

November 23, 2009



Common Ground

Social Justice Newsletter for the UU Church of Bloomington Indiana

Call to Action: Help Commute Prisoner's Imminent Death Sentence and Stop the Cycle of Violence

– By Glenda Breeden for the Friends of Prisoners Task Force

Action Alert: Eric Wrinkles, a man on Indiana's Death Row, has received an execution date-December 11th, 2009. This will be Indiana's first execution in two and a half years if it goes forward. In keeping with several resolutions of the UUA denouncing the death penalty as cruel and unnecessary punishment, we UU's of Indiana need to cry out against this state sponsored murder that is set to be carried out in our names-we are Indiana citizens whose taxes pay for this barbaric crime against humanity. Executions diminish all of us-not merely the governor who washes his hands of the crime, nor the executed person, nor the one who inserts the needle into his arm. So, with that said, please take time to write to Gov. Daniels asking that he commute Mr. Wrinkles sentence to life imprisonment-this is an opportune time to stop the cycle of violence. (address: The Honorable Governor Mitch Daniels, State House, Room 206, Indianapolis, 46204). We will have a table set up between services on the 22nd with more information and sample letters-please come by.

Our Monroe County Jail volunteers are passionate about their work with those incarcerated here in our community. Mentors are needed for parolees; plans are being made for a half-way house; donations of children's books-from infant board books to young adult material-are still taken to the jail waiting room regularly; shelter is being sought for visitors to the jail on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings so that educational and entertaining programs can be offered to the children of those incarcerated; caring and friendly folks are invited to join Crafting Bridges once a month.

Please plug in to this too often forgotten segment of our community.

Our liaison with the quilters at Wabash Valley Correctional Facility continues to thrive. We are always glad to receive and deliver quilting materials and/or monetary donations to the Quilt Project. See this month's Social Justice Bulletin Board in the Commons for more news of our work and contact information.-Glenda Breeden, facilitator, FoPTF, bgbreeden@att.net.

Double Bag It! Holiday Miracle Food Baskets

– *By the Helping Feed Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force*

C'mon! Admit it! You know you feel warm and fuzzy as you wander up and down the grocery store aisles trying to decide – hmmm . . . blueberry pancake mix or buttermilk, tuna in water or oil, cranberry sauce smooth or lumpy. Yep! That's because you're buying food to fill a Monroe County United Ministries Food Basket. And once again you have the opportunity to join in the UU annual holiday

food drive that shares our many blessings with families who are less fortunate than we are.



Last year our congregation was able to supply MCUM with over 90% of the Holiday Food Baskets that they needed to distribute in our community. You can see that they depend heavily on our generosity.

Please sign up on the Holiday Food Baskets contributors' sheet found in the foyer by the Social Justice table. Grocery lists with careful instructions are placed with the sign up sheet. Be sure to take all the information you will need. And note: you may bring in your food baskets anytime the UU offices are open. The deadline for this year's basket deliveries is Thursday, December 3.

VERY IMPORTANT – PLEASE PUT YOUR TURKEY OR HAM IN THE REFRIGERATOR--DON'T LEAVE THEM IN YOUR GROCERY BAGS!

If you have any questions, call Mary Blizzard 333-8957.

And don't forget, you can double that warm, fuzzy feeling by purchasing the grocery store coupons for Kroger, Marsh, and Bloomingfoods, sold every Sunday between services, which donate 5% of the proceeds to the UU Church!

Thank you for contributing to the MCUM Holiday Miracle. Your efforts and generosity will be much appreciated by families who receive food baskets.

Holiday Alternative Giving

– *By Barb Berggoetz, Connie Nelson-Laird, Habitat for Humanity Task Force, Jason Blankenship, International Outreach Task Force, Lizzie Cooke, Green Sanctuary Task Force*

This holiday season, three UU task forces are providing UUsers a chance to support good local and international causes through a donation in the name of a friend or family member who doesn't need another tangible gift.

The International Outreach, Habitat for Humanity and Green Sanctuary Task Forces are sponsoring this Holiday Alternative Giving between services in Friendship Hall on Nov. 29, Dec. 13 and Dec. 20 and at the holiday bazaar on Dec. 4-5.

Please consider making a donation. You can make donations to fund tools and supplies, such as ladders, hammers, drills, safety goggles and shovels, for Habitat builds. The International Task Force will use funds for the Kenya Women's Co-operative and the Buruni micro-lending project. Donations to the Green Sanctuary Task Force will go toward the Reforestation project in Haiti.

In return for making donations, you will receive a special card and/or token gift that you can give to the person for whom you are making the donation. This is a great way to honor those on your list who appreciate the causes supported by our task forces.

Stop Escalation in Afghanistan

– *By David Keppel, Green Sanctuary Force*

As the Senate debates health care, it is urgent that it also act to protect the health of our planet. The Senate is considering the Clean Energy, Jobs, and American Power Act, sponsored by Senators Barbara Boxer and John Kerry. It seeks to cut global warming by creating a mandate for renewable energy and by instituting a cap-and-trade system for greenhouse gas pollution caused by burning fossil fuels such as coal and oil.

One strong feature of the bill, in contrast to the version passed by the House, is that it does not override the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate carbon emissions under the

Clean Air Act. More worrisome is its support for nuclear power. Nuclear power does not itself generate greenhouse emissions, but it involves catastrophic risks, such as accident, terrorism, waste disposal, and proliferation, that will be very hard to manage in a turbulent time.

Senator Evan Bayh is a swing vote. He has often protected coal interests over the environment. Indiana is the most coal intensive state for electricity generation in the nation. As Michigan congressmen found when they protected the automobile industry from fuel efficiency regulations, parochialism only ensures economic decline. Please call him at (812) 465-6500.

Helping Rebuild Damaged New Orleans Homes and Buildings

– *By the The Katrina Relief Task Force*

Reprint from October 2009

The Katrina Relief Task Force took 9 volunteers to New Orleans to rebuild damaged buildings for the week of October 3–10, 2009. We removed drywall and gutted two small offices in the large Central Congregational church that had received some flood water during Katrina, and that has not been used since, except for a Child Development Center in one part of the building. The plan is now to convert that church to a community center, and our work will help that plan to progress. A few of us also worked at a home in the Chantilly Woods area, completing the

– *Continued on back page*

installation of new drywall in nine rooms. This was done in cooperation with a second volunteer group from Portland Maine.

We plan to take another group down at IU's spring vacation next March 13–20, so stay tuned for information about that. If you want to be on the mailing list for information as plans develop, please send email to nola.dfp@comcast.net, or phone David Parkhurst at 333-2945.

Coming in December !

2009 Art Fair and Bazaar

Come one, come all to the Holiday Art Fair and Bazaar **Friday, Dec. 4th, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 5, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** This annual event offers a chance to do some holiday shopping, have lunch or dinner at the café, and enjoy a festive atmosphere all in support of our church. See our poster for a list of participating artisans and more information.