

# Chair Notes...

November 2014



We are an active bunch, so I'd like to highlight the various meetings and goings-on in our small groups! Please find notes, below, from recent meetings.

## Next meetings:

Group A – Sunday, Nov 9th, directly after liturgy at Gloria Mog's home, 5104 N 3rd St, Arlington (contact, John Veldhuis)

Group B – Sunday, Nov 9th, before liturgy at Kenmore (contact, Kathy Scheimer)

Light on the Hill (formerly Group on Sustainability (Group C) – Monday, Nov 24th, 7:15-9:15pm, Carroll home, 2739 N Yucatan St, Arlington (contact, Judy Christofferson) This group clearly has their act together!... hopefully A and B will follow suit!

Peace Group – November 19, 6:45pm, Archer and Jim's home, 901 2nd St, Alexandria (contact, Archer Heizen)

Attached are minutes from some of the groups as well as the original mission of each group.

The fruits of our discussions will be shared at January's general meeting.

All are welcome to join a small group.

In peace,  
Carmela

## Notes - General Meeting - October 19, 2014

At the NOVA General Meeting on October 19th, we convened three short-term, ad hoc action groups around the ideas and issues facing the community that were identified in this year's Calling Forth process. There was discussion about the fact that the issues that came forth this year have been raised in the past and we agreed that this perhaps is a good time to take stock of our community as we approach our 50th anniversary. The groups will meet between now and our next general meeting in January where we will have the opportunity to share the fruits of each group's discussions.

We also took the opportunity to follow up on this year's retreat. A natural outgrowth of our discussion was to create a fourth committee to follow up on peacebuilding. While handouts from the retreat are available on our website, we did reiterate the potential action list Marie offered during Sunday morning of the retreat – the actions include: education, advocacy, campaigning, join and support (Pax Christi, Pace e Bene, FCNL, Campaign Nonviolence), peacebuilding (during/after violence), living as if..., and accompaniment (for example, Christian Peacemaking Team, Nonviolent Peaceforce). We looked at the personal next steps toward peacemaking generated during the community led liturgy from the retreat and it was evident that there are a number of ways to collaborate toward these promises.

The meeting ended with a report from Clyde Christofferson about his trip to Rome for the pre-synod panel discussion as well as some shared reflections on news out of the synod itself. There was a suggestion made that the community do some Pope Francis inspired outreach to our local bishop.

So, below are the groups with potential interested members and a meeting date/time. ALL are welcome to join one or more groups. I would like to personally commend group C for calling themselves the 'sustainability group' and hope that groups A and B follow suit with a name

**Group A (coordinator: John Veldhuis):** The NOVA community seeks to be a spiritual home and source of inspiration and comfort FOR EACH OTHER.

\*What supports can we put in place to enable members to remain connected?

\*How do we grow our spiritual life within?

\*Gathering more frequently, rekindling NOVA-nites, discussing books, topics, films

\*Establishing a retreat committee way in advance to get retreat leaders such as Marie Dennis

Participants: John Veldhuis, Gloria Mog, Marlene Shade, Rosemarie Annunziata, Dianne Carroll, Carmela Ormando, Stephany Costello, Richard Urban

Meeting date: Sunday, Nov 9th after liturgy at Gloria Mog's home, 5104 N 3rd St, Arlington

**Group B (coordinator: Kathy Scheimer):** The NOVA Community seeks to be a spiritual home and source of inspiration FOR OTHERS.

\*Linking in an organized way with other faith communities

\*Can some of our social justice work connect us to others, perhaps seeking a spiritual home?

\*How can we attract and keep new members—particularly younger folks, singles

\*Foster more creativity in our liturgies

\*Have Saturday liturgies (perhaps followed by potluck and discussion?)

Participants: Kathy Scheimer, Meg Tuccillo, Nancy Veldhuis, David Mog, Marie Keefe, Cathy Showalter, Helen Michie, Jerry Barrett, Brian Carome

Meeting date: Sunday, Nov 9th before liturgy at Kenmore

**Sustainability group (Group C) (coordinator: Judy Christofferson):** The NOVA Community desires to MOVE BEYOND forging a path to create a sustainable future for the Community, always discovering who we are and attuned to uncovering new opportunities before us.

\*How much do we align with RC traditions vs becoming more fringe.

\*Do we need to reorganize ourselves in any way to ensure the long-term sustainability of the community? For instance should we consider institutionalizing NOVA with a 5-10 year plan and board/leader?

Participants: Judy & Clyde Christofferson, Joe Annunziata, Eric Carroll, John Tarrant, Scott Spaine

Meeting date: Tuesday, October 28 at John & Marlene's home, 7036 Williamsburg Blvd., Arlington, VA at 7:30pm

**Peace group (4th and newest group) (coordinator: Archer Heinzen)** This group will look at ways of incorporating peacemaking more vibrantly into our community.

Participants: Archer and Jim Heinzen, David Mog, Brian Carome, Cathy Showalter, Eric Carroll, Clyde and Judy Christofferson, Jerry Barrett, Marie Pinho, Teddi Ahrens, Carmela Ormando

Meeting date: Thursday, October 30, 6:30pm – 9pm , starting with a simple supper at the Heinzens - 901 2nd St., Alexandria, VA.

**Meeting Summary**  
**NOVA Ad Hoc Group on Sustainability**  
**“Light on the Hill” Group**  
**October 28, 2014**

Members Present: Joe Anunziata, Eric Carroll, Clyde and Judy Christofferson, Scott Spaine, John Tarrant

Before discussing the agenda questions below, the group discussed changing its name because some felt that “sustainability” doesn’t really capture the group’s purpose.

Change of Group Name: Members agreed that “Light on the Hill” was a better name for our group. The metaphor of a “Light on the Hill” connotes attraction, guidepost, landmark, etc. See Matthew 5:14-16, which states that we should let our light shine before all so that “they may see your good works and give glory to God in heaven.”

#### Responses to Agenda Questions

1. What does “sustainability” for the NOVA Community mean to you?

- Being open to new people and other ways of thinking, otherwise we stagnate.
- We are an aging community and should address the needs that attend aging, such as being ready to respond to the needs of those who are hospitalized, ill, etc.

2. Where are we now as a community with respect to sustainability?

- There is the lack of energy, i.e., we had more energy in NOVA’s early years.
- More members should attend general meetings.
- We are already reaching out to organizations and individuals in need of support.
- We have user-friendly website.

3. What are concerns, issues and/or questions we should address regarding NOVA’s sustainability?

Some key questions and concerns voiced:

- How do we define ourselves? We are: a participatory, Eucharistic community; focused on building community; supportive of requests/needs of our members in their everyday lives;
- We were created to minister to the needy.
- We need to challenge ourselves by reaching out to others with differing perspectives.
- Could we change our website so more people searching for what we offer could find us on line?

4. What are ways of “forging a path to create a sustainable future for NOVA”?  
(Brainstorming – no evaluation at this point)

Some proposed ideas:

- Revisit the website and consider ways it could be improved.
- Consult with our Padre Cadre in reaching out to the hierarchy.
- Try to add to our Padre Cadre list.

- Reach out to other progressive communities, especially PAX, which is also experiencing issue of a largely aging membership.
- Develop ways to get more members to attend our General Meetings.
- Propose ways to attract new members.
- Encourage our members to be “a light on the hill” to others outside community (develop a model).
- Ask for the community’s endorsement/encouragement/blessing when members attend meetings or conferences of groups such as the IEC scheduled next June and follow-up with those who attend conferences to share their experiences.

Conclusion: Next meeting will be held on Monday, November 24, 7:15-9:15 p.m. at the Carroll’s home, 2739 N. Yucatan St., Arlington 22213

We will discuss and build on ideas proposed at the 10-28-14 meeting.

**NOVA Group B (we really need a better name!) Minutes**  
**Sunday, October 26, 2014**  
**Kenmore**

Attendees: Kathy Scheimer, Helen Michie, Meg Tuccillo, David Mog, Brian Carome, Cathy Showalter

We need to recognize & celebrate that through the active participation of community members, we are already involved in work with other faith communities, including:

- SALT
- VOICE
- Arlington Interfaith Council
- UUCA via LFFP Project
- Muslim Women's Coalition & Ramadan Baskets

That "Linking in an organized way with other faith communities" was raised as a concern this year perhaps suggests that we need to work on communication around the work that is already happening. Ideas offered to address this included:

- Quarterly NOVA nights to inform/educate/acknowledge/celebrate the work that is already happening with 3-4 groups presenting each night
- Post liturgy presentations throughout the year from groups we support

David Mog noted that NOVA has long supported the social justice work that individuals in the community are involved in. This is one of the defining characteristics of the community. We need to work on the manner in which calls for support are made – in terms of requests for contributions of both \$\$ and time – invitation vs imposition/obligation

Attracting new members:

- Need to look at the issue of transportation to liturgy. Brian mentioned that he had a recent conversation with a disgruntled Saint Charles parishioner who said NOVA was not an option for her b/c she does not have a car. Many younger people are attracted to Arlington b/c you don't need a car to get around. NOVA's two liturgy locations are not Metro train accessible and transportation by bus on a Sunday morning would be very time consuming if not impossible.
  - o Meg noted that at one time NOVA had an account with a cab company to help folks without cars.
  - o Carpooling was also suggested.
- Are we open to giving new members an "ownership stake" in NOVA. Brian shared his experience having been a 20 year parishioner at Saint Aloysius – a Jesuit parish in WDC. A large influx of young singles and families found their way to the church in the late 80's early 90's. They stayed in part b/c they were given the opportunity to significantly influence the liturgy and parish life. Would we allow that at NOVA??

Next meeting – November 9th, 9 am at Kenmore

Kathy Scheimer agreed to be chair

**Peace Group**  
**October 30, 2014**

**PEACE COVENANT of the NOVA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**  
**(Draft)**

We, the members of the NOVA Catholic Community, are committed to following the example and teachings of Jesus Christ who says to us,

*“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”* [Jn 14:27]

*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.”* [Mt 5:9]

We pray for this peace in our own hearts that we may be instruments of peace in our families, our communities and throughout the world.

The Peace of Christ is grounded in love. We endeavor to do all things with the LOVE that:

*recognizes the infinite value of every human being*, regarding no person as less than ourselves

*is for all people*, including our enemies and those who disagree with us

*participates in no form of violence*, but overcomes evil with good

*seeks reconciliation and healing* through understanding, forgiveness and acceptance of differences

*reverences and cares for the earth* and all that God has created

*seeks to live conscientiously* so that all people’s needs may be met and suffering alleviated

*offers solidarity and support* to victims of violence and injustice

We are determined not to close our eyes to the pain in the world, therefore we will address and confront the systemic violence that causes so much of the suffering.

We covenant to work together in community to build, upon a foundation of such love, the promised Kin-dom of Peace, Justice and Joy made possible by the example, teachings and sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

## Peace Interests in NOVA

Areas of Peacebuilding suggested by MD	Flipchart: Ideas for Next Steps	Personal Commitments
<p><b>Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate ourselves in how to respond with respect and compassion to those believing in the sanctity of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment.</li> <li>• Respect your fellow friends. Don't ignore their attempts to speak or cut them off when they do speak.</li> <li>• Not "tuning out" people we don't agree with—or we think they talk too much. You've got to listen before you can respond appropriately.</li> <li>• Encourage family peace.</li> <li>• It's one thing to study and learn about active non-violence and peace and quite another thing to put it into practice in our daily lives. Just Faith Ministries has a program entitled "Engaging our Conflicts", designed to help us recognize violence in our many forms and through discussion and exercises to help us make active non-violence a part of our lives. I have participated in this program and found it very helpful. The program has 8 sessions, group size 6-12 members and a copy of the book used in the program...</li> <li>• Keep educating ourselves.</li> <li>• DC peace tour to benefit LFFP.</li> <li>• I will forward email from local Pax Christi. I will be more careful in my kneejerk reactions...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further education and reading on peacemaking and advocacy</li> <li>• I will learn more about the workings of the UN Peacekeeping Dept, Responsibility to Protect &amp; Peacebuilding Unit - and find ways to promote nonviolence there</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advocacy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach businesses and ask if they are willing to have people carrying guns in their establishments. If not, we will ask them to post decal stating their policy.</li> <li>• Put a sign in restaurant windows, no guns allowed. No sign, no patronage.</li> <li>• Boycott restaurants that allow guns.</li> <li>• Boycott all products from Israeli companies (Google for list).</li> <li>• Work to overturn Citizens United.</li> <li>• Establish a NOVA peace committee.</li> <li>• Remove bench seat blocks in Arlington and explore daytime needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legis'l'n); engage NOVA in lobby day focused on Iran</li> <li>• to be a stronger, louder voice for peace and to seek out other members of the community who might also like to speak more clearly and more often for peace.</li> <li>• I pray that I can learn to use my voice as a Catholic and peacemaker</li> <li>• Join monthly march/protest at NRA headquarters</li> </ul>



	<p>of homeless.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build local soccer field in lieu of drugstores (Claremont) so people can enjoy play (dignity).</li> <li>• My instinct is to smooth over, get along. I will try now to instead promote discussion, dialogue.</li> <li>• It's "Us"—Support SOAW.</li> <li>• Come march in NYC next Sunday in largest gathering ever to speak up about climate change as UN meets to discuss.</li> <li>• Support peace vigils in front of the Whitehouse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand Oberlin's experience of restaurant signs - no guns allowed - how they went about it - what worked, what didn't.</li> <li>• Educate self how to present the non-gun agenda to those holding onto their 2nd amendment rights; visit local business asking if they allow guns on their establishments. If no - offer a decal for them to display</li> <li>• to help organize action against bringing guns into restaurants, schools, public bldgs - a 'no guns here' campaign (targeting one place at a time)</li> <li>• will attend march for climate awareness in NYC</li> <li>• work for peace in Palestine (learn more about organizations like Jewish Voice for Peace)</li> <li>• Participate in peace marches</li> <li>• volunteer with the I Love Mountain coalition to stop mountaintop removal in the mining for coal</li> <li>• work to eliminate the injustice that creates violence against persons: in Nicaragua; with the homeless; against the environment (especially in West VA)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Campaigning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bishops must talk to the people, not just to each other</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Join and Support</b> (Pax Christi, Pace e Bene, FCNL, Campaign Nonviolence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect with Jewish Voice for Peace</li> <li>• Let's do more with St. Paul's—celebrate a Mass—we go to one of theirs and we do one of ours at their church.</li> <li>• Work w/Pax for Peace; send Pax Pilgrimage for Peace info about Markie. Focus on peacemaking in Advent for both communities; share prayers written by each; plan joint speaker series; peace dinners; they</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More outreach to <i>other Christian communities</i> - so we are not 'other' to them or vice versa; devote monthly time to interact with another faith community - to share our services and ideas on social action</li> <li>• *Involvement in <i>LFFP</i></li> <li>• *<i>PAX Christi</i>: Learn about/join and support the work of Pax Christi USA/Intl. (advocacy on</li> </ul>

	<p>support LFFP-Cyprus—join them; begin with a small group planning dinner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More engagement with Pax Christi.</li> </ul>	<p>int'l issues)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support the peace callings of others in the community even when I would not follow the calling myself, and I will try to help <i>build a continuing NOVA peace education program</i></li> <li>• Network for enforcement of just-war theory</li> </ul>
<p><b>Peacebuilding</b> (during/after violence),</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a NOVA peacemaking program: providing direct food and shelter in conflict areas and/or assisting other peacemaking groups in their efforts.</li> <li>• Supporting NOVA members financially and otherwise who wish to engage in direct peacemaking efforts.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Accompaniment</b> (for example, Christian Peacemaking Team, Nonviolent Peace force).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support Dream Project.</li> <li>• Be witnesses for peace in places of great violence, accessible to us, like Central America.</li> <li>• Connect with undocumented, including Central American refugees.</li> <li>• When you find yourself in a violent situation, stop for a moment to: 1) Breathe, 2) Ask where God is in the conflict, 3) Ask “what’s my role in this—how can I contribute?” What am I called to do?</li> <li>• One at a time—inspired by an article by Colin Powell. Mentor an at-risk student.</li> <li>• Tutoring at Arlington Mill.</li> <li>• Host a pair of students from Cyprus for a few weeks next summer to help build peace and understanding across the border—see Mike and Amanda from Pax—see brochure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor a student (Hispanic or other immigrant in English) and their studies and help family</li> <li>• I commit to foster dialogue and welcome refugees and immigrants and to promote diversity as a gift; enhance opportunities for sharing stories of immigrants</li> </ul>
<p><b>Liturgy/personal prayer and contemplation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift our weekly peace prayer to focus on praying for peacemakers (instead of the dead)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with <i>PAX community</i> to take peace forward in some shared activities (e.g., Advent)</li> <li>• Help coordinate liturgical and prayer efforts to be more focused on peacemaking</li> <li>• *Search and identify and then share with others signs of peace, hopefulness, and</li> </ul>

		<p>progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus on prayer for peace</li><li>• Inner Peace and patience</li><li>• From this day forward I pledge- that I will assume that every person that I don't agree with is coming from a good place and means well.</li><li>• To strive every day to be less judgmental of others and to focus more on the goodness of everyday</li><li>• *Pray daily for peace; fasting; pray for family peace; personal prayers and petitions for loved ones.</li></ul>
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### Eric's (?) Overview

When one sees life as being at a dead end and one can't find a dignified life, violence raises the prospect of finding some dignity.

	<b>Areas of Power: where dignity of life is blocked and where Jesus urged active resistance (urged us to challenge).</b>	<b>Possible Actions: Realize you are not alone; attack self-interest of abusers in a live-giving way.</b>
<i>Participatory</i>	<b>Religion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lay-led liturgies; political activism</li> <li>• Participatory; community ownership</li> <li>• Build communities</li> </ul>
<i>Pinocchio Center</i>	<b>Politics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce/eliminate funding sources</li> <li>• One term limits with longer terms to accomplish something</li> <li>• Need Pinocchio Centers (Twitter?)</li> <li>• Zip code basis for congressional districts</li> </ul>
<i>Profit Limits</i>	<b>Economics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microloans, Focused boycotts</li> <li>• Limits on profits unless socially directed</li> <li>• Keep it local; pay living wage; pay local</li> </ul>
<i>Peace Space</i>	<b>Military</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster conscientious objection (which is not allowed in the command structure)</li> <li>• Interventions to protect (find better ways)</li> <li>• Relief organizations; goal/mission: make space for peace</li> </ul>
<i>Peacekeeping locally</i>	<b>Social Structures e.g. Racism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accompaniment</li> <li>• Train local peacekeepers</li> <li>• Need women's voice (collectively)</li> <li>• Construct a life with dignity—build a soccer field instead of drug stores</li> </ul>

[A large file containing a PowerPoint presentation report on the Pentagon budget was also reviewed by the Peace Group.]