

FULL SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MINUTES MARCH 1, 2018

A meeting of the Full Social Justice Committee was held at the church on March 1, 2018. Present were: Pearl Cohen, Sean Cooper, Frankie Finnegan, Betty Gilson, Felix Matos, Mary Pendleton, Rev. Paul Sprecher and Rev. Rachel Tedesco. The following items were discussed and decided.

The bank balance is \$3,734.39, of which \$1,356.37 is for the *Read to Me, Father* program.

Mary Pendleton shared information about the group *Biodiversity for a Livable Climate* which would like to present a program for Bridgewater at the church in April or May. Their mission is restoring ecosystems to reverse global warming. They will present information about methods to remove carbon from the atmosphere and add it to the soil, as well as other possible actions. Betty, Rachel and Debbie Baumgarten have agreed to work with Mary and Paula Phipps of Biodiversity to arrange a program.

- It was decided to hold the event on Tues., April 10 (later changed to April 3 due to conflict) at 7:30 pm in the church sanctuary.
- Paula will be presenting a film, so will need a screen. Betty will contact Paula regarding all A/V needs and will enlist one of our A/V experts if needed.
- We will do the publicity such as flyers and contacts with the community. (Who would be good at this?)
- Mary has already spoken to Town Clerk Marilee Hunt and Town Green Committee member Pat Neary and they are interested in the program. Betty and Mary will keep them posted on details
- Betty will contact Jeff Fowler of Cable TV, Beryl and Vernon Domingo of BCCR, and Ray Mack for spreading the word.

The three Branches gave reports on recent works and plans for coming events.

First Principle Project

- Members continue working at Old Colony Correctional Center in the *Read to Me, Father* program. The volunteers just completed a very successful *Nurturing Fathers* course for 8 plus fathers. They are now back to having fathers record reading books for their children.
- In conjunction with the core SJC the FPP is presenting a Black Lives Matter film series. The first two films *12 Years a Slave* and *13th* were well received. The next three films are *42* about Jackie Robinson on March 27, *Detroit* about the 1967 race riots on April 24, and *I Am Not Your Negro* on May 22. Please send Rachel and Betty suggestions for films for the second season.
- Rev. Paul is looking for suggestions for more books for discussion to follow *Waking up White* which was discussed on two Sundays recently. He is considering an evening meeting time rather than after morning worship. This might attract a larger group.

Green Sanctuary Committee

- Debbie Baumgarten emailed an update of the many GSC activities.
- 1. Conducted energy audit of church building on Feb. 20; report received via email yesterday. Will discuss recommendations with relevant church folks and follow up.
- 2. 2 services upcoming--Water Justice on March 25, with Dr. Jenna Mendell and her students reporting on their work creating biosand water filters for Water for Cambodia; and Kids to Camp, April 22, with new format, after feedback from Worship Committee this past fall. The camp director will speak at beginning of service, naturalist will conduct Time for All Ages, and Sam Baumgarten will present a nature-centered sermon.
- 3. Metal Recycling--May 5, 9:00-12:00.
- 4. CD recycling campaign--Ginger and Janet delivered CDs to the company recently--we will continue to promote this program and collect CDs. (no update on recycling cassette tapes as yet)
- 5. Durable wall model soap dispenser has been purchased for new bathroom, to be installed soon.
- 6. Plans continue to place Little Free Library in MBTA parking lot (BSU campus) by end of spring;
- 7. New banner promoting FP's use of solar is being made in the coming months (other banner was ravaged by weather and was removed).

Peace Committee

- Frankie gave a summary of Peace Vespers on February 12 with the theme of *Peace in the Heart*. Kathy Keenan led the meditation, Jim Quin and Lisa Troy led the group in a special song, Jack Hart did a reading from the Peace Pilgrim, and Denise Haskins provided peaceful gathering music and played for the hymns.
- Frankie and Betty have discussed helping with the town activities for the March 24 March for Our Lives, perhaps in raising money for students who may want to participate in the Washington March.
- Betty has been in touch with Marilee Hunt and Kevin Bligh about doing things in conjunction with Gun Violence Free Communities, a somewhat dormant group in which they and Pearl were active at one time. Kevin still keeps the website going. Marilee is interested in raising money for students to participate in the march. Kevin has information that Kristine Bell-Smith is launching a Bridgewater page on the topic. He will share more information. A link to GVFC is www.facebook.com/GunViolenceFreeCommunities.

We discussed restructuring the SJC schedule. Since the branches have their own meetings, some monthly, and do their own work, it seems unnecessary to have bi-monthly Full SJC meetings. Each branch can send a report to the SJC of their activities. Betty suggested eliminating the Full SJC meetings and let those be used for FPP meetings. Several members of the core SJC are on the FPP, so that would cut down on meetings for them. Rev. Paul suggested that it is good to have a couple of meetings a year for the full group. This helps with bonding and to keep everyone informed about what is happening. Betty will work out a schedule for this, probably with Full SJC meeting in March and September.

The next Bystander Training presented by BCCR will be March 21 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the Bridgewater United Methodist Church Parish House, 15 Center Sr., Bridgewater.

On March 24 there will be a *March for Our Lives* event in Boston as well as In Washington, D C. See the article in the *March Bridging*. For more information contact Rev. Rachel. She will be organizing transportation, possibly via the Quincy Adams Station. She will put information about this on church web sites and on the Sunday screen for announcement.

U U Advocacy Day is Tues., April 10 from 9:30 am – 4:00 pm. Details are in the *March Bridging*. At least three from First Parish are already registered to attend.

Rev. Rachel reported on some of her actions including explaining the Mass Bail Fund program.

Betty has received a request from Lee Forest, director of the Pride Center at BSU requesting a spring gathering as a follow up to our Fall meeting with members of the LGBTQA community. Lee has suggested some April dates and she and Betty will work on plans for that.*

Rev. Paul reported that McKayla Hoffman has purchased a Black Lives Matter flag for the church. The Worship Committee has arranged for our vexillologist Joe Risko to rotate the following flags: Rainbow, Transgender, BLM, and United States. He will also raise other appropriate flags as warranted. Tony Winters has suggested we may need a second Rainbow flag for the other end of the drive. Rev. Paul also gave us a review of the Black UU relations with the UUA. He reminded us that the church is going to make sure there is a \$10 per member donation for BLUU which was the Feb. share the plate charity. He also asked for suggestions for the next book for the BLM reading group.

The next meeting of the SJC will be Thurs., April 4 at 7:00 pm at the church.

*The date will be Tues., April 24 from 12 – 1 pm.