WTB Monthly Meeting Minutes October 26, 2014 at Jowonio School

President Betty Lamb welcomed us and called the meeting to order at 3:10PM. Patti McGuire and Gay Montague read our Mission Statement and Safe Place Declaration, respectively. Betty announced that our next meeting on Nov.23 would be devoted to the recent Seeds of Peace trip to the United Nations. She also asked for a volunteer to coordinate snacks for monthly meetings this year. Betty turned to meeting over to Daryl Files, who explained groups were to continue last month's discussions with a goal to develop a monthly program idea around each topic. Programs are needed for January, March and April meetings this year. Women who were not present last month were asked to select a topic table to join: Faith Visits, Art, Interfaith Conversations, or Empowerment of Women.

After 45 minutes of animated table discussions and a break for tasty refreshments, Shirley Wells asked each group to present its ideas.

Interfaith Conversations: Cara Steiner reported that their group had come up with some thematic ideas, but had not honed in on a specific program as yet. Areas of interest are the role of women in various religions, symbolism of water, light, and/or life cycles in different faiths, and religion and refugees (especially with respect to Islam and our local area).

Art: Sue Savion reported that Jennifer Jeffery, a local poet who was part of last April's inspiring Women's Poetry meeting, had agreed to do a WTB program on Dec. 14th, in which she would discuss writing poetry and give us an opportunity to write and share around our various holiday traditions. Jennifer is also willing to lead a WTB poetry writing group, which would meet monthly in a manner similar to that of WTB Book Club. The Art group also proposed a program for a Spring meeting focusing on local artist Claire Wilson, who incorporates discarded metal objects in her paintings. Another program possibility was a special Sunday afternoon tour of the new WCNY studio. Opportunities for smaller outings were suggested such as attending a play/talkback at The Redhouse, an Everson Museum visit for Festival of Trees or art exhibit, or a documentary /lecture at Art Rage, and volunteering for the WCNY travel auction. Among opportunities coming up are the Art Studio Open House/Sale Nov 7-8 at the Delevan Center and the May Memorial Fine Craft Show Nov. 21-23.

Empowerment of Women: This group is focusing on sex trafficking has been very active since the September meeting, gathering statistics, and attending a recent lecture at LeMoyne by Frederick Douglass' great-great-great grandson. They want to design a program around the issues of runaways and other young people who are "recruited" into prostitution. Destiny USA is a main recruiting point in our area. Many religions do not regard women as equal to men, and these attitudes may contribute to abuse. The group has been investigating legal issues such as the proposed Trafficking Victims Protection Act that would make the women victims rather than criminals. This topic generated lively interest among us all with women mentioning the role of drugs and higher risks for refugee women. The Empowerment group hasn't firmed up a program as yet, but have talked about showing a documentary and/or having a speaker (female police officer, local judge who is trying to help victims, West Side Learning Center person who deals with the issue in our community). The group also suggested a letter writing campaign to influence legislation around sex trafficking.

Faith Visitation: This group is looking at opportunities for interfaith visits outside of our monthly meetings. Betsy suggested that information be given to Judy Antoine so the information can be shared. Several current opportunities were mentioned:

* Ahmadiyya Muslim Community invitation to Seeratu-Nabi Day gathering on Saturday, Nov. 5
* Native American Thanksgiving Circle, 10 AM Thanksgiving morning, Willow Bay, Onondaga Lake Park
* Episcopal church in Baldwinsville, 11 PM Christmas Eve candlelight service or Sunday after Christmas lessons and carol service
* Sikh prayer time and potluck - (Ralph Singh) new Sikh temple in Liverpool
* St. Vincent Roman Catholic Church, Teal Ave, 9:30 am Sunday multicultural service
* Tibetan Buddhist Chanting, Zen Center, 10 am Sunday mornings
* Attending a local Quaker meeting

Shirley requested that recorders at each table send a copy of today's discussion notes to her. She also asked for a volunteer to join her, Danya, and Daryl on the program committee for this year.

Betty Lamb voiced what we all felt--it is shaping up to be an exciting year! Before adjourning, we voted to staff phones for the WCNY Travel Auction; Betty will contact the station about a date. We were urged to attend a showing of "The Other Son", a film about babies switched at birth between Palestinian and Israeli families at Lemoyne College Oct 29th. Betty also announced that WTB was invited to participate in Temple Concord's World Religion discussions. The first topic is Christianity for Jews; the next sessions are Nov. 23 at 11 am and Dec 3 at 7 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Bova, Sunday Secretary