

Witness Commission: February 5, 2024  
7:00 PM (via Zoom)

Present: Peggy Shaffer, Paula Knudsen-Burke, Sandy Flanagan, Karen Ungemach, Sandy Brubaker, Naomi Kraenbring.

1. Update on the refugee family/meeting at church- a few questions were asked and discussed about logistics with caring for the family the first few days, before they are in their home. We still have no information about where they will be staying the first few days or what time they might arrive.

2, Gerald Rhodes- Heeding God's Call A Video of their work can be viewed here. [https://www.dropbox.com/s/tm4xgdibajdta0g/Lansdale%20GVA%20walk\\_2.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/tm4xgdibajdta0g/Lansdale%20GVA%20walk_2.mp4?dl=0) Karen had gotten information from Gerald Rhodes who is the District Peace and Justice Coordinator about an organization called Heeding God's Call. This group is focused on gun violence in our country and encouraging people to begin talking about it and then encourage possible activism. Karen told them we are busy right now with the refugee family, so asked to meet with them in about a month.

3. O&M funding for this year- Karen shared that Kendra told us that our beginning amount of the fund to work with this year is \$31, 165.48. There was some discussion as to how the Witness Commission is funded and our budget.

4. Christmas Bazaar- Peggy Shaffer did reserve a date for us with the church office, Nov 23, plus the evening of the 22, for set up. We had talked about this as a community engagement project, but then heard that Vida Snavely was talking about a Fall Fest, so we want to check with her about what she was thinking, because we felt both events would be too overwhelming.

5. Pilgrimage for Peace- Naomi shared that she received information about this walk in support of a cease fire in Gaza. It begins on Feb 14. She is sharing the information in case anyone was interested in this and wanted to participate.

6. LGBTQ Inclusion- Naomi brought up that we may want to consider beginning a LGBTQ Inclusion committee, similar to our climate change, and racial justice committee. She felt that the group would be helpful in educating the church about what language is best used in addressing LGBTQ friends and difficulties they may experience and that we could work on more actively supporting people and inclusion. The idea was received well by the commission.

7. Kingian Non-Violence Training- Jason and Naomi both went through some training and thought it might be helpful to our congregation to be part of the 16 hour more involved training. With the political environment we are in and the possibility of more inclusion of LGBTQ friends, it is something we would like to move forward with it. It will be held on a weekend in April and may cost about \$7000 to host.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Ungemach, Chair of Witness Commission