

**FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS. FOOD PROGRAMS, MENTORSHIP and  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES  
6/2/21**

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR: Ashley Wilkinson-Meyer- Cokesbury United Methodist-  
Calls meeting to order at 12:09

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR: Jennifer Thompkins- Epps Center- Resource Coordinator at  
Epps, welcomes to committee

ASHLEY: Says they are excited this is a group of faith-based organizations who share  
passions, and say they see themselves as facilitators who can share ideas who can  
share from their hearts, all committed to the vitality of the community. Suggests that  
they start each meeting with a prayer; starts the meeting with a prayer for peace.

TASK FORCE CO-CHAIR CONNIE BOOKMAN- Welcomes everyone to the committee,  
this idea came about on November 22, said she was reading the paper and there was  
a suggestion that business owners, police, and licensed social workers come  
together to solve homelessness. Explains the other committees and other co-chairs:  
Housing, Healthcare, Employment/Workforce Development, Faith-Based  
Orgs/Food/Transportation/Mentorship (What if every church adopted a homeless  
family?), Legal Services/Criminal Justice, AT LARGE Committee. Gives everyone a  
copy of the Marbut Report, but recognizes it is just a guide; the committee will  
decide whether or not to follow these recommendations.. Asks everyone to be  
thinking about who else needs to come to the table.

*ACTION ITEM: Think about who else needs to come to the table and shoot Connie an  
email so they can be added.*

TASK FORCE CO-CHAIR JOHN JOHNSON – Asks everyone to close their eyes and  
imagine their most difficult client. Asks how they would help them navigate this  
client throughout the system in order to help them achieve success. It's often  
difficult because there are a myriad of services and obstacles in their way. For a long  
time we have been singularity focused but now we are taking steps to unearth all of  
these resources, and to collaborate in more effective ways. He works to prevent  
homelessness currently but also helps get people OUT of homelessness; is excited  
that now they can all align their effort to really end homelessness. Instead of being a  
mile wide only an inch deep, he can go a mile deep and an inch wide; you can focus  
on what you do best.

**INTRODUCTIONS/INVENTORY**

ASHLEY: Reminds everyone that they received a printed version of the Charter, the  
Mission/Goals, and 211's most recent resource guide. Reviewed the third point that  
we will create an inventory and a roadmap, so that in the next couple meetings we

will introduce one another and speak on individual missions. The charter is a working document, so keep that in mind.

CONNIE: Introduced the Task Force to Maggie, who is a Tulane intern assigned to review the sign-in sheets

ASHLEY: Cokesbury & United Ministries- currently associate pastor at Cokesbury UMC, connects with groups already doing focal work they are not experts in, grateful to serve in a congregation who want to serve in community, the heart of the congregation wants to serve those who are doing good work. Will soon become ED at United Ministries, a faith based NPO where they help with Rent/Mortgage, Utilities and other crisis assistance, and wants to support people in a more sustainable way. Looks to connect people to workforce development, education, affordable childcare, basic budgeting skills, etc.

JENNIFER TOMPKINS- Epps Center- Resource Coordinator- she moved to Pensacola about 7 years ago, saw the needs via panhandlers unlike anything she had ever seen, started going to Liberty Church and offering food, offering prayer, remembering someone's name. Next served at Ensley First Baptist and now at Epps. Excited to bring all the organizations together and collaborate to focus on the people everyone is trying to serve.

DR. CALVIN AVANT, Unity in the Family Ministry- works with a variety of already established groups, doesn't want to reinvent the wheel, Works with underserved populations in the community and projects. President of Epps Christian Center, also works with Pensacola Caring Hearts. Has an environmental remediation training center, basic construction and electrician training center, contract out of NOLA for these trainings, has transportation and lunch for students and a \$50 stipend each week as well (3 month program), Deep South Center for Environmental Justice assists with the program- works with Wedgewood Community for this program. Teaches residents how to collect data on toxic landfills. Operates angel tree, parenting classes to male inmates, behavior modification to juveniles.

ALICE CANNEY, Ensley First Baptist Church- Taking it to the Streets program- takes homeless people to the church to get tarps, tents, clothes, meals, sermons, and more. They also just sent 5 men to a year long addiction program. Agreed with Jennifer that it's so important to know names and dignify those who are homeless, she brought pamphlets if anyone would like to learn more. On Tuesday mornings they also have a bible study for the homeless with showers and breakfast. Also runs a seasonal women's shelter in cold months (Nov to March). They have a year long addiction recovery program for women available as well, just opened Feb 14, they currently have one guest in the building who is working hard.

MICAH DANIELSON, Community Member- Micah is retired from Loaves & Fishes, says it is important to build relationships with people who utilize these services.

BERTA & RONNIE HURSTON, Community Members- they work with food pantries in Santa Rosa Counties, want to know how they can help.

MELISSA JOHNSON, Fearless Community Inc.- Melissa moved here and saw the need, goes out daily to bring food, bring life skills, recently got a home donated, and has a 90 day program based on their goals, you can't force it. Works with other agencies to be glue in the community to bring everyone together.

JUNE LINKE, Christ Church/Citizen- Outreach committee at church, wants to help in any way she can.

AVALON MALLORY, 211- Mal is the Resource Manager at 211, which is 24/7. You can call anytime or text your zip code to get info to get help. 211 is confidential. Is here to keep her ear to the ground about what services are out there. Highest category right now is housing and shelter, as well as medical assistance and counseling, utility assistance and food assistance. Between 20-30% of the community who call for services are experiencing homelessness or at risk for homelessness. Also has Florida Veteran Support line, which is for veterans by veterans.

Question: Difference between 311, 211, and 411?

MAL: 311 is city, 211 is community info, 411 is for businesses.

Question: Are monthly reports available online?

MAL: No, but you can sign up to get them emailed.

KRISTI MCCLELLAN, Bright Bridge Ministries - Bright Bridge does food ministry, HIS PLACE (short term housing for men getting out of in-patient rehab), HIV testing, and more.

KATHLEEN SCHUSTER, Ministry Village Olive Baptist- Kathleen is director of Tender Hearts Caring Hands, which does rent and utilities assistance, food pantry, extra clothing and shoes, family food and transient bags, they also received a shower trailer they are about to be able to use. There is a huge need for services over the interstate near Olive. They are soft-testing when is the best time for the showers to be open right now. They know the homeless very well, by name over in that area.

Question: What do you offer at the clinic?

KATHLEE: Health & Hope Clinic is for under and uninsured, you can ask Sally Bergosh for more info.

JIM VCHULEK, Liberty Church: Jim is a member but doesn't represent anybody, they discontinued their homeless ministry during COVID. He is excited that we are all coming together. He is here to learn. Says we feed people, asks them what they need, prays with people, and that police sometimes just move people to another area. When he thought of people who give you the most grief on the street, he thought of someone who just really struggled. Jim wants to learn how you change someone who is used to getting money on the street every few minutes into working and getting a stable job and housing.

AUGUSTINE RODRIGUEZ, Opening Doors- is a case manager and bi-lingual. Says it can drain you, but it's optimistic because we all have a speciality and we need to remember that it's a team effort and we need to learn to be team players and the glory should be for the lord, not for an agency. etc.

RODNEY WILSON, Feeding the Gulf Coast- Two large food banks and storage facilities in Santa Rosa county, going through an expansion to add 15,000 square feet to their warehouse. Assist low income, seniors, nutrition program, food rescue where they save food that is slightly damaged, picks up food from 200 stores each week. Partners with 130 organizations to do mobile outreach and food services.

CONNIE: Please bring your pamphlets or any info for next time, we will want copies of it for all the company meetings. Also we will not be meeting via ZOOM in the future because of the importance of relationships.

KATHLEEN: Corrected her email address on the sign-in sheet.

ASHLEY: Invites everyone to add the task force to your prayer list. Making notes to know people's names- what are people's names and faces? Look for opportunities for your congregation to plug in, reach out to those on the list who are not here and encourage them to participate.

JENNIFER: Let's start getting together a list of routes where people deliver food and where it all is going.

MELISSA: Has a list of routes that go under the bridge, said she will send.

AUGUSTINE: We need to make people accountable so that people will want to change their lifestyle, think outside of the box and help them in a better way.

MEETING ADJOURNED 1:20 PM

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/FOLLOW UP**

#### **POTENTIAL SURVEY QUESTIONS:**

**What** kind of services does your organization provide?

- Food
- Counseling
- Utilities
- Rent Assistance
- Transportation

**Where are your services offered?**

Do you offer pick-up?

Do you offer delivery/mobile outreach?

**Who** do you provide services for?

(Men, women, pregnant woman, children, families)

Are these services available **now**, and if not, **when** will they become available?

What do you need in order for them to become available?

**Where** are you located, and what geographical area do you service?

Escambia County

Santa Rosa County

Mobile

Etc.

Are there any **eligibility requirements** necessary in order to be approved for your services?

Income

Job Requirements

Citizenship Requirements

Down Payments

Financial Requirements

Sobriety/Program Completion

ID Card

If you provide food services, **how much food** do you currently distribute per month while at:

1.) full capacity

2.) current capacity and

3.) what is your goal capacity for next year?

What is your mission statement...**why** are you a member of this task force?