**PAX General Meeting – October 18, 2020**

Conducted via Zoom
Minutes

**Outline / Overview**

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**2 Music Selections**(broadening music options, how selections are made, copyrights, use of prerecorded music)

**3 Use of Music by Composer David Haas, accused by numerous women of sexual abuse** (discussion followed by overwhelming vote by community to no longer use his music)

**4 Outreach Sundays**(discussion, including suggestions of future outreach opportunities, followed by overwhelming vote to continue Outreach Sundays once a month. Mike Messenger to serve as Outreach Presider Scheduler, assisted by others willing to help.)

**5 Return to St. Luke’s in the future**(date unknown, strong desire to include online community)

**6 2020-2021 Ministries**(new Steering Committee, unfilled and new ministries)

**7 Other Concerns / Issues** (website, listserv, Facebook page)

**Details**

1. **Welcome & Opening Prayer**

Margaret Schwartz offered a welcome and the following prayer:

Dear God, thank you for enabling us to gather here for this meeting. May we have meaningful discussions that will help us to build each other up and glorify your name. Help us to share things that will benefit all of us and draw people to the Kingdom. Help us to deal with different challenges we are facing as a community. May we approach each other with respect and kindness. Lord, create an environment of cooperation in this place and help us to be one in the spirit. In Jesus’ name, we believe and pray,

**2. Music Selections**(broadening music options, how selections are made, copyrights, use of  prerecorded music)

*Ann Brown circulated the following from the Folk Group to the Community prior to the General Meeting*:

Music Selection - Community members expressed an interest in broadening our music selection to include more diversity among composers – women and persons of color. A member of the community posed the question, how do we choose our music?

In the past, we used a greater variety of music to include secular “folk” music and music from other Christian traditions. In early PAX days a representative from the music group usually attended Mass planning meetings to offer music suggestions.  This has changed for a number of reasons:

* our copyright agreements with OCP/GIA (now [Onelicense.net](http://onelicense.net/))
* the convenience of Bob Smith’s document with lyrics
* limited time and energy on the part of the community and music group
* the fact that we do not practice regularly limits our ability to use novel music; we need to ensure we have adequate lead time, vocalists available, and music that is manageable for our instrumentalists.

Possible solutions –

* Resurrect music from old sources (*Young Life*, *Rise Up Singing*, etc., personal collections)
* Access other music – Gospel; “Praise”; and published collections from diverse communities, such as *Lead Me, Guide Me* (African American Catholic Hymnal) or the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Hymnbook
* Have a music group representative look at readings for a season or monthly to offer music suggestions to planners (similar to the list of song suggestions for the Season of Creation).
* Use a pre-recorded piece if planners want something new that the music group cannot learn in a timely manner, with the possibility that the music group could learn the piece at a later date.

Potential Issue –When we use music that is not included under [Onelicense.net](http://onelicense.net/), even though we print copyright information, we are not using it with permission and the author does not receive royalties.

Use of Pre-recorded Music — The role of the music group is to lead the community in song, not to perform. Music selections should be accessible for group singing.  We are always hopeful (even now) that our musical leadership will cause the community to want to join in song.

Best times to include pre-recorded music (by other artists) in Zoom Para-liturgies –

* when a particular arrangement or artist speaks to an issue the planners are highlighting
* when there is a desire to use something new or unfamiliar that the Folk Group does not have time to learn; if everyone likes it, we could learn it for use at a later time
* use of pre-recorded music might be best placed as a meditation.

While mass planners may rely on “the convenience of Bob Smith’s document with lyrics” available from the PAX website ([paxcommunity.org](http://paxcommunity.org/)), Ann noted Bob transcribed lyrics from mass sheets which did not always use all available verses.

Ann also confirmed the Folk Group has access to the most current versions of songs with which PAX is most familiar – and usually uses them - noting that some, but not all, lyrics have been updated for inclusivity.

Moreover, the Folk Group has access to diverse music selections and wants to contribute to our weekly celebrations.  Now that the Folk Group has an impressive number of pre-recorded songs available, mass planners should feel comfortable engaging the Folk Group with requests for more diverse music for a given (para-) liturgy – while providing the Folk Group sufficient time honor the request.

It was noted that “service music” (Alleluias, Glorias, etc.) are often left out when paying royalties to composers.  Going forward, Molly Cameron (Music Copyright) will include “service music” in our payments – assuming she knows the author and they are included in Onelicense.

While we are not dealing with large sums, the issue of paying for music not covered under Onelicenseremains.  It was suggested we might include payments in our Social Needs Disbursement Committee grants to include other music publishers (e.g., Medical Mission Sisters) to the extent practicable.

It was also noted that the role of the Folk Group is not only to lead us in song, but to uplift the Community when standing and singing in front of members.  A suggestion was made to consider putting song lyrics in Zoom’s chat box while encouraging members to select “gallery view” so we are all singing together (even if muted and the music is pre-recorded).

**3.    Use of Music by Composer David Haas, accused by numerous women of sexual abuse**

(discussion followed by overwhelming vote by community to no longer use his music)

*Ann Brown circulated the following from the Folk Group to the Community prior to the General Meeting:*

After numerous women recently accused David Haas publicly of sexual misconduct, there was a discussion as to how PAX would respond in terms of whether to use his music going forward. Members of the music group had the opportunity to review a document written by the NOVA music group after their reflection on this topic, as well as a statement by one of their Celebrants.  Many people have also read articles in various publications, including *NCR*and the *New York Times*.  We also reviewed a list of the David Haas songs that are part of our regular repertoire, many of which are quite dear to us.

At this time, to the best of our knowledge, Mr. Haas is not receiving royalties from his music, and GIA put out a statement that they have severed ties with him.  However, Molly reports that as of September 17, 2020, Mr. Haas’ music was still part of the Onelicense database providing an opportunity to give him copyright credit for those songs.

Music Group Recommendations -

There were many considerations and opinions voiced. Ultimately our near consensus recommendation is as follows: *the community should take a break from David Haas music for a period of time.* However, it is important this be done without judgment and not as a “knee jerk” response. We can wait to see what form of reconciliation may occur between David Haas and victims, as well as with the Church at large.  In the interim, we can use this hiatus as an opportunity to explore music from other composers and sources. As always in PAX, the choice of music is up to our planners for any given Sunday. If a planning group feels a David Haas song has something unique to offer to their liturgy, the issue can be taken up at that time.

**PAX Community discussion and decision:**

Our discussion then turned to whether *the community should take a break from David Haas music for a period of time*as proposed by the Folk Group (no time period was specified). Members were invited to comment and the following is a summary of the comments:

* Recent accusations portray a decades-long pattern of sexual misconduct toward women; concern that a survivor may be traumatized seeing David Haas’ name in copyright credits
* Not singing David Haas’ music doesn’t go far enough to help survivors of abuse; we should also do something for abused women (e.g., House of Ruth) - followed by reminder that we have supported House of Ruth for years
* If we take a break from using his music, we should look for some movement on his part toward restorative justice/reconciliation
* We should be conscious of the fact that he used his power in the church as a religious composer to abuse women with less power. This is similar to the ongoing scandal of priests engaged in sexual abuse
* While he has apologized and we can decide to forgive him, we can also decide not to use his music going forward; also, no point in waiting – especially in a case of abuse by a church figure
* Statements that we are too focused on Haas, paying too little attention to his victims. Women deserve to be heard and their pain addressed
* David Haas’ redemption is between him and God; we have an opportunity to take a prophetic stand that the Church has missed – that we will not support a serial abuser of women and will not use his music going forward
* Testimony from an abuse survivor who felt they “had no voice”; acknowledgement we all make mistakes, but survivors carry the pain for their entire lives; not singing his music going forward is an opportunity for PAX to support the women who have come forward. This was followed by comments from community members thanking the survivor for displaying so much courage and stating that we stand in solidarity
* Testimony about the pain abused women carry, that it never goes away; this is a chance to help women and each other;
* If one PAX member is hurt by seeing David Haas’ music, they are okay not using it
* We should delete Haas music from Bob Smith’s list;
* In a professional capacity, hears every day about the suffering from sexual abuse; reason for PAX not to use Haas’ music.

**A hand vote was taken on discontinuing the use of David Haas’ music and the count was overwhelmingly in favor.**

**PAX will no longer use David Haas’ music in our celebrations.**

**4. Outreach Sundays**(discussion, including suggestions of future outreach opportunities, followed by overwhelming vote to continue Outreach Sundays once a month. Mike Messenger to serve as Outreach Presider Scheduler, assisted by others willing to help.)

*Mike Messinger summarized our pilot program of monthly Outreach Sundays (the following was circulated to the Community prior to the General Meeting):*

Once a month (often on the first Sunday of the month), PAX carries out an *Outreach Liturgy*. In Outreach Liturgies, PAX invites different presiders from other communities and from within PAX to lead a paraliturgy (not a Mass). PAX may also elect to visit other communities.

Our aim is to further our *Casting Our Nets* goals. We hope this will engage PAX with new voices, diverse audiences, and enliven our liturgies. We believe this will connect our communities to even more members and foster growth. We also hope it will help us manage the availability of priests.

Pilot Program to Date

Month One:  Lay Presider, Ms.  Catherine Maresca, M. Div. Howard Univ., Catechist and Trainer, Founder of Center for Children and Theology.  [https://cctheo.org](https://cctheo.org/)

Month Two:  Lay Presider, Mr. Julio Hernandez, Pastoral Education Master, Duke University, Associate Pastor Crossman United Methodist Church of Falls Church, father with children in PAX atrium, active in immigration and refugee ministry.  [https://www.christcrossman.org](https://www.christcrossman.org/)

Month Three:  Lay Presider, Ms. Jean Duff, member of Social Justice staff of Washington National Cathedral, founding partner of Faith & Development, co-founder Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty, longtime PAX member.

Month Four:  Lay Presider, Ms. Myrtle Hendricks, Masters in Theology, WTU, longtime PAX member.

Month Five:  Lay Presider, Mr. John Hushon, Masters in Theology (Sacred Scripture), WTU, PhD. coursework (Fields: Pauline Letters, First Century Judeo-Christianity), Coursework longtime PAX member.

Feedback to Date**:** Positive, surpassed expectations. Stretched PAX in new ways (e.g., videos of our songs!). Added new gifts to paralitgury (e.g., Chardin’s Mass of the World). More diverse voices including women! Well suited for Zoom liturgy format.

Recommendation**:**Continue Outreach Liturgies once a month basis going forward.

Guidelines for Selecting Lay Presiders**:**Masters-level education or comparable experience in theology, liturgy studies, or professional service or employment on behalf of Catholic Church or other faith community and tradition.  Personal connection or relationship with an existing PAX community member is preferred.

***PAX Community discussion:***

Members were invited to comment on our Outreach Sundays and feedback was again very positive. We were reminded PAX was founded on “visiting” (new, other) voices during our early liturgies (as encouraged by Fr. Al Pereira).

Comments included suggestions that we also connect with local African American churches and other diverse communities, and that we should engage in interfaith outreach since “all faiths believe in justice.” These new connections would strengthen our community.

**The Community voted to continue once-a-month Outreach Sundays** and **Mike Messinger** agreed to serve in a new ministry: **Outreach Presider Scheduler** (which has already been added to our 2020-2021 Ministries List).

**5.  Return to St. Luke’s in the Future**(date unknown, strong desire to include online community)

On behalf of the Steering Committee, Mike Messinger shared there is no plan to return to in-person liturgies anytime soon (certainly through the end of this year). We will continue to monitor the advisability and feasibility of doing so and will keep the Community informed.

When we are able to gather again, we do not intend to leave our expanded online community behind. We are starting to figure out and budget for technology to continue welcoming members far and wide. Stay tuned!

**6. 2020-2021 Ministries**

(new Steering Committee, unfilled and new ministries)

2020-2021 Ministries

PAX members, working together, share responsibility for all liturgical, social, administrative, and educational components of our Community.

On behalf of the Community, Marian Klymkowsky thanked **Margaret Schwartz** and **Mike Messinger** for serving on the Steering Committee the last two years.  We know they will continue to serve the Community in new and important ways and are grateful for their past and future leadership and service.

On behalf of the Community, Marian also welcomed **Stephanie Niedringhaus** and

**Frank Distasio** to the Steering Committee.  As valued PAX members their insights will make PAX stronger and help us maintain our relevance in today’s world.

The **current Steering Committee** members are:

Marian Klymkowsky (2019-2021) klymkowskymarian@gmail.com; 703-244-7946

Bob Merrill (2019-2021) r\_merrill@hotmail.com; 703-638-3409

Stephanie Niedringhaus (2020-2022) sniedringhaus@gmail.com; 703-346-8923

Frank Distasio (2020-2022) fdistasio@cox.net; 571-215-9227

Marian also thanked all members who continue in or are taking up a new ministry so the life of the Spirit may increase in all of us. A copy of our 2020-2021 ministry coordinators is available on our website and can be viewed using the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MenqYIounqu1MNOSo1N\_BP49ts-Iwx32xAGm2-EAf1c/edit#gid=1065744790](https://docs.google..com/spreadsheets/d/1MenqYIounqu1MNOSo1N_BP49ts-Iwx32xAGm2-EAf1c/edit#gid=1065744790)

Use the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet to toggle between:

* Community Building
* Stewardship
* Formation
* Liturgy
* Outreach

Any member who feels called to serve in a particular ministry need only contact the current coordinator to become more involved in the life of our Community.

During the COVID Pandemic, some ministries have retreated from view (Refreshments, Parties, Sacristan, Bread and Wine – for example) while at least one new ministry (Zoom Administrator) has burst onto the scene.

We have a few ministries that have been unfilled for the last two or more years: **Community Retreats, Fast for a New Harvest/Oxfam, and Martha’s Table.**  Anyone who feels called to one of these ministries should feel free to reshape it in this Age or Corona.  Otherwise, it may be time to honor these traditions while, at the same time, acknowledge the Community no longer has the energy or resources to continue them.

We have not had a **Membership Coordinator** for over two years and yet this would seem to be an important ministry to maintain.  PAX membership is informal and the coordinator serves as a point of contact to help new members enter the life of the community (adding them to our directory/website, forwarding their email to Dan Mulholland to get signed up for our Listserv).

And we are currently in need of a **Mass Planner Scheduler**, a ministry central to our charism as an Intentional Eucharistic Community now gathering to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word in a time when we cannot celebrate the Eucharist as we have done for the last 50 years.

We also acknowledge we may need new ministries to meet our current and future needs. One new ministry is **SOS (Support for Survivors)** based on our discussion above.

As a result of our discussions, one member was unwilling to shelve the two ministries (“Fast for a New Harvest/Oxfam” and “Martha’s Table”) which address food insecurity during the pandemic. It was acknowledged PAX has generously responded to “Food For Others” (which regularly supports Food Pantries at St. Martin’s in Gaithersburg MD and Our Lady Queen of Peace in Arlington VA).

Another member wanted to keep the “Community Retreats” ministry on our list – for a future time. As aside, it also possible to do virtual retreats if anyone would care to organize one.

During the meeting, no one came forward to assume “Membership” or “Mass Planner Scheduler.” It was suggested we consider following NOVA’s example of, on a given date, having everyone sign up for a mass (or three) for each 6-month period – with the understanding if you cannot fulfill the commitment, you can try to find someone else to fill in. Another suggestion was to have everyone sign up for masses on the website (this is actually more complicated since only 6 web administrators can update the website).  It was volunteered that PAX had tried this but it didn’t seem to work and maybe, yes, we do need someone to remind us to mass plan.

**7. Other Concerns / Issues**

(website, listserv, Facebook page)

Other Concerns/Issues

Margaret Schwartz outlined our current communication venues:

Our **website** primarily hosts institutional information (mass planning calendar, mass planning resources, directories, etc.)

Our **listserv**is primarily used for direct or immediate conversations

Our **Facebook page** serves both functions.

It was acknowledged that many PAX members do not engage with social media and would not want Facebook to be the primary source of communication.

We learned from Dan Mulholland (PAX Listserv Administrator) that yahoo groups, which currently hosts our Listserv, is “going away” later this year (December).  We have had some issues with members joining or receiving notifications via the Listserv and are probably best served with a new platform anyway.

Margaret will draft a list of requirements for our web page (which does not have the flexibility and functionality we would like) and Listserv and work with the Steering Committee and Dan to determine our next steps.

*Note: Bob Merrill was unable to attend the General Meeting due to health issues.  Lois reports he’s on the mend.*