

Social Justice Council Meeting

December 17, 2022

The Zoom-only meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM. Attending: Linda Stoller (chair), Natasha Cruz-Knopf, Carol Vaughn, Trude Diamond, Carol Hamilton, Marlene Calderone (treasurer), Christina Bellamy, Harriet Ha-Sidi and Anne Burnham (secretary).

Minutes (November 19th): Accepted, with appreciation expressed to Anne for thoroughness of these Visioning Session minutes.

New and Continuing Issues from Visioning Meeting

- 1) Family Promise: Anne presented information about the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHP) that congregations can participate in through Family Promise of Pinellas County. Congregations participating in the IHP provide overnight housing 3-4 times per year for 3-4 families with minor children who experience homelessness. 75% of families that have participated in FPPC have moved into a home directly from the program.
Christina and Natasha are familiar with the FPPC and spoke well of it. Concerns were expressed about the large scope of the program (e.g., having enough space and the number of members who would be able to participate in the various aspects of the program (e.g., providing food, helping with evening activities). It was suggested that this undertaking might appeal to currently inactive members. Anne would need one or two co-coordinators in order to go forward with the program. Linda agreed to go with Anne to Allendale United Methodist Church to learn how they have organized the program there.
- 2) Reproductive & LGBTQ Issues: Linda spoke about the workshops that UUA's Side of Love offers to address the spectrum of issues re: bodily autonomy. These issues are especially huge in Florida and yet there is currently no SJC committee (like Interweave earlier) to address them. The Florida Interfaith Coalition for Reproductive Health & Justice and Progress Florida's Reproductive Rights Program (Amy Weintraub, director) are two local groups that were mentioned as possibilities for UUC involvement, but at present no one is volunteering to be the point person. Christina and Harriet suggested that it would be best to have an LGBTQ person in charge. Perhaps there could be a notice in the e-Octagram or Linda might make an announcement in her monthly Social Justice Report.
- 3) Civic Engagement: Linda attended an NAACP debriefing meeting following the 2022 election. UUC received a lot of kudos for postcard writing and Linda indicated UUC's interest in continuing to be involved with the work that will need to be done throughout the year. Linda will report back to us about the NAACP monthly meetings.
- 4) Upcoming Events in January
 - a) MLK Breakfast and Memorial Walk, Jan. 16th: Linda announced that volunteers are needed to set up for the breakfast at Greenwood Aquatic Center the Saturday before. The walk will be from there to the North Greenwood Cemetery, where a plaque was installed recently to call attention to graves that were paved over in order to build a school in the mid-1950s. Carol V. attended the plaque dedication a couple of weeks ago and Christina (and others) mentioned hearing about the issue in a recent *60 Minutes* program.
 - b) NAMI, Jan. 21st: Christina said that she has 10 volunteers for setup & promotion. Three speakers will be coming from NAMI to give an overview of the organization. Natasha mentioned other support services that might be interested; Christina will invite them to attend and display their information at a designated table. Flyers are in the works and Christina would appreciate SJC and congregational members promoting the event. Dennis Krohn will be helping Christina with what Kelly Tew needs in order for the new Publicity Committee to help with PR.
 - c) Pinellas African American History Museum, Jan. 27th: Linda said that she will make sure the monthly talks at the museum are publicized in the e-Octagram. This will give our members a chance to attend and show our support for the museum.
 - d) Peace Walk, Jan. 29th: Carol H. stated that the Dunedin group will be sending out new posters soon. Carol is coordinating with Meghan Foley re: the rock painting that the RE children will be doing for the event. Volunteers are needed for registration at Pioneer Park in Dunedin. The walk, which will be from 2-5:30 or so, will be from there to Weaver Park with a stop at the Masjid Al-Salaam

mosque. Carol will submit a writeup to Lauren Logan for the e-Octagram and have a poster and sign-up sheet at the SJC table in the Social Hall. The event will include music, as well as a story time and drum circle.

e) Other: Natasha reported on the great response from congregational members for the Adopt a Family holiday gift program. The 20 families we adopted ended up being 64 children in all! Kudos to Natasha for pulling that together on short notice.

Treasurer's Report: Marlene had no current report because she hadn't received the necessary information. Marlene and Linda will meet with Joe Pace to try to figure out how to make the process more efficient in the future. There is currently \$1,158.83 remaining in the Social Justice funds, with a few payments left to process in January.

Marlene provided some background information about the Pat McGivern Estate (PME) monies. The original donation of \$10,000 was to be used at the discretion of the SJC. Half was put in the Better World Emergency Fund (BWEF) and half allocated for our work with the Hispanic Outreach Center. Marlene is concerned that there is only \$2,430 left in the BWEF, with some debts outstanding and uncertainty about whether the family will be making a donation this year. She suggested that the remaining money in the PME (\$2,278.32) go into the BWEF. After discussion, the general consensus was to wait until there's a need to do that.

Re: the January Community Outreach recipient, Marlene expressed reservations about our earlier designation for January of Project Dynamo (e.g., many subgroups with different names, not vetted by Charity Navigator yet), While it is technically a 501c3 doing good work rescuing Afghans, and more recently Ukrainians, Marlene would like us to table giving to the group until more information is available. The majority voted to wait to make them a designee; meanwhile Harriet and Marlene will continue to do research on the group. The next Community Outreach recipients will be:

January: Habitat for Humanity

February: Meals on Wheels

Committee Reports

- 1) Migrant Farmworkers: There was miscommunication about disbursement of the \$250 to Maria (farmworkers spokesperson) for coolers that we previously voted on. Harriet will call Marlene with Maria's address so that Marlene can see to it that a check is sent to Maria asap. Re: the remaining money in the Rice & Beans account, the group unanimously voted to send it to Maria for her Feeding Tampa Bay account so that she can withdraw from it as needed for the farmworkers. Harriet will check with Maria about how the check should be made out and get that info to Marlene so that she can disburse the rest of the funds.
- 2) Racial Justice: Trude reported that the UU Church of Sarasota has collaborated with the Boxser Diversity Initiative and the Equal Justice Initiative by offering their campus as the location for a Lynching Memorial Plaque as part of the Community Remembrance Project. She has contacted UUCS to find out the date of the dedication of the plaque so that some UUC racial justice members can attend and offer whatever help they may like before, during, or after the event.
- 3) FAST: Linda reported that research of the three issues is ongoing.
- 4) Compassion & Choices: Anne has reserved March 18th at 1 PM on the UUC calendar for C&C Clearwater to screen a play called *Wooden Nickels*. The digital department at national C&C will be making flyers for the event, which will be open to the wider community. Anne will need help from volunteers.
- 5) ESL: In Barb Foley's absence, Linda affirmed that ESL classes are underway each Saturday morning in the Social Hall.
- 6) LULAC: no report
- 7) Environmental Justice: In Eloise's absence, Anne erred in stating the date for the next EJT meeting. Note: The correct date is Jan. 10th.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM. The next meeting will be Zoom only on Sat., Jan. 28th at 10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Burnham