

## **Social Justice Annual Report 2019-2020 Unitarian Universalist Church Bloomington IN**



***Social Justice permeates all programming at the UU Church of Bloomington – worship, religious education, fellowship, and special groups like Chalice Circles and the choir. Social Justice Task Forces are formed when a number of people wish to work together around a specific social justice area.***

Our congregation is very active in many areas of social justice. With the pandemic, activities have changed and in some cases been delayed. In other areas particularly with hunger and homelessness, activities have increased substantially. KAP has moved from meeting in person to home delivery of activities helpful for children and their families.

The third Sunday SJ Film series continued with increased attendance. The task forces found many creative fund raising mechanisms to support their activities and continued hosting parking during IU football games.

Several members of the Social Justice Circle pooled their funds and made a \$1500 donation to Shalom Community Center. They also supported creating a How You Can Help webpage and linked off from the church home page that gives up to date things we all can do. This page is updated regularly and is especially helpful in supporting everyday donations and pickups designated for different groups in the community. Many are hunger in nature, but it also often includes toiletry items, cleaning materials, clothes, etc.

**End of Life Task Force(EOLTF)** believes that our cultural consciousness needs to change with respect to death, terminal illnesses, aging, grief, and other parts of the end of life and will work to do so. [Tracy Turner](#) or [Kathy Gilbert](#).

### **The End of Life Task Force Annual Report**

In the past year, The End of Life Task Force has held events addressing end of life concerns, including an August workshop utilizing the Sacred Dying Journal (published by the Sacred Dying Foundation) and UUCB memorial planning documents, facilitated by Reverend Mary Ann Macklin and EOLTF co-chair Tracy Turner.

During the annual Celebrating Our Ancestors service in October, we help a quiet, serene space for those who wanted to talk about loved ones who had died, or simply needed someplace private to be to process the feelings the service evoked.

In January, EOLTF co-chair Kathy Gilbert and her daughter, Rebecca J. Gilbert (a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist) held a workshop called "Crafting Grief and Resiliency: Using Hobbies and Crafts in the Healing Process After a Loss."

We were on the cusp of reassessing our activities and goals as a task force with guidance from MAM when she returned from her sabbatical, because many of the people who have expressed interest in joining us have a more pastoral role in mind, while our focus has been largely educational. The death of Megory Anderson of the Sacred Dying Foundation last year meant the Vigiling at Life's End (VALE) group would have to find a new path if anyone new wanted to join, so we were considering ways to merge the groups.

First, the resignation of the associate minister, and soon after, the pandemic stalled that discussion.

To try and meet the moment at hand, we pulled together online resources for the congregation about a number of end of life-related topics particular to this time, including socially distanced memorials, advanced directives, and helping families cope with the coronavirus. We are in conversations with MAM about how to offer what we may offer as a lay ministry, and will continue to evaluate our role as a support to the ministers and the changing needs of the congregation.



The **Green Sanctuary Task Force** promotes mindful, Earth centered living, working to educate and motivate individuals and institution to take positive steps toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions with the understanding that it is our moral imperative to care for the Earth. [Marcia Veldman](#)

### **The Green Sanctuary Task Force Annual Report**

The GSTF continued to be active on several fronts until the public health emergency suspended many of our activities for the spring and summer. Coffee sales, football parking and participation in the Holiday Bazaar helped provide funding for our projects and sponsorships to outside organizations. Donations were made to H-IPL and Farm to Family Fund.

We launched the Earth Keepers composting program at the church, running a pilot that allowed Earth Keepers to more fully develop the concept on the compost exchange. Using funding from the SPF, Green Grounds worked with Gardens by Ana on ground maintenance and watering of trees, continuing to move toward a permaculture model.

We launched the Plastics Task of the Month. In conjunction with that effort, Jana Perea did a public presentation on plastics reduction at Green Drinks in October and in November we showed "Bag It" as part of the Social Justice film series.

For MLK day we worked with Earth Care on the Community Energy Fair at the Evangelical Community Church with GSTF members staffing many of the tables.

In November GSTF members launched a local group of Extinction Rebellion.

Also in the fall we hosted another well attended Clothing Swap.

Our efforts to continue to improve energy efficiency in the building and grounds were rewarded with a 96% Energy Star rating

Grounds: In the summer of 2019 over 30 volunteers, including a chalice circle, took on maintenance of small areas of the grounds, and many have signed up to do so again in 2020. A site plan with numbered areas to be maintained was created and uploaded to the Green Sanctuary Task Force portion of the church website. With a grant from Special Purposes we hired Gardens by Ana, whose employees from Made Up Mind (former felons)

ran our drip irrigation to the evergreen trees during the dry months of summer 2019, weeding while the system runs. The grant will cover a second year of their services in the summer of 2020. Most of the everbearing strawberries wintered over in our garden tower, and a volunteer planted lettuce and herbs in the top and empty pockets. During the COVID 19 building closure our composting cabinet was closed, and members took their organic materials to cabinets outside the Bloomingfoods East or Near West Side stores.



**Habitat for Humanity Task Force** strives to educate the congregation about housing needs of Monroe County, including purpose and accomplishments of Habitat for Humanity and other related housing groups. Congregation can contribute in many ways to help provide decent affordable housing in Monroe County. Barb Berggoetz or Kathleen Chmelewski

### **The Habitat Task Force Annual Report**

The Habitat Task Force was active during 2019-20, with a dual focus: 1) raising funds to co-sponsor a Habitat home within a few years, and 2) increasing the number of UUsers who participate in Habitat Task Force projects. With the advent of COVID19 and the curtailment of face-to-face fundraising and build projects, we are considering how to best support Habitat in the coming months by virtual fundraising projects, contributing financially to Habitat's immediate needs caused by COVID19, and other creative measures.

**Our Habitat Task Force members are:** Barb Berggoetz and Kathleen Chmelewski, co-chairs, Connie Nelson Laird, Nedra Carlson, Jackie Hall, Angela Lexmond, Mary Blizzard, Kathy Sideli, Brian and Pearl Springfield, Dian and Ed Robbins, Tracy James, Dirk and Susan Herr-Hoyman, Laura Hannam, Deb Martin, Sandy Davoren, Richard Stumpner and Licia Weber. Others have voiced an interest in joining and/or volunteering for builds and fundraisers and contributing money. The task force meets on the first Sunday of most months, 10:15 to 11:15 a.m.

**Our objectives/funds:** Educate the congregation about local housing needs, including the purpose and accomplishments of Habitat and other housing-related groups; support Habitat by providing volunteers, food and raising money for builds and its needs, including equipment. As of May 2020, we had \$12,150 in our account.

#### **During the 2019-20 year, the task force:**

- We have raised \$12,150 of our \$20,000 goal to co-sponsor a Habitat home in the next few years. The search continues for Bloomington community co-sponsors. The Evangelical Community Church has committed, along with tentative interest from Sherwood Oaks Christian Church pending leadership approval and the First United Methodist Church. Inquiries are still out to a variety of potential partners.
- Our TF is considering applying for the SPF Matching Funds program. The proposal means dipping into our build savings to provide PPE masks and hand sanitizer for builders or to help with mortgage payments for homeowners who've lost jobs as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic. If the task force approves, we may donate \$1,385 and if awarded matching funds would result in a \$2,770 contribution.

- Donated our annual UU Social Justice grant of \$300 to the Shalom Community Center for their most pressing needs during the coronavirus crisis. Our donation, along with contributions from five other SJ task forces, resulted in a \$1,500 total contribution.
- Our Social Justice Moment presentation on March 1 featured photos and messages from six current or future Habitat families. The UU boomwackers provided a musical performance with hardhats and hammering.
- The Habitat Women Build has been tentatively rescheduled from May 2 to sometime in Aug 2020. Co-leaders Barb Berggoetz and Lauren Bryant have organized a team of 39 UU and other women. As of May 3, our team had raised \$9,740, the most of any team. We remain ready to build as soon as conditions allow. We have received \$800 from several UUsers to help team members' meet their minimum \$270 donation level.
- We applied for the UU 25% Sunday Plate Fund. While we were not nominated as the recipient this year, we were encouraged to apply again next year.
- Screened "Briars in the Cottonpatch" on Sunday, March 3, as part of the Social Justice Film Series. We co-sponsored the film with the Racial Justice Task Force. Approximately 25 people attended and participated in a post-film conversation about the origins of Habitat for Humanity and its overlap with the civil rights movement.
- Sponsored a Habitat Take-Home Chili sale on February 3, 2020, between services at UU and earned \$429 to put towards our house sponsorship.
- Sold handmade crafts donated by task force members and other UUsers at the UU Holiday Bazaar in December, 2019, earning \$1,380. Task force members made decorative Christmas trees and cookie/soup jars.
- Sponsored a Habitat Coffee House, Oct. 18, and earned \$1,055 (including \$225 in Judy Allenworth's jewelry sales) toward house sponsorship.
- Awarded \$500 social justice grant by UU to be used as seed money for fundraising to co-sponsor home. Plan to sponsor fundraising event at UU, such as a coffeehouse, when COVID19 restrictions are lifted.
- Participated in both Getting Involved Fairs.
- Participated in a Habitat build on Saturday, May 18, with 10 volunteers at 905 W. Moravec Way, Bloomington.
- Parked cars for IU football game in August, September and November, making \$2,664 for total task force share.
- Organized two UU tables at Habitat's More Than Houses event in November 2019.
- Increased our task force membership and Facebook postings.
- Participated in the "Because of You" Annual Volunteer Thank-You event, Jan. 2020. Barb Berggoetz was awarded the Community Partner Volunteer of the Year award.

- During 2019, Habitat TF members participated regularly in the monthly Hunger TF food pantry at College Square. This furthers a UU initiative to create cross-currents among task forces.



**Help Feed Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force(HFOHN)** engages in projects to reduce hunger in our community: monthly College Square (Walnut Grove) Pantry, Christmas baskets for MCUM, Bountyful Sunday Food Drives , staffing Shalom breakfast once a month. *Mary Blizzard*

## **The Help Feed Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force Annual Report**

The past year was another successful year for the HFOHN Task Force. We continued the activities that have been so successful for us in the past including our work with the food pantry at College Square (Walnut Grove) Apartments, and we were able to add a few new projects/fundraisers as well.

\* **Holiday Basket Food Drive.** (November 2019) Annual food drive for MCUM’s Emergency Food Pantry. Individuals and families at the church can donate a “holiday basket” to benefit a local family in need. A basket is actually 2-3 days worth of groceries, which can include the fixings for a holiday meal. In 2019, our congregation donated 80% of MCUM’s total holiday baskets. UU has consistently been the biggest donator of baskets for this food drive.

\* **First Sunday Food Drives.** We returned to our monthly food drives which target a different agency each month: New Hope Family Shelters, Backpack Buddies, Shalom, Wheeler Missions, Mother Hubbard’s Cupboard, Area 10, MCUM, College Square Pantry, and New Leaf New Life. This monthly process not only distributes the food more fairly, but also raises the congregation’s awareness of these outside agencies and their needs. These food drives have taken on a “virtual” aspect with the coming of Covid19. We are able to successfully continue these food collections by bins placed on the outside, north side of the church where supplies are picked up daily and distributed appropriately. This is a shining example of how the generosity of this congregation allows up to continue our work.

\* **IU Football Parking.** HFOHN raised \$1065.50 this year.

\* **UU Cookbooks.** This was a fun fund raiser, as we asked members of the congregation to send us their favorite recipes for the book. The response was overwhelming and we were able to sell all 100 copies to make \$1000.

\* **Fiber Arts Booth at Holiday Bazaar.**(December 2019). HFOHN runs a booth selling hand knitted and hand made fiber items (scarves, hats, quilts, etc.). Members and friends of the congregation make these items and donate them to the sale. In 2019, the booth brought in approximately \$2800, a portion of which was donated to the MCUM Emergency Services. The rest of the money was set aside to acquire food from Hoosier Hills Food Bank to supply the Cottage Square Food Pantry. This has become the biggest fund raiser for us.

\* **College Square Food Pantry.** In March 2015, HFOHN began running a monthly food pantry at Walnut Grove Apartments in Bloomington, later named College Square. Food from Hoosier Hills Food Bank is delivered to the site and task force members and other volunteers from the church setup and run the food pantry on the 3rd Friday of each month. Thanks to our fundraising from the Holiday Bazaar and the SJ Grant Award, we have been

able to “buy”(at 18 cents per pound)) food from HHFB to supplement the foods dropped off by the HHFB truck. In December, we were able to put together Holiday Food Baskets for pantry goers, which included extra food of canned hams, fresh fruit, granola bars, chocolate and more. RE had the children decorate grocery sacks for this project and the pantry clients seemed very appreciative.

So far, this has been a great opportunity for us to work directly with people experiencing hunger. It has also been a great opportunity for this task force to expand our work with members and friends of our own congregation who volunteer at the pantry each month. We have been able to host several Chalice Circles who volunteered, several youth from the church and many others. Without the support of these volunteers, we couldn't sustain this much-needed food pantry. With the start of the corona virus shutdown, we were still able to have a “pantry” in April and May with the help of the National Guard and a radical change in logistics.

\* **Hot Breakfast at Shalom.** This is a continuing program that we began in February of last year. On the second Wednesday of every month, 3 volunteers go to the Shalom Community Center at 6:30 am to prepare and serve a hot breakfast for the clients. Usually they are served a cold breakfast in the form of cereal and pastries, but our volunteers prepare scrambled eggs, Tator Tots, and sausages and serve between 80-100 people. The money for this breakfast comes from the Hunger Task Force budget. Unfortunately, this activity has been postponed until further notice because of the virus.

\* **Community Kitchen Help.** We have joined forces with Libby DeVoe to help with the volunteer kitchen help for CK, the third Thursday of every month. Three volunteers give about 2 hours of their time to prepare take away meals for shut ins. Unfortunately before this merger was well established, the virus has put this task on hold.

\* **The Gourmet Valentine Dinner.** This was a smashing success in February. We not only sold out, but oversold by a few tickets. There was much congregation participation, not only in consuming a superb meal, but also in setup and clean up. We were able to raise \$1248 from this activity.

**Hunger & Homelessness:** In March, HFOHN decided to work more closely with the Homelessness Task Force, which now consists of Alan Backler, Marlin Howard, and Mary Blizzard. We found that some of our tasks were overlapping, so we merged in order to support each other, including help with fund raising.

**HFOHN** is a strong and enthusiastic task force consisting of Iris Kiesling, Cecelia Murphy, Dixie Welch, Jackie Hall, Judy Kelly, Dee Morris, Anne Graham, Lynn Struve, Bettina Hahn, and Mary Blizzard, plus many other dedicated volunteers from the congregation. **And we can't wait to get back to work!**

\* *Denotes task force activities that directly involve the congregation. Prepared by Mary Blizzard*



The **Homelessness Task Force** works with agencies to provide services/support to homeless people, to develop strategies dealing with issues related to homelessness including hunger and unemployment, and to end homelessness. Alan Backler

### **The Homelessness Task Force Annual Report**

The major activity of the Homelessness Taskforce, until this year, was to operate the Interfaith Winter Shelter (IWS) at Wheeler Mission on the second Saturday of each month from November 1 to March 31. Because Wheeler Mission has taken over the total operation of the shelter, many fewer volunteers from the churches, including UUCB, staff the shelter.

The following is a review of our current activities:

For years, the Homelessness Taskforce has worked with the Hunger Taskforce. This year, as this report will indicate, the two taskforces are working much more closely together. We supply coffee, macaroni, and spaghetti to Shalom Community Center every week, year-round. We continue to do this activity, but, have expanded the service. In April we provided those types of items for Shalom and New Hope for Families. Since the church is closed, we placed bins near the portico entrance where congregants can leave donations. We collect the items donated every day and take them to the designated agencies for their use. Beginning on May 1, we offer the goods collected to Shalom, Wheeler Mission, and Backpack Buddies. In addition, we work with organizers of the Bazaar and Auction to distribute left over articles to agencies serving the needs of the less fortunate in Monroe County.

Along with four other Social Justice Task Forces, this year we donated our Social Justice funds of \$300 to Shalom Community Center. The total amount, \$1500, will be used to support the Shalom Hunger Relief program.

Together with the Hunger Task Force, we applied to the Special Purposes Fund Committee for a matching grant to support the hunger relief efforts of seven agencies in Monroe County. We were awarded \$1,700 from SPF, which means that we will be donating a total of \$3,400 to those agencies: Shalom Community Center (\$400), Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (\$400), Community Kitchen (\$400), Monroe County United Ministries(\$400), New Hope for Families(\$400), Wheeler Mission(\$400), and Hoosier Hills Food Bank. (\$1,000)

This year, the task force planned to focus primarily on volunteer activities for Shalom Community Center (which also includes Friend's Place and Crawford Homes.) Our intent was to recruit volunteers to engage in activities such as food services (preparing meals), supervising the Shalom library, sorting clothing and other donations as well as building repair work, painting, and cleaning. (UU volunteers provide one hot breakfast a month for Shalom and its clients.) Unfortunately, because of the coronavirus epidemic, those opportunities are very limited, though some people still volunteer.

The coronavirus has also limited the activities of a committee that Homelessness Taskforce members Marlin Howard and Alan Backler serve on. This committee is primarily made up of people whose churches had volunteered to operate the Interfaith Winter Shelter. The

purpose of the committee was to identify ways in which the Wheeler Mission Shelter could be served and in which the community could be better informed about homelessness.

The coronavirus has also limited a video project that some of the task force members were doing with New Hope for Families, in which we were capturing the stories of families who had successfully worked with New Hope and were now in permanent housing. We were working on this project with Sociology Professor Emily Meanwell, and hope to continue it in the fall.

Jim Harvey, Marlin Howard and Alan Backler serve on the Homelessness Taskforce. Jim and Alan serve on committees for the Shalom Community Center. Marlin volunteers at Shalom. Again, we are all limited by the coronavirus.

Submitted by Alan Backler and Marlin Howard, Co-Chairmen



The **Hope for Prisoners Task Force (HFPTF)** works on projects based on recognizing humanity of those in prison and their families. The goal of this task force is to serve and advocate for individuals during incarceration and their return to this community, and also their families and support systems with a major effort to support KAP, Kids with Absent Parents. **Chris Haynes**

### **The Hope for Prisoners Annual Report**

The mission of this task force is to work with the community to initiate, coordinate and encourage efforts to aid both incarcerated and released people, and advocate for their just treatment, at county, state, and national levels.

In conjunction with the Social Justice Film Series and the Open Mind Zen group, the task force sponsored on February 16th the showing of *The Dhamma Brothers*, a documentary which tells a dramatic tale of human potential and transformation through the practice of Vipassana meditation in an Alabama maximum security prison. The showing was well attended and followed by a lively discussion of inmate needs and the power of meditation for personal transformation in general, and particularly in the context of incarceration.

KAP: Kids with Absent Parents is the major new initiative of the task force. KAP provides programs for the children who are separated from a parent and their caregivers. Bi-monthly gatherings include lunch, followed by separate and simultaneous enrichment programs for the children and their caregivers. This is made possible by a pool of over twenty active volunteers and partnership with Girls Inc. of Monroe County, which provides the facility. Typical bi-monthly participation is 12 to 20 kids from up to 12 families. During the pandemic KAP has helped distribute food, crafts, books, games and puzzles to the caregivers. Those interested in contributing to this program with their time or financial support please contact Mary Goetze at (812) 327-0144, or email [kidswithabsentparents@gmail.com](mailto:kidswithabsentparents@gmail.com).

The task force has been involvement with two other dynamic community initiatives: Courage to Change, <http://couragetochangehouse.com>, which provides transitional housing for sober living and MUM: Made Up Mind, <http://mummadeupmind.org>, which assists the



development of ex-offenders who have made up their mind to stay out through transitional life training and hands-on work experience, thus breaking the cycle of homelessness, addiction, and incarceration. An essential part of this is providing supervised employment for the first few months, providing a variety of services. If you need assistance with such things as lawn care, landscaping, painting, gutter cleaning, car detailing, furniture repair or residential moving, etc., please contact them.

We maintain our involvement with the long-standing New Leaf--New Life (NLNL) organization, <http://www.newleafnewlife.org>, which provides support and volunteer-led programming for inmates in the Monroe County jail, as well as support for released individuals returning to our community through the Transition Support Center (TSC). Opportunities for involvement include financial contributions and volunteer support for jail programming. One such is the Read to Me program in which incarcerated parents read books to their children that are delivered to the child as a CD with accompanying book, with hundreds distributed in the past year. During the pandemic, jail volunteer access has been suspended and TSC closed to clients, but jail services continue via internal communications and some TSC services continue to be offered via entrance contact. For information about other NLNL initiatives and volunteer opportunities, such as jail Bingo, visit their [Volunteer page](#) or contact Chris Haynes at 812-360-0296 or [chaynes56@gmail.com](mailto:chaynes56@gmail.com).

-- Chris Haynes, HFPTF chair



The **International Outreach Task Force (IOTF)** expand and improve cross-cultural and international understanding through hands on involvement with projects fulfilling local needs in developing countries. Currently three projects are in Kenya: [Claire Robertson](#)

### **The International Outreach Task Force Annual Report**

#### *Status of the Kenyan Projects*

Our Task Force exists to raise funds for projects in Kenya. Every 2 years we visit the projects to see how things are going. This year a small group including Judy Kelly and Penny Githens (not a church member) went on a successful but a bit stressful trip. This group had to be reconstituted twice in membership since several people who confirmed their interest in going then subsequently cancelled their reservations, hence I invited Penny to go, given her great interest and past as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the 1970s in Kenya. Her expertise became invaluable as it turned out. We found that one of the projects, the residential orphanage, Msamaria Mwema, now housing some 36 children, has a number of problems such that we no longer are going to support it with funds, although we might take clothing to them. They might not exist much longer if the Kenyan government enforces its new law to shut down all residential orphanages, but the managers/owners are not keeping proper records, seem to be inflating costs of basic goods and paying themselves in doing that. The decision to remove funding was arrived at at a meeting in February of all interested folk, approximately ten people.

The Spurgeon School for AIDS orphans is doing fine, is well managed with almost 500 students, and used the funds brought (about \$8,000 equivalent) immediately to pay staff

and to put down a cement floor in the basement of the building where they hold classes, as per a requirement of the city of Nairobi.

The Ndethya wa Ngutethya Women's Group at Kathonzweni, Kenya, seems to have some problems, with reduced attendance and too much authority wielded by Monica, its leader. She expressed a very strong preference to spend all the money on larger water tanks, but at our meeting told us that the ones they already have, supplied by us, never filled in the past 3 years. Also, it was clear that the guttering aimed at filling them was often not done properly so that much water was wasted. We told them to fix the guttering properly. So, after much discussion by our group, and after emphasizing to them that they needed to be doing a project that earns them income in the future, eventually after our departure but continued advocacy by Jane Turunga and her daughter-in-law, who has a degree in development studies, they decided to raise chickens and set up that business using the money given as capital, which is proceeding. We emphasized to them that in the future there might not be more funds forthcoming and that they needed to think about their children and grandchildren. The next and last (if no one wants to take over the effort) trip should be in 2021.

### *Fundraising*

In 2018-19 we had a record fundraising effort through bake sales, donations, separate sales of African stuff and designer scarves, etc., such that we had almost \$8,000 to give to each project. Unfortunately, this year COVID 19 restrictions closing the church have also closed down our fundraising, no bake sales, no on site bigger sales, after February, 2020 so far. We look forward to resuming our efforts but do not know when that is going to happen.



The **Just Peace Task Force** works to promote peace and justice in the world, recognizing the essential role of grassroots organizing in creating a consensus for a new foreign and military policy. David Keppel

### **The Just Peace Task Force Annual Report**

In the past year, the Just Peace Task Force labored for a major initiative that was unexpectedly postponed. Around the nation and around the world, municipalities are formally declaring themselves "in alignment" with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. That treaty overwhelmingly passed the United Nations General Assembly in 2017 but was boycotted by the United States and other nuclear nations. The International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for its global grassroots efforts. (Please watch the ceremony [here](#).)

The Just Peace Task Force consulted national experts and local officials on the draft of the potential resolution, to be adopted by the Bloomington City Council and signed by the Mayor. It calls on the President and Congress to cancel plans to "modernize" the U.S. nuclear arsenal by building "usable" nuclear weapons that, we are convinced, would greatly increase the risk of an omnicidal nuclear war. It also commits the City to implement the

treaty by divesting any City funds from stock in nuclear weapons-makers and w(hen feasible) steering City contracts away from such companies.

After we secured support of City officials for the resolution, its formal consideration was delayed, first by the heated local debate over the Unified Development Ordinance, and then by the crisis of Covid-19. However, we intend to persist, working with our allies in City government, at the first opportunity. At that time, we will need wide support from the Congregation.

We have also been published in *The Bloomington Herald-Times* and *The New York Times*, and our members have visited Congressional offices to lobby for peace.



The **Racial Justice Task Force** joins UU communities across the US, and with faith, arts, and civic organization around the city and state, to educate, organize, and take action on racial justice issues.. Martha Foster

### **The Racial Justice Task Force Annual Report**

The work of the UUCB Racial Justice Task Force has felt a serious impact from the pandemic of 2020. Two major planned projects, as well as additional film screenings, have had to be postponed. However, the Task Force was active prior to and somewhat during the pandemic shutdown, and expects resume the planned projects when that is possible.

#### **Events and Activities with UU during the 2019-20 year:**

- Task force members organized and served food for a reception for the presentation of *Sentences: From the Pen to the Page* at the Waldron Rose Firebay theater on September 6, 2019.
- Task Force members participated in fall football parking fundraising
- Task Force Chair Martha Foster presented the SJ Moment at a Sunday service in February, 2020, tabled at Getting Involved fairs, etc., and offered brochures and sign-up sheets for the Task Force
- Racial Justice Task Force continued to participate in the Third Sunday Social Justice Film Series, including sponsoring several screenings of the work of Dr. Alan Backler and a special Hallowe'en showing of award winning feature film *Get Out*.
- The Task Force held periodic in-person meetings with interested members to plan for future activities, and notified the Task Force email list of 110+ of volunteer opportunities and events of interest, as well as meetings.
- Leaders participated in Social Justice Circles with leadership from other task forces

#### **Collaborative Work with Other Bloomington Organizations:**

- Task Force leadership and members continued to work with the Monroe Country branch of the NAACP. Martha Foster and Earon Davis, as well as other UUs, attended

monthly meetings, the NAACP annual Freedom Fund Banquet at Ivy Tech in October 2019, and the NAACP holiday banquet at the UU Church of Bloomington in December. Martha Foster co-chaired the Freedom Fund Banquet with Debra Vance, and the Task Force provided tickets for 10 or more UU members, board members, and young adults. We also placed a half page ad for the Task Force in the souvenir program for the Freedom Fund Banquet. Earon was recognized as a new Lifetime Member of the organization, joining other UU members in this category.

Martha and Earon attended the NAACP Indiana State Conference, October 25, 2019 in Clark County. Martha accepted a position as an assistant secretary for the Monroe County Branch of the NAACP, in order to help update and digitize membership records and mailing lists. The Task Force actively promotes individual NAACP memberships and provides application forms at the UUCB

- The Task Force organized at least four volunteers and provided funding for the Bloomington Black Lives Matter organization, coordinating with Renee Reed, member of UU Bloomington and Bloomington BLM, to support a drive to provide Easter baskets and other materials for Black families in Bloomington. Volunteers shopped for appropriate items for the baskets and delivered them to Renee Reed, who assembled and distributed the baskets with other volunteers. Many Racial Justice Task Force members expressed regret that they could not participate due to health concerns during the pandemic.

### **Postponed Projects to be Reinstated when Possible**

- The Racial Justice Task Force had plans underway to organize two events for the spring of 2020, including the presentation at the UU Church of Bloomington a presentation of Gladys DeVane and Liz Mitchell's production, *Elizabeth, A Woman of Color*, directed by Danielle Bruce. The scheduled March 20 date had to be postponed due to the Corona virus pandemic.
- The Task Force was also planning a bus tour to an historic Indiana African American agricultural village, Lyles Station, with Elizabeth Mitchell as consultant and tour guide. Our intention is to invite participants from the Second Baptist Church of Bloomington, along with UU members and friends, to experience this tour together. The tour will be rescheduled when possible. The Task Force received a \$500 Social Justice grant to support the event,

May 2020, Martha Foster, Chair, Earon Davis, Co-Chair



The **Rainbow Rights Task Force** seeks to work with and for the congregation in the area of LGBTQ rights and concerns. Amy Makice



The **Reproductive Justice Task Force (RJTF)** promotes an active liberal voice to educate ourselves and the community, advocates for reproductive justice, and connects with community partners to ensure reproductive justice for all women and men. **Nan McKinley** or **Deborah Meader**

## **The Reproductive Justice Task Force Annual Report**

The RJTF mobilizes around the concept of reproductive justice as "*the right to bodily autonomy, to have children or not have children, and to parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities*". We educate, advocate and connect within the church and with outside community partners to support and advance reproductive justice for all.

### **Ongoing Work**

- Legislative liaison: Liaison monitors anti-choice *and* pro-family bills during legislative sessions and reports out to the task force with "action items" (e.g. phone calls, letters, testimony, committee watch/observation, rallies, etc.).
- Statehouse/City/County Council meetings. Face-to-face meetings with representatives and supportive presence and public comment for PPINK and All-Options PRC.
- PPINK:
  - volunteer and support clinic escorts
  - "Snack Stewards" provide snacks/drinks to patients awaiting abortions
  - provide scrub uniform bottoms to the clinic for women in need
- All-Options PRC:
  - volunteer as peer counselors and talkline support
  - Virtual diaper drive
  - Annual Hoosier Abortion Fund drive
  - promote Practical Support Network, a project that trains volunteers to provide rides and other support to women seeking abortion access
- Monitor the implementation and work of the state's Maternal Mortality Review Committee, mandated by 2018's Public Law 48.

### **Education & Outreach**

- Partnered with PPINK for the "Hoosier Days of Action" Statehouse lobbying event Feb 25th.
- Co-sponsored fundraiser to benefit Common Cause Indiana (CCI) with a showing of the documentary film Charlie vs Goliath, followed by speaker Julia Vaughn from CCI, on Sept 22, 2019.
- Legislative letter writing events during the IN legislative session with support from Maternal Advocates Resource Alliance (MARA)

### **Fundraising/Donations**

- Football parking - \$1065.50 raised
- February bake sale - \$975.73 raised
- Hoosier Abortion Fund - donation of \$750 from the task force brought our UU team total to \$1092.40 counting the congregation and friends donations.
- Annual UUCB grant to the task force for Snack Stewards - \$300 for food and beverages purchased (plus items donated by congregation)

- All Options (AO) Diaper Drive - donation of \$750 from the task force and open donations by the congregation and friends to the AO diaper website during our fundraiser
- Donation - \$750 to MARA
- Donation - \$750 to Planned Parenthood of Bloomington

Submitted by: Nan McKinley & Deborah Meader, Co-chairs



**Refugee Task Force** goal is to support refugees and immigrants living in Bloomington and work cooperatively with efforts of the Interfaith Alliance and the Bloomington Refugee Support Network. **Deb Fish**

### **The Refugee Task Force Annual Report**

When Kris Roehling moved to Indianapolis, Barb Backler stepped up to be a co-chair with Debbie Fish. We accomplished the following:

- Coat drive for immigrants in Indianapolis
- Booth at the campus-community town hall titled "Borders, Bans, and Babies: America's War on Immigrants" on March 27th
- Participate in monthly meetings of the IJTF (Immigration Justice Task Force) that is made up of people from various churches and other organizations in Bloomington; led by Christie Popp.
- Emailing notes from the IJTF meetings to the UUB list serv
- Hosting movie of the month night on May 19<sup>th</sup> showing "The Visitor"; raising money through sales of handmade jewelry by Judy Allensworth
- Hosting World Refugee Day event at UUB with BRSN
- Communicates with UU connection in Chicago to help find overnight housing for asylum seekers needing to appear in Chicago court

Submitted by Debbie Fish, co-chair

### **Social Justice Funds Committee (SJFC) - 2019-2020 Annual Report**

In October 2018, SJFC sought grant applications for funding consideration by the church's SJ grants fund. The following grants were approved:

- **Habitat For Humanity by Barb Berggoetz and Kathleen Chmelewski for fundraising**
- **Hunger Task Force/Hot breakfast for Shalom by Mary Blizzard**
- **Racial Justice Task Force/Tour of Lyles Station by Martha Foster**
- **Refugee and Immigration Support and Education Task Force/ World Refugee Day by Deb Fish**

Spring 25% Plate Fund Campaign

In March 2020, SJFC sought nominations for non-profit agencies to be the recipient of 25% of undesignated Sunday Plate funds for July 2020-June 2021.

The Following Three organizations were chosen and the final selection will be voted upon at the June 7, 2020 congregational meeting.

- **Bloomington Refugee Support Network by Deb Fish and Barb Backler**
- **Monroe County United Ministries Compass Learning Center by Sandi Clothier**
- **Women Writing for a Change by Lisa Meuser**

New guidelines were written which will be available for Fall 2020

A new procedure for educating the congregation about the three nominees via UU website were written.

SJFC Members: Anna Beaucamp, Steve Mascari, Denise Ogren, Advisor: Jackie Hall, Rev. Bill Breeden

### **3rd Sunday Social Justice Film Series Annual Report**

The second season of the film series continued our efforts to bring task force sponsored documentaries to the congregation and greater Bloomington area. Discussions followed the films, whether with provided study guides or led by the task force sponsor. We also encouraged relevant community group representation when possible.

#### **September**

Film: *Reverend Marvin Chandler: Open to the Moment*

Sponsoring TF: Racial Justice

Attendance: 35-40

Film Synopsis: The fascinating story of native Hoosier Reverend Marvin Chandler, whose life not only made a significant impact on Indiana, but on our nation as well. He never stopped sharing his love of music, commitment to justice, and passion for ministry with others. Film was followed by discussion with the filmmakers, including UU Alan Backler.

#### **October**

Film: *Jordan Peele's film: Get Out!*

Sponsoring TF: Racial Justice

Attendance: 15-20

Film Synopsis: In a step away from documentaries, this dark comedy/horror film explores one family's overly accommodating behavior of nervous attempts to deal with their daughter's interracial relationship.

#### **November**

Film: *Bag It!*

Sponsoring TF: Green Sanctuary

Attendance: 25-30

Film Synopsis: An average guy makes a resolution to stop using plastic bags at the grocery store. He comes to the conclusion that our consumptive use of plastic has finally caught up to us, and looks at what we can do about it. Today. Right now.

## **December**

Film: *Better Angels: Reuniting America*

Sponsoring Task Force: 3rd Sunday SJ Film Series

Attendance: 25-30

Community Partner: Better Angels; a citizens' organization uniting Red and Blue Americans in a working alliance to depolarize America.

Film Synopsis : 8 Democratic-leaning voters and 7 Republican-leaning voters move through a Better Angels workshop, from initial skepticism to more profound understanding and empathy.

## **January**

Film: *Mary Bateman Clark: A Woman of Colour and Courage*

Sponsoring TF: Racial Justice Task Force

Attendance: 30-35

Film Synopsis: The story of a slave brought to Indiana in 1815 and her court case to win her release from indentured servitude which went to the IN Supreme Court. The case demonstrated that even during the infancy of Indiana, important issues of justice, equality, and freedom were being debated and resolved.

UU Gladys DeVane is the on-screen narrator for the video. She and the filmmakers, including UU Alan Backler, led a discussion afterward.

## **February**

Film: *The Dhamma Brothers*

Sponsoring TF: Hope for Prisoners

Community Partner: Open Mind Zen Meditation

Attendance: 20-25

Film Synopsis: This film is about human potential and transformation through the practice of meditation in an Alabama maximum security prison. This film has the power to dismantle stereotypes about men behind prison bars, and illustrates a path to freedom available to all.

## **March**

Film: *Briars in the Cottonpatch: The Story of Koinonia Farm*

Sponsoring TF: Habitat and the Racial Justice

Attendance: 30-35

Film Synopsis: About the unique Koinonia Farm in Georgia, a small Christian community where whites and blacks chose to live and work together as equals, despite the brutal and frightening consequences. Koinonia faced years of terror, boycotts and intimidation in the years leading up to the tumultuous Civil Rights era. Their struggle helped plant the seeds for the global work of Habitat for Humanity, The Fuller Center for Housing and Jubilee Partners. Discussion followed on ways local residents can help provide affordable, decent housing and also achieve racial justice and harmony in Monroe County.

## **April**

Film: The Human Element



Sponsoring TF: Green Sanctuary

Comm Partner: Interfaith Power and Light

Attendance: online (# unknown)

Film Synopsis: With rare compassion and heart, *The Human Element* relays captivating stories from coast-to-coast, inspiring us to reevaluate our relationship with the natural world and look for ways to fix the problem.