

Meeting Minutes Pacifica Synod AMMPARO 8-14-2021

Attendees:

Deacon Roberta Wall- Our Savior's LC San Clemente, Pacifica Synod AMMPARO
Pastor Sarah Sumner-Eisenbraun- St Andrew's LC
Jaqueline Hanson- Christ Lutheran, PB
Pastor Andreas Walker-Thode- Carlton Hills
Doris Payne- San Marcos LC
Linda Howard- Our Savior LC
Pastor Bill Radatz- Retired Pastor
Antoine Cummins- Agape House
Cindy Jorstad- San Marcos LC
Donna Johnson- San Marcos LC

Opening Prayer

Mission Statement:

Pacifica Synod AMMPARO provides advocacy and support services for asylees, refugees, and migrants seeking asylum regardless of country of origin. We seek to work with ELCA congregations and with local and national agencies to assist migrant families in accessing services they may need during and after the hearing process, to conduct fundraisers to assist families during transition, to provide emotional based support such as writing letters to migrants in detention centers, to provide advocacy work with local and national organizations, and to support migrant shelters facilities in the United States and Mexico.

Pastor Sarah- Pastor shared some of the challenges St. Andrew's has encountered while trying to settle their 5 new Haitian families. One of the mom's delivered her baby in the US when she was 6 mths pregnant. They have arranged medical appts for post-partum care and to rides to visit the little one who remains in NICU. Another daughter of the same family is in Mexico. They are trying to meet the unique needs of this family. St. Andrew's was able to raise \$15,000 to help cover expenses. The priority is to find affordable housing for all families. Generally speaking, the cost of housing in San Diego is inflated. Connections with understanding and compassionate property managers and landlords is needed. Our Savior LC was able to help with clothing though diapers and wipes are an ongoing necessity. Families have access to the food bank and WIC to meet nutritional needs. The families ask only for what they need. Pastor mentioned that Catholic Charities has been extremely helpful with their guidance.

Antoine Cummins- Antoine offered the Agape House, an inclusive campus ministry outreach facility on the San Diego State campus as a possible solution for short term housing for several of the families. The house needs to be emptied, cleaned and furnished. Pastor Andreas has a modular unit that is available for anything that needed to be stored. Cindy suggested that an

Amazon wish list for Agape furnishings might be helpful. The committee will wait for further communications about upcoming work parties.

Deacon Roberta in the absence of Katrina P., mentioned an email update from Survivors of Torture. There will be 2 opportunities to take part in their virtual annual fund raiser. It will be held on Sept 14th at 8:00 and at 12:00 noon. SOT also has received resumes from professionals to provide medical evaluations for their clients for the first time since covid.

Jackie Hanson- Jackie shared the latest information on the Eritrean family that Christ Lutheran has been sponsoring since 2018. The 3 girls in the family are doing very well and excelling in their education. The oldest will start college this fall. All are fluent in Arabic, the native Eritrean language, Tigrinya and English. The 20-year-old son is having some challenges and has not been in contact with his family since the spring. There is growing concern about his safety and decision making. An attorney has been hired to represent the asylum claim. Jackie discussed Christ Lutherans past affiliation with Safe Harbors. There were differences of opinion on management of their facility. Christ Lutheran had the support of 5 other congregations to help with their sponsored family so they made the decision to unaffiliate with Safe Harbors.

Deacon Roberta- Roberta discussed the \$4000 grant money from the ELCA given to AMMPARO. That money can be used to connect churches helping with immigrant needs but not on the needs themselves. There was consensus from the group that the money can be used for interpreters and for expenses that congregations incurred holding meetings on immigration concerns. She also shared that there is a woman in detention who was able to pay a \$1500 bond but she needs a sponsor, someone or church that can be a contact for ICE officers. In addition, she needs a place to stay. Pastor Andreas will have his church consider being this contact. Cindy will post this housing need on SMLC Facebook page. On another note, Roberta will follow up with Jeff to be sure Linda and Doris are included on the email list.

Pastor Bill- Pastor shared that the Convention Center housed 2400 children during the months it was open. It was a model that others are using to learn how to handle a project like this well. Ninety five percent of those children were united with family or placed with sponsors.

Pastor Sarah- Pastor closed with mentioning a 5-part ELCA Advocacy Summer School series. You can join in beginning with session 3. It promises to be an informative resource on faith-based advocacy.

Next Zoom Planning Meeting: September 7th at 1000 All are invited to be a part of the planning session. The big benefit will be that you will have more input on the content of meetings and direction of AMMPARO.

Next Zoom Meeting: September 11th at 1000

Closing Prayer

Helpful Links:

ELCA AMMPARO:

<https://www.elca.org/Resources/AMMPARO#ForSynodsAndCongregations>

Pacifica Synod AMMPARO:

<https://www.pacificasynod.org/about/ministry-teams/pacifica-synod-ammparo-network/>

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services

<https://www.lirs.org/>

Survivors of Torture, International

<https://notorture.org/>

California Lifeline (Phone/Internet Discounts)

Website Link: <https://www.californialifeline.com/en> and

Phone: 1-866-272-0349 (English), 1-866-272-0350 (Spanish), 1-866-272-0356 (Mandarin/Cantonese)

Svc area: California

Eligibility: Must qualify for public assistance programs or be below 135% of federal poverty guidelines (provide copy of paystub or tax return) More information, visit:

<https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/General.aspx?id=2752#qualify>

Description: Financial Help towards cell-phone, home phone, and internet service for low-income persons. Apply online at the site below. If you have questions about your application, or would like an application mailed to you, please email LifelineSupport@usac.org

How to Apply (flyer):

<https://www.lifelinesupport.org/wp-content/uploads/lifeline/documents/How-to-Apply.pdf>

ELCA Advocacy Summer School:

<https://www.gcsynod.org/news/advocacy-summer-school>

