

## **OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

### **Mary Howard King**

Our Outreach Committee at All Saints', until recently, has been made up of the chairpersons of our Saints' Brew Ministry, Neighborhood Life Committee, and Servant Ministries Committee. One goal for our committee this year has been to expand our membership to include others within the All Saints' community who are not committee chairs but faithful members who have a heart for outreach within our church as well as our broader community. Currently the members of our committee are Mona Warlick, Beth Harris, Dawn Bean, Rufus Van Horn, Karen Dieckmann, Harry Dieckmann, and Mary Jane Hillen. We would love to welcome more new members in 2017, so if you would like to join us please contact one of us.

We are a committee that does not meet monthly. We meet once every six to eight weeks (more if needed). We serve as a support group for the outreach ministries that are going on at All Saints' and discuss resources, ideas, concerns, and suggestions for improving outreach opportunities for all of our members. Most of the specific outreach ministries will be expounded upon in other committee reports, such as Saints' Brew, Neighborhood Life, and Servant Ministries, so I will offer general information about our outreach ministries.

Through our work and association with MUTEH (Mississippi United to End Homelessness) beginning in 2015, we were invited to participate in a software initiative, HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) that will allow agencies to coordinate their efforts in serving the homeless population in our area. Several staff members, Father Paul, and several volunteers attended training sessions on the software early in the year so that Saints' Brew could be used as an "entry point" for homeless clients. We hope this will also be helpful to Nancy Sweat in the office where people in need most often come for help first. Mona Warlick has been All Saints' dedicated volunteer working with MUTEH and other community agencies as she attends monthly meetings and shares information from those meetings with us.

Dinetia Newman and Kay Trapp continue to coordinate "Lawyers in the Parish Hall" once a quarter, a free legal clinic through the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project. They do an awesome job of recruiting volunteer lawyers (and law students) to help clients with various legal issues and of spreading the news about the free legal clinic to reach as many people as possible. This year has seen many other agencies invited to share this ministry with their own clientele base. We are always in need of assistance, so if you are interested in serving, please contact Kay or Dinetia for more information.

Father Paul introduced us this year to a new Re-entry Court program that meets once a month. This is a twelve-month program for federal probationers who are "re-entering" communities with the goal of reducing recidivism. Re-entry Court is a collaborative effort between the federal judge, prosecuting and defense attorneys, probation officers, and mental health professionals working together to ensure these citizens' re-entry into communities is successful. Those of us who attend the court sessions have been there as a "support system and cheerleaders" to encourage the participants in their efforts. As this new program continues, we hope to share more ways that All Saints' members can support the participants in Re-Entry Court.

In March our committee read an article by Tom Ehrich on “Mission Development” that inspired us to reach out to all our members regarding All Saints’ outreach ministries. Over the summer we hung large sheets of paper asking each of you to share your ideas for outreach with us. We asked you to tell us about the needs you see in our larger community, ideas for outreach projects, and volunteers for our various ministries. The sheets of paper hung around different places throughout our buildings all summer long. At the Potluck Supper in September, our Outreach Committee presented the summarization of the sheets, and we facilitated small group discussions about prioritizing these needs and ideas.

Early in the fall, the Family Resource Center invited All Saints’ to apply for a grant to assist homeless families with children under the age of 18. Father Paul submitted our grant application which was approved in October, and the grant awarded was in the amount of \$125,000. The grant will assist these homeless families in finding and paying for housing and related expenses. All Saints’ will concentrate on working with the school systems in Lee County and Tupelo, initially, to target families who could benefit from this grant. As administration of the grant continues, we will keep the parish up to date on ways to help.

We look forward to new challenges and hopefully new growth in outreach in 2017. We are always open to hearing new ideas for ways in which All Saints’ can minister to others outside our church walls. Please feel free to contact any member of our Outreach Committee with your ideas and suggestions.