

Minutes for the Social Justice Council Monthly Meeting
February 4, 2010 7:30 – 9:30 pm
Cedar Lane Library

Present: Betsy Devlin-Foltz, Nancy Janssen, Kay Gottesman, Becky White, Kay Scott, Ann Suydam, Val Carter, Pat Karlsen, Connie Nissley, Marge Dimond, Annette Scarpitta. Helen Strang, who was attending the AIM meeting, joined us at the end.

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting: Betsy chose the responsive reading that she and Kay Gottesman read, while Annette lit the chalice. The Covenant was not read this month.

International Concerns Coalition

Annette Scarpitta, ICC Chair, provided an update on their activities.

- The Alternative Giving program raised about \$3,000. The late start due to weather conditions and the current economy probably contributed to this amount being less than previous years. A suggestion was made to offer Alternative Giving more than once a year.
- The Kakenya Girls School received the most donations and has been selected for the ICC's 50/50 collection, which is currently scheduled for March.
- Kakenya will speak at the Forum on April 11, and Annette will check with Sandy about moving their 50/50 to that date.
- The Afghan dinner was a success and Annette thanked members of the SJC for their participation.
- Don Cleary reports that the Embassy of Ukraine will host a fundraiser for FOCCUS in late April.

General SJC Business

Social Justice Fair debriefing

The committee members agreed that the fair was a success with lots of energy in the room and made the following suggestions:

- At future fairs, number the tables and provide a map with their locations and organizations.
- Do a few smaller "fairs" throughout the year focused on different themes, such as Global issues, local issues, other issues.
- Involve SJC organizations in worship services. The summer services with visiting ministers may be a good way to start. Becky will contact Terry Hoffeld, Worship Committee chairperson, about this.
- Pat mentioned another organization that is not currently on our list. UU Affordable Housing Corp. merged with a corporation that lends money and the new organization is called Open Door. Pat will check with Jay Schneider about it.

Commitment to Justice Campaign update

Betsy passed out a "model of leadership" showing how leaders bring about change in their communities. The following ideas were discussed for following up on the congregation's commitment to participating in Social Justice activities.

- Develop a visual representation to translate hours pledged into "good done"
- Create a video of participation in volunteer activities
- Group liaisons will collect information about volunteer activities: number and names of volunteers, personal stories/testimonials, pictures to exhibit in the space outside library.
**** Betsy follow-up message to SJC members with detailed suggestions is included at the end of these minutes.

Betsy will talk to Roger about giving SJC a minute at each service through March.

Kay Gottesman will collect group information and stories.

Haiti Earthquake Relief – update and next steps

The special 100% collection for Haiti raised \$8,000. for Partners in Health. There are no plans at this time for follow up activities.

50/50 Update

February – LGBT will donate their collection to Equality Maryland.

March – International Concerns will donate their collection to the Kakenya Girls School. Annette would like to reschedule this to April in conjunction with Kakenya’s forum talk.

April – Whoever is scheduled for April could move to March.

Finance update: Connie reported the following items:

- Charges for copies continued to be high – this is probably related to the SJC Fair.
- Carrie Meyer said that the Endowment Committee plans to transfer the part of the SJC gift fund in the investment pool into the part in the operating account, so they have fewer small accounts in the investment account.
- As requested by Annette, Connie gave Bruce M. approval to write checks totaling \$1300 from the International Concerns budget. These were not taken out of our account as of 2/1.
- Second semester tuition for the recipient of the Maurer Scholarship Fund will be \$2,046, which a little more than first semester.
- Marge would like to move some money from the LGBT operating expenses into the Yamamoto Fund, which is dedicated to LGBT issues.
- Kay Scott will contact the UUSJ to find out about our financial obligation to them.

Nominations for next year

Since the SJC term is 3 years, several members who joined in 2007 indicated they plan to retire this year. Members can begin thinking about potential SJC nominations.

Requests for SJC Support

Connection Circle Facilitators’ service project: Pat Karlson reported that the facilitators would like to make a video of congregation activities. This fits in nicely with the earlier discussion of publicizing the congregation’s commitment to social justice.

Pledge Committee: Nancy Janssen reported that this year’s goal is one million dollars, which will enable raising salaries for the Cedar Lane staff.

Closing: The members observed a moment of silence.

Announcements

LGBT Task Force

Lobby Day Bus is **Monday, February 8**. The bus will leave CL at 4:00 pm, head to Annapolis for the Rally, followed by legislative meetings and return to CL about 9:00.

AIM

Helen handed out a flyer about AIM’s winter action meetings 7:30-9pm.

Wednesday February 24 - AIM Action with County Executive Leggett

Cedar Lane pledged to bring 20 people

Thursday March 11 – AIM Action with U.S. Representative Van Hollen

Cedar Lane pledged to bring 35 people

SJC members will be signing up participants in the lounge.

Follow-up message from Betsy

Plans to keep up the momentum and generate more buzz for the Campaign for Justice.

Contact “your group” (see liaison list below this message) to collect the information below.

1. **An inspiring vignette** about the social justice work the group is doing (ideally, but not necessarily, between Jan and March). It could be:
 - A story about what it meant for someone (new?) to be involved in the work of this group;
OR
 - An exciting description of what the group did; OR
 - The impact the group has had (the funds from the Afghan Dinner will support xxxx couples literacy classes, AIM’s most recent action led to xxxxx, Cedar Lane’s contribution to Martha’s Table feeds xxxx people each month,) OR
 - Anything else that will “make it real”

We will find a way to share these with the congregation—during a service, in the newsletter, on the wall/window next to the tally of volunteers and hours, in the connections circle facilitators video. Send a brief summary of the vignette to Kay Gottesman (kgottesman@verizon.net)

2. The **names of people** involved in their group’s activities during the Jan-March campaign (please send to cluucjustice@gmail.com)

3. The **approximate number of hours** they will be involved. This can be a number for the whole group or for individuals (please send to cluucjustice@gmail.com)

Also, encourage “your” group to **consider creating an exhibit** for the vestibule at the church entrance, such as the LGBT exhibit that is currently on display for ideas. Check with Sara Deshler sdeshler@cedarlane.org about space availability.

Liaisons to...

- LGBT task force-Marge
- CLARITY-Nancy
- Environmental Task Force- Ann S., Connie
- International Concerns Committee- Betsy
- Action in Montgomery-Helen & Kay S.
- Community Based Shelter- Sandy
- Bethesda Men’s Shelter-Connie
- Manna Food-Anne T.
- A Wider Circle-Anne T.
- Kensington Parkwood Tutoring-_____ Nancy ???
- Re-building Together-Mike Burski
- Criminal Justice/Anti-Death Penalty-Betsy
- Martha’s Table – Becky