

Israel-Palestine Task Force
CA-NV Conference
United Methodist Church
Minutes March 12, 2009

Present: Doug Smith (Chair), Rev. John Chamberlain, Dean Fearn, Gloria Fearn, , Peg Langer, Linda Sekiguchi, Doug Sibley, Kathy Smith, Alex Solo, Dorothy Wonder, Rev. Michael Yoshii.

Guests: Rev. Alexis Easton, Rabbi Dan Goldblatt, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb-AFSC, Esther Ho-Church of Brethren, Janet Lahr-Lewis- Bethlehem Missionary, Will McGarvey – Chair, Presbyterian IP Task Force, Noura Khouri – Arab Resource Organizing Committee, Shan McShadden-PSR faculty, Kaz Takahashi.-Community Developer Buena Vista UMC

Guests were introduced. The meeting opened with a prayer. Minutes from the last meeting were approved as corrected. (Spelling error of Michael Yoshii; Doug Sibley did not attend the last meeting.)

REPORTS:

Compassionate Listening training in Seattle report was given by Kathy Smith (full report attached).

AFSC report by Rabbi Gottlieb focused on eye-witness interviews scheduled for May and advocacy (full report attached).

Rabbi Dan Goldblatt discussed creating an interfaith group, “*Faith in Peace*”, to support efforts to foster peace in the Middle East

Revised Mission Statement draft was presented by Rev. Michael Yoshii framed upon the Circle of Concern. For lack of time, focus on the statement was deferred to the next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Sabeel Prayer Wave is every Thursday at noon.

Missionary Janet Lahr-Lewis reported on current conditions in Palestine.

She stated that traumatic stress is causing Palestinians to turn on each other; Education in the U.S. is still necessary and we can help by insisting that Holy Land travel by UMC members & clergy follow guidelines in the book of resolutions.

She’d like to see liaison work among protestant churches partner with the Eastern churches. Some Muslim villages are resistant to our work with Jewish organization & education is needed for them to understand interfaith efforts.

Help is needed to support the Mar Elias Education Institute (university) building in Nazareth.

(full report attached)

ACTION

- MSP Commit \$700 for Compassionate Listening training out of the Education line item Task Force budget to be distributed at the discretion of the chair.
- MSP Designate \$500 for scholarships for popular education on Israel/Palestine peace advocacy.
- MSP Designate \$500 for Task Force sponsorship of eye-witness hearings planned by AFSC. Further: Encourage congregations to attend.
- MSP Work to form coalitions with Jewish organizations, Christian and Muslim based on the concepts of *Faith in Peace*, as presented by Rabbi Goldblatt. Further: Encourage the support of the Bishop and Judicatory leaders within the UMC for this work.
- MSP Authorize Rev. John Chamberlain and Doug Sibley, representatives of the Board of Church & Society, to work with Janet Lahr Lewis and Will McGarvey to form joint resolutions regarding Israel/Palestine