a physician and priest.
- The Presiding Bishop will be in Bangor on Saturday, May 2nd to help us celebrate our Diocese's 200th anniversary. This event will run from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.
 - Ralph Cordes suggested that PPEAT organize group transport to/from this event.
- Lin raised a clarification question about Maine's re-instituting a primary election while the two major political parties also retain caucus systems. Seth explained how the primary and caucus system will work in the case of the Democratic Party. For more information on how this works for both parties follow the links below:
 - [Democratic Party Caucus](#)
 - [Republican Party Caucus](#)
- Liz reported that \$200 worth of carbon offsets were purchased by those who participated in the Rev. Tom Mousin's pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This represents the first instance of carbon offsets being used in connection with official Loring House-related travel.
 - We have the opportunity to craft a resolution on using offsets for all Diocesan-related travel to present to Convention this coming fall.
 - Anyone interested in helping think through how an offset program could be devised that would keep funds working within our Diocese should contact Liz.

Ongoing matters

- A date for the Wolf's Neck Farm public presentation suggested by St. Lukan Sallie Smith will soon be chosen. This will take place on a spring Saturday from 10:00 to Noon followed by a luncheon. Colin Woodard will be invited to moderate the discussion. Joyce offered to help Sarah with the panelist composition. See Sarah if you are interested in working on this event as well.
- There was general interest in offering a number of voter registration drives beyond those we have conducted in cooperation with St. Elizabeth's Essentials.
 - Lin suggested setting up tables on days when Amistad will temporarily be using the lower parish hall.
 - John suggested setting up tables during First Friday events.
 - Liz will ask Anne Schink about arranging for another League of Women Voter's Training, as we did last year. Anyone interested in helping staff a voter registration table should contact Liz.

- The previously-discussed faith and values forum for candidates in local races would need to take place in early fall. Liz will work with the Parish Office on obtaining some possible Saturday morning dates.

New/Other matters arising

- There will be a youth-led climate action rally at Portland City Hall on Super Tuesday.
- Barbara called our attention to two social justice-related events taking place at USM:
 - A presentation on [compassion and love in community building](#);
 - A two-day workshop on racism taking place in early March.
- Charles announced his candidacy for State Representative in District 38 which includes the West End and, thus, St Luke's and the Diocesan office. Anyone interested in learning more should contact him.
- [Spring Training](#) will take place on Saturday, 21 March in Augusta. The format will be somewhat different this year than in the past in that there will be a keynote speaker. See the link offered above for more information.
- We discussed organizing an Earth Day-related 10:00 AM service this year as was the case last year. We decided that Sunday, 26 April should be the date. Sarah Braik will work with Dean Shambaugh on this. Anyone interested in helping plan and/or participate in the service should see Sarah, Ben, or Liz.
- The planned screening of "Dawnland" will need to be rescheduled since it conflicts with Spring Training.
- Charles suggested St. Luke's obtain gender-neutral signage for the bathrooms on the Cathedral's lower floor. We encouraged him to approach Ben about this on our behalf.
- Joyce suggested that more information about the need for plastic reduction be included in our monthly eco-tips as well as in World Too Beautiful resources. We discussed the possibility of calling for a Lenten Plastic Fast, as have other faith communities. Joyce will do further investigation.
- Sarah met with Portland's two Sustainability Office staff members to present the [Carbon Tracker Program](#) to them. They were quite interested and are now seeking to integrate the secular version of this into the [One Climate Future](#) joint planning process between Portland and South Portland.

Next meetings (members attend one or the other; not necessary to attend both):

- Sunday, 1 March, 11:30 AM, Chapter Room
- Tuesday, 10 March, 6:00 PM, Upper Parish Hall

Dates of note:

- Wednesday, 19 February, World Too Beautiful service, 5:45 PM in Emmanuel Chapel
 - Alice Goshorn, reflector
- Tuesday, 3 March, primary election – VOTE!