



Great Falls Inter-Faith Association

March 27, 2014

Pastor Ray opened and Tom Rasey led us in a reading from James chapter 2 verse 14 and a prayer.

Erica: Recruiter for the Benefis Health Systems said that many jobs available especially in housekeeping and food services. CNA Scholarships are available. Applicants have to be able to work by themselves, need to apply by themselves. Open all year at their website: benefis.org. The online application process takes about an hour, applicants should put that they were referred by their pastor/chaplain.

Tom R from Benefis said their pastoral care team, on-call program is going well, 8 on call ministers are covering the 6-6 shift at night. They have coverage 7 days a week 24 hours a day. Haven't had any issues. Tom is recruiting ministers for the next class, they have 4 so far. They are having their next class in April.

Shelia read the minutes.

Udo asked for reimbursement of \$65 to pay for the website sponsor. Fred moves, Tom seconds. No opposition.

Kristy on Youth: Submitted seven grant proposals so far, and had conversations with the county about their responsibility for the expense in shelter care. We used to have shelter care and a few years ago they weren't interested in doing it again, but now they would be, hopefully the cost could be shared by grants, faith based communities and the County. The detention center is definitely interested in having shelter care and they already have a 24 hour center. They contacted a church that has a home and they want to shelter 18-20 years olds.

Fred on Tumbleweed: Billings center is in full operation. They have 4 different funding sources now and were donated two houses by a church. They are interested in coming to Great Falls to talk with us about how Tumbleweed operates. Kalispell and Missoula now have programs and Sherry overseas those as well as Billings. Billings JDC has an offender wing and a shelter care wing. Shanna from Great Falls JDC is looking into it.

Jim: A few beds for single ladies are available, family rooms are full, and they are working at expanding mens.

Fred on update on Center West, they are in the process of putting up curtains and blinds and need a small fridge for each unit (cost \$100 each), they need seven plastic dressers beds they have gotten a pledge of \$600 from My Neighbor in Need for beds and First Pres. Church offered \$1000.00 so the beds should be covered.

In a meeting with Vets for Vets, Grace Home is still looking for funding. They need to build a comprehensive plan for the home. They currently have 200 Vets that are homeless, most of which are looking for a home. They are working with Tony Snell from Fort Harrison in Helena. Their goal is they need at least 3 years of funding in place to open. They currently have 3 Vet transitional homes in this state, they are sustainable units helping vets with their needs.

Circles: Karen Hendricks, Director of Counseling has a graduate student who is putting together a thesis on how to work with the person in need.

Fred mentioned that there is opportunity to create a network of human services in Great Falls. One of the breakdowns is the lack of cohesiveness. Major Joe witnessed this in El Paso. All the agencies providing shelter worked together. They met monthly to tell of each others needs and other agencies could help fulfill these needs. IE: One shelter needed beds and the local Rescue Mission had homeless men building beds, they worked with local day care facilities to place homeless children in the facilities while the parents were working or seeking employment. Finding recourses to help a needy family become stabilized is vital. Having them all come together helped them network resources to come up with actual solutions.

Fred: We need to bring more people and human service agencies together with GFIA meeting. He suggested we change the name to incorporate the Network of Human Services.

Ron updated us on Family Promise it is up to 11 host congregations and 5 support congregations.

Jan: Passed a flier out for Diaper Sunday. It's Mother's Day, May 11th.

I passed out flyer that Dandelion Foundation sent us a flyer for Million March against Child Abuse April 5th from 11-5 with the march from 3-4 at the Cascade County Courthouse. Also there is a presentation by Jaime Thietten "Celebrating Christ...Celebrating Life" at Holy Spirit Catholic Church on Monday April 14th at 7:30.

Ron said that the Crop Walk is April 13, 2014 at the Gibson Park Bandshell. Fight childhood hunger week April 7th - 12th, may things going on and all proceeds go to the Great Falls food bank.

Tom with GFPS said April 7th through the 12th is Fight Childhood Hunger week with Battle of the Bands Friday April 12th at Faith Center Church with a recipe and food tasting contest. Pacific Steel and Recycling is sponsoring a Swap. Student in Need is participating for more information you can check on the School District Website.

Our next meeting will be April 24th at noon.