**Strangers No Longer Meeting Minutes: August 22, 2030 ( two zoom sessions)**

**Attendance:**  Rose Pikor, Julie Watanabe, Pat Watanabe, Fiona Archer, Kathy Best Cyndi Malow, Sue Johnston, Watoii Rabii, Carol Schroder, MaryLou LaTorre

**Opening Prayer:**  Fiona

**Questions/ Corrections on last month’s minutes:**  None

**Strangers No Longer Updates:**

Pat W. gave a report on the August 19th, organizational meeting. We are now divided into regions: St. Michael’s, Holy Trinity, Port Huron, St. Clemens in Romeo, Servant’s Entrance (people who have left St. John Fisher), Notre Dame Prep (Pontiac). and St. Mary of the Hills. St. Michael’s is in the NE region. Father Randy Phillips from St.Blase has agreed to host a meeting with Democratic Nate Shannon (District 58) with Strangers No Longer and to discuss the Drive Safe bills. This meeting might be by invitation only. Time TBD. Cyndi reported that district 58 is divided into different sections. St. Michael is not is this district. Only Cyndi, Rose and MaryLou are in this district. We are waiting for response from Nat Shannon’s office.

**Continued Business for Circle:**

* We discussed the responses from the activity survey summary which had been sent by Julie to assess the importance of activities. Seventy percent felt education was very important, such as book studies, articles in bulletin, and communion service and to continue with these. As this year’s goal, we can try to reach out to members of our church family and possibly reach out to other sister parishes through SNL. There were positive responses to our service activities. Political advocacy is an individual personal choice and to keep it general and not to have it specifically promoted at St. Michael’s. Raffle baskets for our fundraiser should be continued, and we can decide how much we will be a part of working with the baskets. We can continue to help set up, but to step back from the total planning of it. Pat W. will not do the coordinating for the fundraising this year, with some of the other Circle Groups taking on more of the planning. Next year’s plans are to increase the attendance from 400 to 500. Therefore, there will need to be a different venue. Pat W. stated that not much planning has been done as of late, but offered to help if needed for the planning of the luncheon.
* The backpack drive was a success. There were 182 backpacks with supplies donated.

There were 26 pairs of shoes collected for those ages 5-16. There were 21 pairs from our SNL group, and the last 5 were bought from our funds ($220). All of the shoes have been delivered, with Donna delivering shoes to Sister Val. Sister Val’s jubilee will be this Sunday. Info will be on online.

**Summer Book Discussion: (**second zoom meeting**)**

We discussed “Separated: Inside an American Tragedy” by Jacob Soboroff. In addition to discussing specific details from the book, we discussed the present continuation of the family separation policy, and its consequences. We do not have an exact account on children who still have not been reunited with their parents, and were concerned as to where those children are presently being housed. Since last February there may still be 1000 children still separated. We wondered whether there were other countries (Canada, New Zealand?) which had better immigration policies. Discussion was had on who is responsible for this immigration policy. Various immigration policies adopted actually went back several administrations. We discussed how climate changes and also holding back aid money affects immigration. We questioned how much the actions or lack of actions from citizens affect immigration. Deterrent policies don’t work. We wondered how other ways SNL could help immigrants. We might possibly illustrate our projects in the bulletin focusing on our immigrant projects. For example, we can illustrate the children holding their donated special backpacks, needing to be cognizant of privacy issues (names, etc.). This might give our church family a more personal feel about the immigrants we help.

The consensus was that the book was disturbing as it recounted how the separation immigration policy was implemented with its cruelty, and to know that the immigration policy today continues to abuse immigrants.

**Next Meeting:**  Sept. 19th at 7PM (zoom)

**Agenda:** Julie **Minutes:** Rose

**Opening Prayer: Closing Prayer:** Fiona

**Communication with Kathy Chadick (bulletin):** Julie

**Communication with Michelle Hayes (Facebook):** Fiona