Social Justice Council Meeting

September 26, 2026

The Mission of the UUC Social Justice Council is to facilitate communication and cooperation between the Council members, Social Justice committees, UUC Board of Trustees, UUC congregation, and the wider community.

Present: Linda Stoller (chair), Trude Diamond, Bob Hedlund, Barbara Hammond, Donna Polhamus, Carole Vaughn, Chris Mueller, and Anne Burnham (secretary)

Meeting called to order on Zoom at 9:30 AM. Trude started Fathom (AI) recording, Linda lit the chalice and offered opening words, check-ins followed.

August minutes accepted.
Treasurer's report (Bob)
August donation to Clothes to Kids: $970.
(Email Bob, bobh.uuc@outlook.com, any questions.)

Community Outreach (Trude):
Our September recipient, Boricuas de Corazon, donation will be reported in October.
Our October recipient, Equal Ground Education Fund, is a Florida 501c3 community-centered organization engaging the rising American electorate through equal access to education about voting and empowerment. They fight for the issues they believe in, from equality, a living wage, healthcare, to fair elections, climate change and social justice. See https://linktr.ee/egvote for their voter toolkit.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Racial Justice (Trude)
"In September, some RJ members supported Indivisible activities, attended racially diverse arts and cultural events as well as online presentations about voting effectively. If you want information on voting for yourself or friends, see Equal Grounds' https://linktr.ee/egvote."

FAST (Linda)
"The small group meetings are over, recruiting is still occurring. The general assembly will be on Oct. 26th at 7 PM."

NAMI (Christina) no report

NEW AND CONTINUING

***Stories of Intersex and Faith* movie**
Linda announced that the date for this event has been changed to November 14th. Barbara, Carole and Christina Bellamy will be organizers. Because the film involves people telling their individual stories, there won't be a panel; there will probably be small tables for discussion with an expert there to answer any questions.

Talk to Your Sheriff
Anne reported that the Coalition for Human Rights and to End 287(g) has had meetings at UUC every other Saturday from 2-4. At the last meeting coalition members broke into demographic groups to determine dates for going to different municipalities to introduce the proclamation and speak to the issue. In the last couple of weeks speakers have been to five council and board meetings. The Largo Council provided feedback and history about the police department; the Clearwater Council meeting is up next.

Florida Action Committee (rewritten by Chris)
"Being required to register means constant potential for violation, increased risk of homelessness without increasing public safety. Florida is one of the most restrictive states in the country, with onerous and unconstitutional administrative (and costly) requirements that arguably make the public less safe.

Getting a date on the calendar for a panel in January is imperative for today. The purpose of a UUC panel discussion will be to educate about potential law changes and dispel myths. Anita Killan, state director for FAC is available to attend. Barbara Kendall, local team coordinator, would be good to invite, as well as someone on the registry and possibly someone in law enforcement. Bob mentioned that Hillsborough County's HOPE (similar to FAST) was successful with their diversion program when they involved commissioners; Linda pointed out that such programs usually didn't include sexual diversion, however.

The afternoon of January 16th is open on the UUC calendar; Chris will email Anne Gilbert to ask her to put the event on the calendar. Chris thought a title might be "Dispelling Myths." Chris and Christina with Bob and Linda will be organizers."

UUC Better World Emergency Fund
Linda announced that there is a little more than $4K in the fund that the Anderson family bequests approximately $2K to each year. After discussion, the SJC group decided to give $1,000 to World Central Kitchen and $1,000 to Boricuas de Corazon, to add to the Sept. Community Outreach collection for their disaster relief programs locally and abroad.

Postcard Party
Barbara said that the election postcards for the same Hispanic community we have contacted twice before will be ready for members tomorrow after the service. It will be much easier to do them this time around, just need to add a personalized message to what is already on the postcards.

Voter Action Pinellas
David Thornton has been working with Mary Fahey on the Reach app for calling people to remind them to vote. He will have a session in the Patio Room tomorrow to help members and friends obtain and use the app. The group will also be going to neighborhoods (including the one we are sending postcards to) with flyers; they could use help after the service with writing personalized sticky notes to attach to them.

Carole mentioned many packet drops that are ongoing in different parts of Pinellas County. On Oct. 1 from 6:30-8:30 VAP and Indivisibles will have a huge GOTV event at the Central Park Performing Arts Center in Largo.

Linda reminded us that in order to keep our tax exempt status we are not allowed to speak at UUC about specific candidates but can discuss voting issues, forums, etc.

The chalice was extinguished at 10:50. **Note**: The next meeting will be on **October 31st (a week later than usual)** at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Burnham