

MISSION COMMITTEE MINUTES
Meeting of December 2, 2009

Members Present: Linda Becker, Sharon Portman, Betty Thompson, and Pastor Daniel Jimenez.

Members Excused: Annie Lugo, Juan Jose Echeverria, Ava Steaffens, Jim Steaffens

Guest: Vanessa Combs/Amigos Program Director

FOR SESSION APPROVAL:

First Presbyterian Church to be the recipient of funds to then be distributed for the purpose of supporting Antoinette Ngiama, the sister of Jeanclaude Manuga.

Linda called the meeting to order and Betty opened with prayer. Linda volunteered to take the minutes of the meeting. Minutes of the October 21, 2009 committee meeting were approved as submitted. There was no meeting in November.

As Vanessa Combs was with us and is in charge of the church's facilities, we then discussed the various requests that come into the church weekly and require committee approval to session before being accepted to take place at our church. As more mission-related items come before Vanessa because our church is being noticed as a downtown facility for outreach, it is necessary that we have an agreed method of procedure. After discussion, it was decided:

- (1) If a "no host" event is requested, in which the requestor would provide its own liability/insurance and director, then it would be up to Vanessa and ~~Dick~~ to decide if the event is something that the church could host, appropriateness and schedule availability.
- (2) If the event requires "sponsorship", a minimum donation of \$350 would be required (to cover security, janitor services, etc.), the committee would be contacted to consider the event and if appropriate, the recommendation would then go before ~~Session~~ for approval.

Administration Committee

Monthly reports were received to become a part of the minutes as follows:

1. Amigos - Vanessa Combs, Director of the Amigos Program, was with us and presented her report to be added to the minutes. She highlighted the parenting class taking place for the families while their children are in the program on Mondays and led by Pastor Danny. It has had a very positive response. The children's program is set and proceeding strongly. Need for more tutors was discussed.

As the Tustin PC gift for the program ends after next year, which supports Vanessa's position, she is in the midst of writing grant proposals and preparing a package proposal for potential donors. She will keep us posted as ideas develop.

Vanessa was thanked for her leadership in the program, was encouraged to meet with the committee at any time, and she then left the meeting.

2. Food Distribution – Pastor Danny reported that 368 families were served in November (only one distribution due to Thanksgiving). Because of the one distribution day, the Food Bank provided their truck so Danny and Javier could transport about 12,000 lbs. of food – approximately 6 people to a family and over 2200 people fed. The same thing happens in December due to the Christmas holiday, and the Food Bank is proposing the same plan. The committee in charge of the distribution will discuss the possibility of going to one distribution day per month instead of two, which would allow the recipients to receive twice as much food at once, and perhaps become more efficient for everyone involved.

3. Susan Johnson (our parish nurse) will continually have various classes for information/resources on nutrition and cooking ideas during food distribution time.

4. There was no report received from Arturo Diaz, counselor from Hoag.

Reports on Fall Events

The Halloween Bash was very successful. Danny reported that the “official” count registration of children was 128 plus their families. It is believed that many of the later attendees did not complete the sign-in process. Ava and Jim estimated possible 20-30 additional attendees in this category.

Alternative Christmas Market totals were mostly positive due to the lower attendance this year. Linda reported the following:

Fair Trade Coffee/Tea/Chocolate	\$146.00
Original Tea Bag Art	\$180.00
Mary Magdalene Project	\$119.00
Jewelry from Lesotho, South Africa	\$120.00
Tamale Sales	(sold out!)
Dorcas Society	\$110.00 (\$30 each given to the Care Center, Kidsingers and Pres.Woman --\$20/reimbursed supplies)

As there have been requests for last minute gifts from many congregants not prepared or present at ACM, it was decided that a follow-up sale be held on Dec. 13th after combined worship in McFarland Hall of the Fair Trade and Tea Bag art items not sold.

Wilson School Book/Dictionary report was brought by Betty, who accented the success of the Dictionary ceremony held at Wilson. The entire school was present to witness the awards to 4th and 5th grade students. Pastor Lance and Pastor Danny were present, as well as Betty, Linda and Ann Niedringhaus from the Committee. Ruben Martinez from Martinez Bookstore, who is Santa Ana's Reading Ambassador, was present and gave a very supportive speech to the recipients. As dictionaries were presented, the students were lined up by classes and pictures were taken with our FPC members. Public TV was also present and has made a presentation of the entire ceremony to be aired in the near future. The students were clearly excited about their gifts.

All who could be present were encouraged to help on Friday with sorting and setup of the books donated for the Book Fair to take place on Monday, Dec. 7th. The kids are really excited, but they do not know yet how many books have been donated and how many they will receive. The estimate is 4-5 books for each child.

The Martinez Bookstore emphasis for December was discussed and it was decided that Betty will talk with the store to see which dates are possible for them. They have offered that when our church does a book drive, they will donate 10-20% to Wilson for their library. Betty will get back to us with the dates.

The school librarian, Naomi, has planned an emphasis in March to celebrate "Reading Across America" – the Dr. Seuss theme. Pastor Lance has volunteered to wear the Dr. Seuss costume and appear at the library to encourage the children to read.

Presbytery Partnership with Limuru was updated by Linda, with emphasis on the progress of both the Girls and Boys Orphanages. Additional sponsors are still needed to support the boys now expected to be taken into the orphanage by the end of December. The girls are fully sponsored at this time. Discussion took place concerning the request from the orphanages for the gifts of animals to provide the children with protein, as well as education in taking care of the animals. The program is expected to grow to also take care of the boys' orphanage. At this time, the hope is for a cow(s) to provide milk, goats, sheep and chickens for eggs. It was decided that this was a great program, but that it would be best brought to our church in the Springtime. Linda will follow up on some questions about the price of the animals.

Immigration Training conference took place at our church on Dec. 1 and was attended by Linda, Danny and Betty. The event was very positive and much good information was shared. Possibilities for followup events at our church, both with our congregation and possibly our Amigos families were discussed and will be brought to the meeting in January.

Concerns for committee and for our church family were shared and Pastor Danny closed the meeting in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Becker, Chair and Acting Secretary

AMIGOS Report for October/November 2009

Overall: AMIGOS continues to be going very smoothly – second year is so much easier! The kids are growing closer together and I've heard nothing but very positive comments from parents about the program overall – so great news!! The biggest concern is that there are currently 14 children on the waiting list for the program, hoping to be enrolled. We are currently discussing the best way to admit all of these kids without taxing the integrity of the program. More details to come.

Tutoring with La Semilla: Going quite well. Four more tutors started this past week, so we're always hoping to add to the number available to help. Most of the kids are able to finish the majority of their homework... Alisa is doing a GREAT job helping the tutors with the individual kids and keeping everything very clearly organized. She is attempting to test the students in order to see their progression over the year in basic grade level expectations.

Snack Time: Going well! It's being run by the parents and we're cleaning out all the snacks for the next 2 weeks until they're all gone!

Parenting Class: Between 7-12 parents attending each week. One concern is that the moms that have young children don't feel comfortable staying in the class while the little ones make noise, as they feel like they're interrupting. Pastor Danny would like to look into a way to have a baby-sitter during this class time so that the parents can really benefit from the program.

Art Class: During this semester, the kids have done many projects: Name Tags, Tissue-paper Pumpkins, Spiders & Spider-webs, Footprints bookmarks, Turkey puppets, Tree of Thanks watercolors, The First Thanksgiving finger-painting books, and Gingerbread Houses. The kids have a BLAST and this by far one of the CUTEST classes to observe! It's so neat to see their individual creativity coming out in their art... Ms. Jennifer has been a fabulous addition to this program, bringing her natural talent with art.

Reading Class with Santa Ana Library: While I've been somewhat disappointed by their organization and being ready when we come in, in general, the library has been a great experience for the kids. Many didn't have library cards and now do. Also, they spend a minimum of 30 minutes reading out loud while they are there, and I've seen a marked improvement between the first time we went and now. We also get to go the library on a bus and the kids are on cloud 9 for that 3 minute ride!

Choir Class: Ms. Linda is teaching the kids various songs for the presentation on December 11th to the parents. The kids are developing their musical skills and building confidence to sing in front of their peers through various singing games that she incorporates. Very well done. Linda did mention that it's tough for her to teach such a large age range, since their abilities vary quite a bit. We are trying to remedy this situation for the coming semester.

Hip-hop Class: Ms. Julia has done a great job organizing all these little ones to learn a hip-hop dance to present to their kids. She's taught them basics of dancing hip-hop as well as their specific dance. The kids are trying new things, learning and building their confidence in their ability to do things they've never done before. A wonderful addition to the program.

Funding: We are currently funded for one more year of the program (through December 2010). We will need to find funding beginning in January 2011 of approximately \$15,000 per year to support the director position and expanding the program). I am working through the month of December on assembling potential donors and writing appropriate grant letters to these donors, along with a "package" including a short video, a pamphlet and a letter for potential donors.

Volunteers: We are still currently in need of more volunteers on Mondays and Thursdays.

Tustin Presbyterian Mission Committee: I spoke with Jere Murphy today briefly about our potential growth. I will also be meeting with the Tustin Mission Committee on January 17th at 11:00 a.m. in order to further discuss any questions or information with them. We are planning a moment for mission in the Spring in order to recruit more volunteers for the potentially larger program beginning in Fall 2010.

Schedule: Our last official class day will be Thursday, December 10th. We will have a small party on Friday, December 11th at 4:00 p.m. for all the tutors, parents, students, teachers and staff to say thank you, Merry Christmas and show off what the kids have been working on throughout the year. ☺ All are invited to attend! We begin tutoring again on Monday, January 11th. We'll be off January 18th, February 8th, February 15th, March 29th – April 1st, May 31st and finished for the semester June 10th. We will again have our special Thank-you dinner, Date/Time TBD.