

SJ Council Meeting

October 30, 2021

Meeting called to order on Zoom at 10:03. Present: Linda Stoller (chair), Natasha Cruz-Knopf, Davonne Irion, Susan Allen, Marlene Calderone, Harriet Ha-Sidi, Eloise Hardman (board liaison), Anne Burnham (secy.)

Anne had a couple of corrections for the Sept. minutes. Susan moved to approve the minutes with those changes, Anne seconded – approved.

Marlene reported that \$555.57 was deposited for Sept. for Community Tampa Bay (still collecting); \$910 was distributed to ACLU FL; \$300 withdrawn for Racial Justice speaker. \$1165.76 remains in the SJ acct for this year; funds will be disbursed in Jan. & Feb. for UUSC and UUJF. Susan moved to approve the report, Harriet seconded – approved.

New & Continuing Issues:

- 1) Considerable discussion ensued about holiday gifting to the community. Linda to check with Eloise to verify that the covenant group that had headed up the Mitten Tree and Toys for Tots in previous years is not able to volunteer this year.* Everyone agreed that the best option this year is to have a collection box for toys (unwrapped) for the Shepherd Ctr in Tarpon Springs. Natasha will monitor the collection box, which will be outdoors near the Welcome Table, starting Nov. 14th. Marlene will check to find out what toys the Shepherd Ctr would like and when they would need to have them (and they will probably pick them up from UUC). Marlene also mentioned that she had some gift cards from previous years that could be included.
*When Eloise arrived after this discussion, she said Linda should contact Scotty about covenant group participation; no decision had been made at their last mtg. Linda will get back to Marlene so that she has info to follow up with Shepherd Ctr.)
- 2) Linda has posted in the e-Octagram about members joining the Immediate Response Team on Facebook but has not had any responses to date. We need to continue outreach with members and encourage new ideas for SJ. Marlene suggested an occasional email just about SJ, which segued well into how we could share the many thank yous she has rec'd for donations from UUC. We decided to send a special email, perhaps to be called a Thanksgiving Report, about the upcoming toy collection, that will include the thanks yous we've received from community agencies. Some confusion re: whether monthly Community Outreach donations will be given only online or whether they can be given with donations to UUC in the lock box in the lobby. Linda will check minutes for what had been decided earlier. Restarting Equal Exchange was put on the back burner until Barbara & Mark return from their travels.
- 3) Upcoming Community Outreach recipients:
Nov: Southern Poverty Law Center
Dec: none; our entire Christmas service donations go to Feeding Tampa Bay.
Jan: Guest at Your Table boxes (UUSC)
Feb: Black History Month - need to do some research to learn what would be best
Mar: Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), to coincide with Open Issues & Farmworker Month

4) Open Issues wants suggestions of SJ issues that we're interested in, with names of people & organizations that might have speakers.

5) Nov. 20th is Transgender Day of Observance for people who have lost their lives.

Committee Reports:

Migrant Justice: Harriet expressed regret that she has not been able to organize rice & beans or blanket distributions this year.

Racial Justice: Susan reported that the next Jubilee 3 training will be related to the 8th Principle. Many upcoming 8th Principle events include: tomorrow's service (Trude, Aryna and Linda); theme for covenant groups in Nov.; Dec. workshop on issue of accountability (to whom, what does that mean, etc.); many discussions Jan. thru April, culminating in vote at May congregational mtg. Bill Foley has contact at NAACP and will find out whether there will be an MLK breakfast in Jan.

Refugee Task Force: Barbara out of town. Linda reported that Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services may have a refugee family for us to work with.

Compassion & Choices: Anne has been trying to figure out how the Clearwater C&C can continue, no leader currently. Stakeholder mtg on 10/7 and presentation by regional mgr. Nicole Reyes-Palma on 10/14 went well. Anne will be speaking with Nicole end of this week and has many questions that will hopefully give some direction.

FAST: Linda said there were about 700 people at Annual Assembly (on Zoom) and good UUC representation—along with 5 new congregations that joined! Work will continue on increasing affordable housing and expanding a civil citation program for adults; county commitment last year on mental health issues means that will be in monitoring mode this year. The new issue that rec'd the most votes is water quality and flooding. Linda was pleased that the new minister at UU St. Pete gave the closing prayer, which included lighting a chalice.

LULAC: Eliseo unable to attend, in Puerto Rico. He has been very busy with providing vaccinations all over the county, focusing on Hispanics. The Thanksgiving food giveaways this year will be tied to vaccinations.

Anne indicated that she wants to devote time to the midterm elections in 2022. Susan suggested that we talk about this in the next SJ mtg. so that we could learn about what people are doing and share ideas with others.

Linda encouraged us to register for the UU Social Justice Activist Roundtable on Nov. 20th. See email she sent out earlier today.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10. The next meeting will be on Zoom at 10 AM on Nov. 20th.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Burnham