



# Common Ground

Social Justice Newsletter UU Church Bloomington In



Members of Crafting Bridges pose with inmates at the jail.

## Crafting Bridges

Crafting Bridges is a project of the Friends of Prisoners Task Force. UU's Ray and Rita Rust, Rick and Lois Holl, Martha Sattinger, Joan Caulton, Marion Sinclair, and Christine McKenna visit the jail monthly to facilitate simple craft projects for the men to make and mail home to their loved ones. Projects have included decorated pillowcases, magnets, bookmarks, placemats, sun catchers, photo frames, mobiles, and more! Contact Christine McKenna at 812-935-2514

## International Outreach Task Force

The inaugural year of the International Outreach Task Force (IOTF) is now behind us. As we look back at all we have done in 2008, as a congregation we should rightly feel a sense of pride and fulfillment. Whether it involved buying bracelets to support children in Liberia, or enjoying rice and greens at the Giving Back to Africa Lunch Forum, dancing to the music of Afro Hoosier Int'l at Players Pub, or buying jewelry in support of Ndethya wa Ngutethya at the Bazaar; task force members, volunteers, and congregation members all played a part in our success. We have taken our first steps as a congregation on the journey to expand the scope of our service outreach around the world in a more direct way. As a task force we are very excited to see where this journey may take

us in the future. Information regarding the international service organizations that the IOTF will be supporting in 2009, along with details of upcoming events, is available on the Social Justice table in the foyer.

In 2008 the IOTF raised a total of \$6,070.00 to support various internationally focused educational, cultural, and service initiatives including; Inches International, Indiana Friends of Nyaka, Giving Back to Africa, Lotus Festival, Ndethya Wa Ngutethya, UU Service Committee (UUSC). For additional information contact Jason Blankenship, 765-318-8851, jason-blank33@yahoo.com

## Singers of United Lands (SOUL) Welcome Dinner & Meet and Greet

The International Outreach Task Force (IOTF) will be hosting a Welcome Dinner & Meet and Greet for the members of SOUL on **Monday, February 23 at 7pm**. SOUL is vocal ensemble comprised of four singers from four different continents who travel the world performing and teaching songs from their native lands. The IOTF is proud to support SOUL's mission to develop international and cultural relationships through vocal music from around the world. More information can be found at [www.soulands.org](http://www.soulands.org).

This dinner will also serve as a thank you to those who have agreed to host group members during their stay in Bloomington. All who wish to attend the dinner and help welcome the members of SOUL to our community are welcome. The dinner will be served free of charge. Donations to help with the costs of the dinner will be thankfully accepted, with any excess funds collected going to the IOTF general fund to support their work with selected international service organizations. Both meat and vegetarian lasagna will be served. This is an all ages event. If you would like to attend the dinner please R.S.V.P. to Jason Blankenship [jasonblank33@yahoo.com](mailto:jasonblank33@yahoo.com) / 765-318-8851

## Capitol Climate Action in Washington, D.C. Monday, March 2, 2009

Now is the time for the first national mobilization on climate justice and energy solutions. Join thousands of people young and old, who are taking



*Please join us in D.C. and lead the way toward a just and sustainable future!*

action to lead us toward a just and sustainable future with "The Capitol Climate Action". The Green Sanctuary Task Force from the Unitar-

ian Universalist Church is organizing bus transportation to D.C.! The 55-passenger motorcoach has seats available.

The Capitol Climate Action is endorsed by over 50 organizations nationwide, Wendell Berry, Bill McKibben and, according to *The Guardian*, Al Gore and James Hansen.

See [www.capitolclimateaction.org](http://www.capitolclimateaction.org)  
If you are interested in going, it is important that we hear from you very soon. The bus will be leaving Bloom-

ington at 6pm on Sunday, March 1st and plans to return by 7am, March 3rd. The fare is \$95 per person. Reserve your seat before Feb. 20th and get an early bird discount of ten dollars!



*Green Sanctuary  
Task Force*

Nonviolence training is required by the organizers of this action and may be provided on the bus, if not upon arrival in D.C.

The Capitol Climate Action has a component of civil disobedience. Organizers are working closely with the D.C. police to assure participants not involved in civil disobedience, but otherwise participating in the Capitol Climate Action are not arrested. If you participate in civil disobedience and are unable to return to the bus by the scheduled departure time, you will be refunded \$45, but the bus will not be able to wait for you.

If you cannot go with us to Washington, D.C. yourself, please consider sponsoring another person's seat on the bus!

E-mail Marcia Veldman at [meadowlk@bloomington.in.us](mailto:meadowlk@bloomington.in.us) or call: 812-988-4956.

### **Katrina Relief Task Force: Help Rebuild New Orleans Homes**

The Katrina Relief Task Force seeks volunteers for another trip during IU's spring break, March 14-21, 2009. Also, some volunteers willing to put in their time can't afford the expense of the trip so we seek contributions to the cause. Information about the Little Farms Church (United Church of Christ) where we were housed, and which has a well-developed rebuilding program, is at <http://www.ucc.org/volunteer/hurricane/>. Please contact David Parkhurst, 333-2945; [nola.dfp@comcast.net](mailto:nola.dfp@comcast.net).

### **Sunday Plate Raises Funds for Volunteers in Medicine**

Since July 2008, Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) has been the grateful recipient of 25% of the Sunday Plate Collection, and to date that has totaled \$2626. VIM is a free medical clinic that serves the uninsured of Monroe and Owen counties, and is staffed mainly by volunteer providers. The money has been used to purchase blood sugar testing strips for diabetics. Each box of 50 strips costs about \$32.50, and our UU contribution goes towards the \$35,557 VIM spends on strips in a year.

Elizabeth Sturgeon, director of the clinic, would like to thank the Unitarian Universalist church very much for their monetary support which has helped this program to be a success.

- Judy Bennett, sponsor

### **25% Sunday Plate Collection for Social Justice: Update and Plans for Next Year**

The collection of 25% of non-pledge monies from the Sunday plate has been a great success this year! Our contributions to Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) total \$2626.66 (from 7/08-12/08). VIM will continue to receive 25% of the non-pledge Sunday Plate funds through this July. Thank you to all who have been adding additional cash and non-pledge checks to the collection plate. Your generosity will help uninsured folks receive necessary diabetes testing supplies through VIM.

The process for selecting an agency to receive the 25% of Sunday plate collection for the next fiscal year is underway. The Social Justice Funds Committee, which oversees the early stages of the process, will have application forms and guidelines available March 1<sup>st</sup> for those who would like to nominate an agency. The applications can be found in a folder in the Social Justice Funds Committee mailbox in the volunteer workroom of the church. You can also request the application electronically from Stephanie Estell ([nanaysteph@hotmail.com](mailto:nanaysteph@hotmail.com)). After the applications are submitted, the committee will select up to three nominees, from which one will be chosen by vote at the spring congregational meeting.

If you submit an application, you are

responsible for contacting the nominated agency to gather the information necessary to complete the application. **The completed applications must be submitted no later than Tuesday, April 1**, to be considered. Completed applications can be returned in the SJFC mailbox in the workroom or submitted electronically to Stephanie (preferred). Contact Stephanie if you would like more detailed information.

Recipients of funds in previous years were Stepping Stones, Community Justice & Mediation Center, Shalom Community Center, Community Kitchen of Monroe County, and Martha's House.

-The Social Justice Funds Committee  
Stephanie Estell and Jennifer Blankenship, co-  
chairs Joan Caulton, Jan Neff, Jerry Neff

### **Habitat for Humanity Task Force**

Spring cleaning? You can clean out some items in your home and at the same time help build a new home for a local family in need. The Habitat for Humanity Task Force is planning a Re-Store Donation Day in early April for UUs. Habitat's Re-Store, managed by UU Sandi Clothier, sells new and gently used furniture, household good, electronics, appliances and building materials. All items are donated and sold at discounted prices. Proceeds benefit Habitat building projects.

So, think about what you would like to get out of your garage, basement or any

place else that you don't need or want any longer and donate it to the Re-Store, located at 200 W. 11th St., between College Ave. and Rogers St.. We will organize a Saturday donation day.

It's also time to organize UU's team for Habitat's Women's Build, an annual event for which teams of 25 women from throughout the community come together to financially support and build a home in the community. **The UU team will work on May 14**, first of nine days of the build,



when we will be measuring, cutting and hammering to build the walls that will get raised by the next team. This will be the first time that the walls have been build by a team of women on site.

Each team member will be responsible for either personally contributing or raising from friends/family/colleagues a total of \$250 by May 1. The team has to raise at least \$6,250. If you're interested in participating or learning more about the build, contact Mary Andrus-Overley ([maryao@earthlink.net](mailto:maryao@earthlink.net), 334-3437), who is the UU team captain again.

Earlier this month, the task force donated \$2,200 and we provided workers and food for one day in January for the current Habitat build. We raised the money by parking cars for IU football games, hosting a breakfast and selling decorations at the holiday bazaar. Thanks to everyone who contributed to that effort.

-Barb Berghoetz, task force co-chairman

Singers of United Lands (SOUL)  
Welcome Dinner & Meet and Greet

**Monday Feb. 23, 7pm UU Church →**