

Minutes for Testimonies and Concerns Meeting; 9th month 06 2020

The meeting was held as a Zoom meeting and began at 8 am with the following members and guests in attendance: Connie Lewis, Beth Mufson, Dona Sorce, Sandra Herbert, Jonathan Slocum, Dee Rein, Mary Brian, Whitley Gray, Priscilla Morris, Kevin Walsh, Ellen Silbergeld, Vincent DeMarco and Paige Tilghman, Clerk.

The meeting began with an overview about concerns for workers in the poultry industry on Delmarva by Ellen Silbergeld, a professor emerita in the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, and author of “Chickenizing Farms and Food: How Industrial Meat Production Endangers Workers, Animals and Consumers” (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016. Ellen shared with us that, “like healthcare workers, those on the front lines of US Meat production are at high risk during the pandemic and that the conditions in these processing facilities are unsafe for the workers” <https://hub.jhu.edu/2020/07/27/meat-production-covid-health> A discussion followed about the efforts to bring the breach of human rights to the industry to better protect workers during the COVID 19 pandemic. The highest rates of Covid are in counties where poultry workers live. When asked what we might do to support these efforts, there were several recommendations including patronizing those companies that are taking care of their workers or not eating chicken. Priscilla Morris suggested connecting with Green America, national advocate for labor and environment best practices in industry.

Connie Lewis provided an update on the work with migrant populations at the Snow Hill Detention Center and that while visits are not permitted with COVID, a letter writing campaign continues. Katherine Johnson asked that we share information from the American Friends Service Committee and their “Free Them All” campaign to bring

attention to those incarcerated, September 9th to the 16th. We reviewed consideration of the 3rd priority, to send letter to our Governor encouraging increased resources to our prisons and detention centers to keep those detained safe from COVID 19. We agreed to bring this matter to 9th month Business Meeting with a draft letter to Governor Hogan.

We then heard from the CEO of the Maryland Citizens Health Initiative, Vince De Marco who reviewed the Health Equity Resource Communities Initiative. The Health Equity Resource Communities Initiative is a call for support to increase the state alcohol beverage tax by one cent/dollar to be used to reduce health care costs caused by alcohol overuse that includes creating Health Equity Resource Communities in locations to address poor health outcomes and create more community based support programs to address substance abuse and mental health disorders. T&C encourages THFM to consider this Initiative and sign as an endorser.

Sandra Herbert, Dona Sorce and Whitley Gray shared their participation in Quaker Voice, a legislative advocacy that aligns Quaker Values with legislative issues in Maryland. Dona serves on the Program Committee. Whitley has offered to be a liaison for THFM and to keep T&C informed of activity.

Pricilla Morris then shared her work with Historic Easton, Inc and the Asbury United Methodist Church to secure grants to restore the historic church. Funding has been secured for a massive restoration to this church. The funds will be used to repair brick work and the structural integrity of the historic building. AMU is in need of additional funds to renovate the kitchen and Fellowship Hall that has been so involved in preparing lunches and dinners for many. A GOFUNDME account "Help the Church that Feeds Our Neighbors" has been launched to raise \$75,000. <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/asbury-united->

[methodist-church-easton-md/marybrian1](https://www.methodist-church-easton-md/marybrian1) . The meeting closed with a moment of silence.

The 10th month, 04 Testimonies & Concern meeting will be held at 9 am as a Zoom. An agenda will be sent.

Respectfully submitted, Paige Tilghman