

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (SJC) MEETING REPORT DECEMBER 6, 2018

A meeting of the Social Justice Committee was held Dec. 6, 2018 at First Parish U U Church. Present were Betty Gilson and the Rev. Rachel Tedesco. The following issues were discussed and decided.

The SJC bank balance is \$2,964.72 of which \$1,041.69 is for *the Read to Me, Father* program. The RTMF balance is so high because the staff at OCCC has been slow in vetting fathers for the program.

The SJC will have a booth at the church Holly Day Faire on Dec. 7 & 8. Volunteers to staff the table are: Janet Dye, Frankie Finnegan, Lisa Troy and Rachel Tedesco. (Debbie Baumgarten volunteered after the meeting.) We will be selling gift cards for MainSpring House donations, Equal Exchange products, cocoa mix bottles, and perhaps other items. Janet is providing the cards and ordering the EE items. Sonia D'Alarcao has made flyers to pass out explaining opportunities to help, especially with MainSpring.

The Share the Plate January charity is Comfort Zone Camp. Comfort Zone Camp is a nonprofit 501(c)3 bereavement organization that transforms the lives of children who have experienced the death of a parent, sibling, or primary caregiver. Their programs are free of charge and include confidence building activities and age-based support groups that break the emotional isolation grief often brings. Comfort Zone's programs are offered to children ages 5-25, and their families for the family programs. Held year-round across the country, with primary locations in California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Virginia (HQ).

The next Black Lives Matter film is *Southside with You*, which will be shown Mon., Dec. 17 at the church at 7:00 pm. This is the story of the first date for Michelle Robinson and Barack Obama in the summer of 1989. The next film will be *Moonlight* on Tues., Jan. 22 at 7:00 pm at First Parish. This film gives three defining chapters in the life of a young black man growing up in Miami.

Rachel reported that the holiday card project for incarcerated U U's promoted by the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) was very successful. Congregants signed 110 cards with short messages, and the envelopes were stamped with stamps supplied by various donors. Betty mailed the package of cards to CLF on Dec. 4.

Rachel has been investigating a possible future collaboration with the social action committee at the First U U Society of Middleboro. She will check with Rev. Susan Person regarding programs in which we could participate.

Rachel is especially interested in their "Are You Looking for Help" Brochure which they have on their website. It lists community and church resources available to residents in the Middleboro and Lakeville area.. We plan to do a similar one for Bridgewater in a print version as well as on our website. The brochure will list local agencies and organizations providing assistance. Here is the link to the Middleboro one.

<http://uumiddleboro.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/HELP-BROCHURE.pdf>

Rachel will ask Debbie Baumgarten to contact Kimberly French in the Middleboro church about Green Sanctuary suggestions.

The church received a request from Amnesty International to participate in a winter letter writing campaign Write for Rights event to take place in Dec. or Jan. It is to write letters to and for ten women prisoners of conscience who are in urgent need of help. Since the Dec. calendar is already packed, we are looking to Jan. Betty will ask the Peace Committee about organizing this event as their winter activity.

Another proposed collaboration *Mercy Street* was introduced to us by A. J. Derby. Also, Rev. Paul has received and posted a letter from Trinity Episcopal Church in Bridgewater which sponsors and supports this mission. Mercy Street is a non-denominational support program for families affected by addiction. On the last Wednesday of each month, Trinity Church hosts a safe gathering place for those affected by a loved one's addiction. They begin with a supper at 6:00 pm, followed by separate programs for children and adults. Betty will place an article in the January *Bridging* regarding this program. We suggest this as the June Share the Plate charity.

We discussed the January 13 service on MLK weekend, which the SJC is responsible for. Suggested theme: "Talking with people with whom you disagree." Betty will check with Jim Quinn for ideas about a skit on this theme. Rachel will check on-line with the UUMA, the UUA (on the Worship Web) and the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

The next SJC meeting will be on Thurs., Jan. 10, 2019 rather than Jan. 3 since the Parish Committee is meeting that night.