

Draft

EASTSIDE INTERFAITH SOCIAL CONCERNS COUNCIL (EISCC)

P.O. Box 662, Bellevue, WA 98009

www/eiscc.net

HISTORY

To: Executive Board members

From: Sally Wing, Vice-President

This is a first take on developing a history, making use of notes compiled by Dorothy Shindler (member since 1974), 10-11-1994; and Nadine Shannon, 10-8-1996. See comments at the end of this document about actually producing a history.

Organizations preceding EISCC:

Eastside Conference on Race and Religion, 1963-1968

Since real estate offices closed when a Black customer arrived, open housing became an issue, until a ballot issue was successfully passed in 1968. Many gathered clothing, food, and medical supplies for individuals participating in Martin Luther King marches. Naomi Robinson received the Jewish Christian award for presenting Black history in schools. During this period, Rabbi Podett and the Rev. Ralph Morrell served as president.

Bellevue Ecumenical Social Concerns Committee, 1971-1972

The Rev. Dr. William Cate, along with other ministers and the wife of the rector, the Rev. Mr. Gorsuch of St. Thomas Episcopal, worked with Eastside Mental Health to obtain \$16,000 from the Medina Foundation to provide education and mental health training for ministers. Their meetings were eventually attended by parishioners as well as ministers. Participants included these clergy: Bill Welch, Doug Stewart, Wes Beach, and Geoff Ethelston.

Bellevue Ecumenical Social Concerns Committee, 1974-1976

The constitution, written in 1974, identified needs of Bellevue and the organization looked at the "Churches' Role in Mental Health" as well as "Life Enrichment of Elderly." Vietnamese refugees were arriving.

Rev. Wesley Veach (Bellevue Christian), first president, 1974; Barbara Geraci (Sacred Heart), vice-president; Rosemary Harris (Bellevue Christian), secretary-treasurer.

Doug Stewart was former chair of First United Methodist Social Concerns.

Barbara Geraci, second president, September, 1975 (other information identifies her as president in 1971-1972); no vice-president; Helen Springer (St. Louise Catholic), secretary-treasurer.

Bellevue Ecumenical Social Concerns Committee, 1977-1980

Issues included singles in church, Overlake Service League, hunger in Bellevue (food bank) and Washington with hunger awareness dinner, family violence program, East

King Council relationship, Jewish-Christian and Lutheran-Catholic dialogues. Letter written regarding anti-Jewish Glendale Golf Course incident.

Bellevue Ecumenical Social Concerns Committee, 1981-1984

Issues included Asian Resettlement Center, Hunger Awareness Dinner, Jewish-Christian Dialogue II, Eastside Family Haven, refugee needs, shelter for runaway youth and battered women and children, teenage pregnancy workshop, elderly day care, nuclear freeze, Crossroads elderly, low-income housing. Established Bellevue Emergency Services Fund along with quarterly reports from Bellevue Food Bank.

Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council

Bylaws begun in 1983, adopted in December, 1984

Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council, 1985-1987

Nadine Shannon, chair, 1985-1986

Statement to Bellevue City Council, 2-20-1986: "We plan to be in the business of MAKING A DIFFERENCE!! And so we are. Each of you are [sic] a participant in making a difference. We tend to take so much for granted even our attendance at the meetings and taking the information back to members of each of our faiths. Your questions and comments are always important in our meetings. Our executive meetings are open always to any of you who wish to attend."

Membership: each church/synagogue limited to two people; agencies have voiced but not vote.

Goal: improve the quality of life on the Eastside.

Procedures: become more visible with increased church membership; quarterly newsletter; develop and implement telephone "Pals" targeting senior citizens (with help from Coalition 100 Aging Task Force chaired by Kord Roosen-Runge); explore [possible food disbursement on weekends and shelter on Eastside.

Identify needs: no coordination of facts, no funds.

Vision of future: police aware of referral services for the needy; advocacy and intervention to enable reentering mainstream society, including money management, education on shopping and preparing nutritious meals; child care for working mothers; provision of health insurance; clearing house for information; pre-employment classes; human service panel to evaluate *input and implement decisions*.

Quarterly newsletter and a one-page emergency directory (updated yearly) were mailed to 161 Eastside congregations.

Task Forces included Aging and Telephone Pals: food disbursement; Emergency Feeding Program participation beginning in 1987.

Shelter Task Force developed a brochure.

A forum was proposed about sexual preference rights.

Bellevue Emergency Service Fund was renamed EISCC Bellevue Emergency Service Fund.

A network including Catholic Community Services, City of Bellevue Parks Department, and EISCC congregations provided hot meals Monday through Friday evenings at Crossroads.

Council members, after consulting with their respective congregations, voted to establish the Eastside Coalition for the Homeless.

EISCC presented a forum for congregation/agency information exchange with 27 congregations and nine agencies along with liaisons from the Church Council of Greater Seattle and the Kirkland Interfaith Network.

Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council, 1988-1993

Priority issue areas were: affordable housing/homelessness, families in crisis, hunger, health care/mental health, cross-cultural relationships, liveable income/employment.

Implemented were: Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council Emergency Service Fund; Emergency Services Directory (updated yearly for Eastside congregations); Emergency Feeding Program on weekends; Crossroads Community Center Hot Meals Program, Monday – Friday; AIDS/HIV Task Force; Family Task Force; H.O.P.E. Program of Catholic Community Services; Racism/Hate Crime Task Force; Job Fair Task Force Program; Congregations for the Homeless.

There is a listing of 1985-1986 and 1986-1987 programs.

In 1996, Nadine Shannon commended members of EISCC:

Diana Rogers made recommendations for disbursement of HIV/AIDS funds.

Sally Wing took minutes and prepared them for mailing, and served as newsletter editor.

Betty Spohn as membership chair maintained member names and addresses and did the bulk mailing

Jim Palmer meticulously maintained the treasury.

Mary Ann Knowles, Pat Sandbo (Sacred Heart), Dorothy Scott (St. Luke's Lutheran), and Gerry Longton (Overlake Park Presbyterian) made calls to update the Emergency Directory.

Nadine Bentsen (Cross of Christ Lutheran) created a professional emergency directory.

Babs Pingree developed a booklet, Strengthening the Family.

Pam Toelle implemented Congregations for Kids.

Tony and Marian Copeland , Task Force for Employment, updated employment in three counties weekly.

Betty Smith developed Racial Justice Workshop.

Geoff Ethelston shared responsibility as co-chair.

Joy Pocasangre began as vice-chair in 1992, presided over meetings when chairperson Hackett was not present, and served as Legislation Task Force chair.

More recent information resides with Betty Spohn and Sally Wing, to be added later. Other long-time members can also provide information about prior years of EISCC and its predecessors. This project will require the work of many persons over a period of time. I'd suggest a target date in 2010, and we obviously need many volunteers to make use of their interests and talents. I'm willing to either serve as coordinator or share that task with Betty.

Updating of history needs to include newsletter contents; development of the website and of electronic transmission of minutes; establishment of Congregations for the Homeless (and probably a chapter on CFH history), Congregations for Kids, and Sophia Way (the latter two in 2008 and 2009); revision of bylaws; development of October/November programs featuring member agencies; locations