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June Meeting Focus on Food Outreach



"Food Outreach" was the topic for the June 15th meeting of the Parish Outreach Committee. Twenty-eight committee members and guests attended the third meeting of this newly formed committee.

Lori Robbins (seated left) from Cason United Methodist Church in Delray Beach shared an interesting presentation on their Community Garden. Pastor, Linda Mobley, also attended the presentation. The concept of a community

garden involves renting small plots of land to individuals or families to grow their own "organic" vegetables. For a small fee, people can become organic farmers with help and expertise provided by a master gardener. A garden is a non-threatening place for interaction among people of all ages and cultures, income levels and physical and mental abilities. All members of the garden reap the delicious benefits of fresh produce, as well as helping the community by donating a portion of their bounty to the local food pantry.

Alex Stevens (seated right above), Director of the Palm Beach County Community Food Alliance, also spoke to the committee and guests about working together to end hunger in our communities. He described the huge gap in food provided versus food needed, as well as the barriers to accessibility. For example, only an estimated 46% of those eligible for food stamps access them. The Food Alliance works to increase the capacity of the food recovery and distribution system and to support advocacy and development of community resources for issues related to food security. Alex commended those present for their work in food ministries.

Community Outreach Directory

The Community Outreach Directory is being developed. We still need to hear from some parishes that have not replied to the survey regarding what outreach ministries they provide. Another request will be distributed this week in an effort to have all parish information included in the directory. There will be other community resource and referral information included in the directory, as well as parish information. All parishes will be given a copy of the directory when it is printed.

Next POC Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Outreach Committee will be held on Tuesday, September 7 from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the Pastoral Center. The topic will be Grant Writing for Ministries. Once again, you may invite those interested in grant writing to come as your guest or as your parish representative.