

UUC Social Justice Council Minutes

May 23, 2024

6:30 Chalice Lighting and Opening Words, Brief Check in

6:45 Acceptance of Minutes of Meeting April 27, 2024.

Decision to not require formal minutes acceptance, since we get the minutes in advance and have a chance to request that the secretary make updates/corrections. Going forward, the facilitator will ask “Any additions or corrections to the minutes?”

7:00 Treasurer’s Report and Community Outreach Recipients

- We donated \$480.76 to April recipient We Care Family Connections and a late-arriving \$200 to FAST.
- We will donate \$100 each to BLUU and DRUUMM. Interactions with Tim Thorne (new Treasurer) and Dale (accounting) will be smoothed out as Tim gets into the groove as UUC Treasurer.
- We voted to add three monthly donation recipients for January, February, and March 2025. These scheduled recipients can be replaced by others if an emergency need arises (hurricane season is upon us), and UUCers often pitch in to assist local disaster victims with hands-on support and donations of goods (clothes, food, toys, etc) in addition to an existing monthly financial social justice recipient via Breeze or cash.
 - [Florida Rising Together: January 2025](#)
 - [Equal Ground, Florida: February 2025](#)
 - [Faith in Florida: March 2025](#)
- We sponsored the May 20 Faith in Florida board meeting in the social hall.
- Eliseo suggests UniMex, a local 501c3 Mexican grassroots organization for us to consider as a donation recipient in the coming church year. Its vision is to maintain a high level of consistent guidance and support for our youth, so they can succeed in accomplishing their professional goals. By coming together as a community, UniMex amplifies Hispanic voices, leverage collective strength, and create opportunities for positive change. Trude will suggest adding it as a donation recipient in April 2025 at our next meeting.

7:30 Committee Reports

1. Racial Justice

- The EJI/Pinellas Remembers lynching memorial placement is being reviewed by the Pinellas Remembers board of directors. They’re considering placement at the very diverse Mt Zion United Methodist church on Sunset Point Rd, whose minister will try to obtain his board’s approval. Mt Zion’s location would offer greater exposure/awareness of the marker. UUC/SJC would continue to offer the \$2000 music scholarship in association with the marker dedication, regardless of its location.
 - We hosted social hour refreshments to honor Danny White, president of Pinellas Remembers, who spoke at UUC’s pulpit on May 19, telling us the history of the lynching memorials and current status of the Clearwater memorial project.
 - The Hispanic Women’s Coalition, a group we sponsor, will meet at UUC on May 24.
 - Many Juneteenth celebration events can be found [here](#) (inc. at Greenwood Rec Center & Library, the Clearwater Pinellas African American Museum), in Dunedin [here](#); the Woodson Center Jazzy Juneteenth Jubilee has been sold out.
2. **FAST** - The Nehemiah Action was held on April 30th. 50 UUC members and friends joined over 1,000 members of other Pinellas County Congregations. Although we were disappointed, a little disgusted at the elected officials who failed to attend the Action, most of us were inspired by the

testimonials and reports given by the FAST members. We understand that we are working on some hard issues that need us to be steadfast in our work for justice. A few weeks later we held our Joshua assembly. We heard reports from the issue committees about plans for upcoming meetings and how we continue to put forth our issues. We also kicked off the annual investment drive. More details of upcoming events will be in the Octagram. Finally important news, FAST will be renting some office space at UUC for their north county office. This office was at the church on Belcher but they had to leave because two churches will be merging and they needed the space. Welcome to our new neighbors!!!

3. **Environmental Justice** - Our EJT team met Wednesday 5/15/24 on Zoom with 8 in attendance.
 - We reviewed our Earth Month activities and decided to postpone the planned field trips (to Rosebud Continuum, Sacred Lands) and the Composting Class (that our guru Christina Bellamy will teach) in the cooler months of autumn, when the snowbirds will also be back.
 - Updates on Right to Clean Water 2026 ballot initiative and the UU Climate Justice Revival were discussed, as well as plans for team members to bring their ideas for next meeting for ways we can support other environmental groups who already have film series, outings or events we might wish to attend and recognize. As well as see what we may want to include for community building at UUC.
 - Eloise will forward information about the stormwater workshop to her committee for potential participation.
 - Not so impressed with the AI Scribe app we tested at the April meeting, we have decided to return to our tried and true human, pen and paper method.
 - Next zoom EJT meeting: Wednesday, June 19th.
4. **NAMI**

Half of the attendees were people outside of UUC in the community. It was extremely comprehensive. It was not just the teacher standing up lecturing. It was a lot of experiential discussion – small group discussion, lots of questions, wonderful graphics. It was very well done, and they're offering it again online. They offer it 4 times a year. So we were lucky to get one of the 4. The ongoing family support group had 15 people last week. I think it was the second Wednesday of every month. Two were online, the rest were in the room, mostly from the community. It continues to be a safe place, a refuge, an information center, a support network for the people who need it. So I'm hoping they're going to continue. I'm going to meet with them next week, as their fiscal year is wrapping up. There are some other options they're considering. There are a lot of people who need it, but we'll see what they decide. They've been very pleased with what we have offered. It wouldn't be about UUC. It wouldn't be anything personal.
5. **Interfaith Tampa Bay** – no report
6. **LULAC** – Eliseo will remain a member but currently not representing the organization.
7. **Alianza** – Eliseo is now Environmental and Clean Energy Manager for Alianza's Gulf Coast Region.

8:00 New and Continuing

1. **Pride**

PFLAG: June second. Wendy Marie will be our guest speaker at the pulpit. She's the president and founder of the Safety Harbor PFLAG. That's the meeting at UUC. They're holding 2 meetings a month. The first meeting is what they call a community meeting, and they have different speakers, and it's open to the community, except in the summer.

Pride events:

- [St Pete Pride family day, June 8](#)
- [Page with more Pride events](#)

- [Shades of Pride: Juneteenth](#), June 14-15
- [St Pete Pride parade](#), June 22
- [Dunedin Pride](#), June 1-228

2. **Black Lives Matter banner/lighting up the wall for Pride**

- We would like to install a new Black Lives Matter sign. Outstanding questions: where, how, type of sign, other pragmatic issues, and whether/how to engage with nearby congregations about strategies for supporting marginalized groups and managing vandalism.
- Trude will contact Dylan Danes of Faith in Florida to explore with nearby Clearwater congregations what racial justice tactics they use, supportive signage in particular.
- Linda will follow up with Bill Newton about constructing a BLM sign placed high enough on the UUC building to be visible from the road and hard to reach by vandals.

3. **Post card writing** Linda said we'll be having a kickoff on July 7th after church, to coincide with the Fourth of July theme of being patriotic and saving democracy. Linda will check back with Eliseo to see if his printer is able to preprint the message.

4. **Social Justice Report** canceled for May

5. **Social Justice Retreat** – Late August, early September. In person.

6. **HEP Update** – Anne Burnham sent Group Volunteer Application to HEP on 5/3 to cover the 2 projects (backpacks and holiday giving) that we agreed to support this year.

- Anne Gilbert said there is ample room to store the backpacks in the closet marked “signs” (across from the Westwood Rm, where we used to store blankets).
- Madeline Stone, Marketing Manager at HEP, spoke to a dozen or so attendees at Open Issues on 5/19 and it was well received. She will be notifying me in the next couple of weeks about what HEP's backpack needs are.
- Discussion: How will we estimate how many backpacks our congregation will be able to donate? Let's say 25-30. We could open it up to UUC snowbirds to donate money and Eloise, Carol V and Linda will help project lead Anne B shop for backpacks with the money from them and others who don't want to shop. Eloise, as Ass't Treasurer, will work with Anne B on how donations should be made so that she can put correct info in the *Octagram*.

7 **Open Issues:** No Social Justice topics, nor any others, til after Summer.

8:30 Social Justice calendar any additions? No.

Next Meeting June 22nd at 9:30 on Zoom. We discussed changing the meeting day/time. We'll keep it the same, fourth Saturday 9:30 AM, for now but discuss the matter further during our retreat in August/September.

[Trude Diamond]