

Social Justice Report February 2021

Good morning. Let's start this morning on a positive note- This generous congregation on Christmas Eve donated \$2575 dollars to Feeding America Tampa bay. Then the Social Justice Council decided to add \$425 to that from the UUC Better World Emergency Fund bringing our total donation to Feeding America Tampa Bay to \$3000. Thank you all very much.

I know you have all been following the humanitarian crises in Texas. Yesterday the Social Justice Council voted to send \$750 dollars from the UUC Better World Emergency Fund to assist the people in Texas. This special fund was developed years ago from a bequest of a UUC member so that we are able to react quickly to emergencies all over the world. Each year the family sends funds from the estate to replenish the fund. Donations from all are always welcome.

We are pleased with the results of our newest initiative the Covid Community Outreach Program. Each month the Social Justice Council identifies a local non profit that is being impacted by the pandemic and invites members to donate to it throughout the month. During the month a spokesperson from the organization speaks at open issues.

In January the nonprofit was the Urban League. We learned from Watson Haynes, their CEO that the number of people that they are serving rose by 300% since the pandemic. We were able to raise \$506 dollars for this worthwhile agency.

This month the non-profit agency is the Clearwater Free Clinic. At Open Issues we viewed an excellent new video about the clinic and learned that they served uninsured people in our community. They are able to keep people out of the ER by providing excellent care in the clinic setting. We also learned that they do not get government funding and that their traditional fundraising events have been impacted due to Covid. We will be collecting for this organization until the end of February. To give please go to the UUC website, click giving and then click on the Clearwater free Clinic.

Beginning March 1st we will be highlighting the Haven- the spouse abuse shelter in Clearwater. I know you have heard that domestic violence has been on the increase during the pandemic. The director of the shelter will be presenting at Open Issues on March 7th.

The committees of the Florida House and Senate are currently reviewing the bills that will be voted on in the general session beginning on March 1st. UUC members have been working with UU Justice Florida to track bills and write emails to our representatives to express our opinions. You can join UU Justice Florida directly by going on their website or join the uuc sj immediate response page on Facebook. We won't be traveling to Tallahassee this year so this is a great way to let our legislators know that we want them to support legislation that follows our UU principles.

And talking about holding our elected officials accountable, the FAST Nehemiah Action will be on March 22nd at 7 PM on zoom and by driving in to the parking lot at Sacred Heart Parish. This year you must register to get the zoom link. The registration link will be in the next Octagram and available from any of the UUC FAST Team Leaders.

This is Black History Month. Our Racial Justice Committee invites you to go to the social justice page on the UUC website and read or reread the past articles written by members under the heading Racism, What you didn't learn in School.

Despite the road blocks the pandemic has thrown up I am proud of the good work we continue to do at UUC. The word of the month is Perseverance.