**Migrant Ally Group Meeting Sept 21, 2017 Notes**

**Attendees:** Carol K, Laura A, Veronica C, Bruce B, Norm T, Patricia

**EVERYDAY LIVING/ EDUCATION**

**Outreach:** We discussed how this can and should happen lots of ways—not just via Open Door. Several recounted how they just approached migrants whenever they saw them out and about--at Hannafords, Field Days, music events-- and just talked with them and asked where they were from and let them know that there were people in the community ready to help. Veronica shared how happy a migrant worker was to see others he knew at Ripton Coffeehouse event who introduced themselves this way.

**Banking:** Laura asked where we were in terms of getting banks to consulate visit. Veronica said her husband was working on Credit Union and Norm said he and Cheryl M had worked with NBM. Laura rec’d that they both come.

**Tamale Making (Sun Oct 29, Methodist Church)**: Need a coordinator. Need to confirm details by next meeting. Nail down time (afternoon or later), who to invite & how, needed supplies. Bruce recommends starting after 3pm when Spookcacular (a Halloween event) is over and it is less busy downtown and he can be available. Veronica will ask two people she knows (a woman we’ve known about for awhile who makes tamales and Antonio, a migrant friend who makes even better tamales) to come and let us know what time they can do it and what supplies are needed. Laura said she’d ask Cheryl M about coordinating the project. It may be that the Quakers will take it on in a fashion similar to community suppers they host for Charter House. It could be that volunteers and migrants could come and go during a designated period of time as their work schedules permit.

**Rides:** Norm shared that they were working on refining communication. Helps to have good Spanish translators who can relay the details. Most volunteers just have cursory Spanish skills. Hard to get rides for workers to St Mike’s mass when have to commit to at least 4 hours and they may not have that much time off.

**Working with Farmers:** We discussed what others could do to support some of the things we are working on.  Veronica feels we really need people willing to go to farmers to let them know that there are people in the community who are not judging them but who want to support the workers and bring them into our larger community.  We really need to work with farmers more. And, we need people who speak Spanish to study Spanish with farmers who are interested in learning.  Anyone who wants to become involved, can contact Veronica and we can discuss how they want to be involved.

**Working with Migrants:** We discussed how valuable English language practice is to workers and to remind them of this. It translates into better jobs back home. If you know English, you can get work as translators, taxi drivers, for higher paying jobs. Veronica needs people to find used ESL books. She also reports that ESL lessons remind us to work on English (not Spanish speaking) when we are in lessons with migrants. Veronica since the meeting said there are other migrants like those working the apple orchards and Woods that don’t have transportation and need help with housing repair/cleaning and transportation/driving lessons/getting their licenses.

**Sunday Potluck @ Veronica’s:** Anyone involved in service to Addison County’s migrant workers are invited to a **potluck lunch Sept 24 starting at 11:30 am** to share experiences, gain skills and learn about new requests. It will be at Veronica Ciambra’s home (58 Seminary St Ext, at the 5 corners). She’ll be there all afternoon for anyone who wants to drop by. You don’t have to bring food. You could just stop by. The invitation is open to anyone who is ready to do something, doesn't matter what- practice English, meet farmers, provide rides, provide Spanish translation, meet workers and do social things and anything that people come up with.  But, they have to be ready to get involved and do more than talk about the issues.  What she hopes to avoid is what happened with the ESL classes that Rebecca did- people attended but most never signed up to work with an English language learner.

**Vetting volunteers:** We discussed need to be sure we get to know who is volunteering before pairing people up for lessons or rides. Veronica is getting names referred to her and doesn’t know them and wants migrants to be safe.

**CLERGY**

**St Mary’s Catholic Church:** The new priest Father Luke is very interested in helping. He’s in regular communication with Veronica and referred some people and is interested in offering a Spanish mass at some point. We discussed being sure he’s invited to the consulate visit and ask if he’d like to provide confession. If anyone wants to meet and liaise with Father Luke at the catholic church, Veronica will be happy to introduce you.  Let her know.  He's very approachable.  She can fill someone in on the issues

- how the church can better respond to workers spiritual needs

-parishioners who want to volunteer

-money

-sister group in Franklin County

-St. Michael's college

**St Mikes**: Offers a Spanish mass once a month on Monday nights. We’ve been tryingto ride migrants there that wish to attend but it can be hard for their schedules and too big a time commitment for volunteers, though Norm is still willing to try. He’s learned that St Mikes students want to help and see a chance to practice their Spanish while doing a project like repairing or cleaning a migrant’s home. We discussed the conditions of homes and need to be careful about our assumptions about what is a mess.

**LEGAL**

People were referred to Pam Marsh’s note about providing DACA support.

**NEXT MEETING**: Wed Oct 18, 4:30 pm