

Meeting Minutes Pacifica Synod AMMPARO 9-11-2021

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
Antoine Cummins- Agape House
Cindy Jorstad- San Marcos LC
Kathi Anderson, Survivors of Torture Int'l
Pastor Darin Johnson, Agape House
Pastor Manuel Retamoza, St Andrew's Lutheran
Pastor Jim Friedrich, retired pastor
Kaye Hambleton
Pastor Karla Halvorson, St Mark's LC

Opening Prayer – Pastor Karla Halvorson

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- joined us from Agape House, Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry at SDSU, where one of the Haitian families previously housed by St Andrews will move in this weekend. We are invited to celebrate with them this Sunday as they bless this family and their new location. St. Andrews was able to raise the \$20,000 needed for housing and legal fees. St Andrews has worked closely with Catholic Charities to house the other 3 families. They may bring another woman, whose child is the NICU, to stay at St Andrews. Pastor Sarah and other volunteers were able to furnish all the apartments through St Andrews and a local "Buy Nothing" group. **HELP MAY BE NEEDED to purchase/ supply** smaller items for these apartments as well as host a baby shower for the family that just moved into Agape house. Their baby is due in November. St Andrews is also celebrating the one baby who was baptized previously and 3 more baptisms scheduled.

Pastor Sarah also invited everyone to watch the Netflix documentary Crip Camp this Sunday in the Community Center: Gather to watch the Oscar-nominated documentary "Crip-Camp: A

Disability Revolution.” 4-5:30pm, either in person in the Community Center or online for discussion of the film.

Kathi Anderson, Exec Director of Survivors of Torture

Invites us to join the 11 th annual Helping Survivors Heal fundraiser. (Notice sent to you on Sept 11, 2021 from Pastor Karla Halvorson). She reports that the work of Survivors remains hybrid (in person/on line) for the safety of their clients, many of whom are children. They have had a successful vaccination campaign and are thrilled to report no Covid deaths in their clients, despite high risk situations.

Current asylum seeker statistics: More than 10,000 asylum seeking cases in San Diego county. Current success rate 8%. (For clients of Survivor’s of Torture, its 80-90%). Asylum cases very backed up, although immigration courts are open.

Kathi serves as an elected member of the state advisory program for (refugees) (?). A special meeting was held to discuss the incoming Afghani refugees. They fall under 3 categories: SIV (special immigrant visas), SIP (Special Immigrant Parolees) and Humanitarian Parole for Afghanis. The later are not eligible for federal services and are admitted only for 2 years, during which they are expected to apply for asylum. Quick overview of the numbers:

The new guidelines for immigrant courts are Last one in, first one out, so all Afghani asylum seekers will now come before previously scheduled asylum cases. Some pending cases have been on hold for 5-9 years.

In San Diego we are expecting 83 Afghani cases (384 individuals) in the SIV/ SIP category as of Sept 7 and 256 (cases or individuals) in the Humanitarian Parole program.

Currently there are 31,000 on 8 military bases in the US and 22,000 on military bases abroad. If writer understood correctly, California should expect 20,000 Afghanis (in the humanitarian parole program?) . Newsome has requested monies for the resettlement for Medi-Cal, cash assistance, because a large number of these will not be eligible for federal assistance, or at least not yet.

Biden administration has set new refugee number at 200,000 which does not include the Afghani resettlement and current asylum seekers.

A huge question is where they are to be housed. Some are proposing unused county, state and federal buildings. Much attention must now go to the infrastructure of resettlement programs, as, for example, California has gone from 23 resettlement agencies to 15. San Diego is second only to Sacramento in receiving these resettlers as we have 4 agencies and better infrastructure to assist.

Kathi will keep us informed and encourages us to stay in contact with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee

Services www.lirs.org to find out more.

Next Zoom Planning Meeting: has not been set, as it will depend on Pastor Sarah Sumner-Eisenbraun’s schedule. Jackie Hansen from Christ Lutheran has volunteered to assist with planning. Donna Johnson from San Marcos Lutheran and Roberta Wall from San Clemente will

continue on the planning committee. Pastor Karla Halvorson will step down from planning but remain active in the regular meetings.

Closing Prayer- Deacon Roberta Wall

Respectfully submitted

Pastor Karla Halvorson