

Minutes
Cedar Lane UU Church Social Justice Council Meeting
Thursday, October 4, 2007

Present: Deborah Vollmer, Karen Lerner, Helen Strang, Mike Benefiel, Betsy Devlin-Foltz, Connie Nissley, Marge Dimond, Pat Karlsen.

1. Check in

Mike Benefiel opened the meeting and invited members to check-in

Helen Strang noted that a commitment had been made to bring 45 people to the AIM action on October 17

Deborah Vollmer raised concerns about low participation in McCaw meetings & a lack of CLUUC's involvement in Peace work.

Connie Nissley noted the very full agenda and wondered what process we should have to follow up with people who come to us with requests & concerns.

2. Mission Statement

The council discussed the draft mission statement. Mike Benefiel requested that all members look it over again and come to the next meeting with suggestions for edits.

3. Treasurer's Report

Connie Nissley, SJC treasurer presented a draft budget. The committee discussed various line items and thanked Connie for her work on this "close to thankless" task! Heather encouraged us to think bigger and consider asking the congregation for more as our passions develop.

Individuals on the committee and task forces are encouraged to request specific amounts and communicate them to Connie. It was noted that the Council could consider doing fundraisers.

4. Congregational Outreach

Betsy Devlin-Foltz shared ideas for communications strategy for 2007-08. Of the ideas presented the Council seemed most interested in arranging to have a presence in the lounge on Sundays on a regular basis to share information about social justice activities. Social Justice Task Forces would be invited to join Council members at the table when they are planning big events (such as the GreenIN) to recruit volunteers and provide information. Betsy will set up a calendar for this process. She also agreed to be the point of contact for brief announcements for the newsletter and requested that people send her information marked "Social justice info for the newsletter" for activities in which they are involved and would like to publicize at CLUUC.

5. LGBT Task Force

Marge Dimond said the task force is receiving positive feedback on the exhibit in hallway near the library that is accompanied by a resource table. She noted that federal work on employment non-discrimination is very close and that hate crimes legislation passed but Bush said he will veto it.

Heather Janules provided a reading to help close the meeting and we all had cake.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy Devlin-Foltz, Secretary

Cedar Lane Social Justice Council Congregational Outreach/Communication Proposal

Goal: To inform and inspire Cedar Lane members and friends to increase their involvement in active SJ task forces¹ and to support them in creating new ones on issues of interest to the congregation.

Assumptions

- Members of the congregation care about social justice issues and look to our faith community for opportunities to live socially just lives
- People are most likely to get involved when someone reaches out to them personally
- People are busy and need opportunities for different levels of involvement
- People need frequent reminders in a variety of media about what's going on
- Outreach is an important part of SJC's work and will benefit from involvement by as many SJC members as possible
- Increasing congregational involvement may take time, but it will be rewarding!

Outreach Ideas

(I'm sure we could try other strategies too, and we'll definitely need to prioritize! Betsy)

- **The Pulpit**

Goal: Coordinate social justice messages from the services with appropriate follow-up activities

How it might work: SJC works with ministers to identify and create opportunities for connection between the sermons and services and current or potential SJ activities.

- **Coffee or Tea on SJC**

Goal: To help SJC members learn more about individual Cedar Laners' interests and passions related to social justice, so that we can help them find ways to get involved at whatever level of commitment works for them.

How it might work: SJC members meet one-on-one with members of the congregation over coffee or tea (fair trade if possible!) to find out more about what social justice issues individuals care about and might be invited to get more involved in. This could happen at coffee hour after the services or at another time by mutual arrangement. We would seek out individuals we know for such conversations, and invite people to let us know that they would like to meet with an SJC member through the "lounge lizard" table (see below), the newsletter, electronic media etc.

Questions: If we want to do this, do we need some AIM type training in doing "one-on-ones" to make this work? What kind of follow-up process would we need?

- **Lounge Lizards**

Goal: To have a place where people can easily find out about justice-seeking activities and indicate their interest in getting involved etc.

How it might work: SJC members could decide to staff a table in the lounge after all or most services. (This would be similar to the Board staffing the desk in the office.) The table

¹ Active Task Forces (~Portland's Action Groups) Environmental Task Force, LGBT Task Force, Martha's Table, Community Based Shelter, AIM, Beacon House? (what's missing here?)

would provide a friendly face, literature about SJC and Cedar Lane task forces, SJ activities in the wider UU community and other events as appropriate. When task forces want to recruit for or publicize specific events more heavily they could join SJC at the table.

Questions: Do we have the volunteer time to do this?

- **Newsletter**

Goal: Use this regular communication mechanism even better than we are now to promote involvement in social justice activities by Cedar Laners

How it might work: A Social Justice page in the newsletter (with a new Cedar Lane Social Justice logo to help it stand out?) could include the following regular features:

- Detailed information from the Cedar Lane task forces on activities, events etc.
- A list of briefer info on other opportunities and events in which Cedar Laners are involved or which are organized by other UU entities (churches, UUA, UUSC, UUSJ etc.)
- Messages and updates from SJC to recognize, encourage, educate, and inspire (how many verbs?) the congregation.

Questions: Who would do what here?

- **Flyer**

Goal: Highlight SJC mission and provide important information about SJC in an easy to access format

How it might work: We would create a short document (one page or less—book mark?--on recycled paper) that includes SJC's mission and contact information² We would leave it in various places at Cedar Lane to increase SJC visibility and make it easy for people to reach SJC members.

- **Electronic Media**

- Website:
 - The “General SJC section” should at least include mission statement, description of active task forces, contact info of SJC officers and task force leaders.
 - The “Upcoming Events and Announcements” (aka online bulletin board) could include the more time critical information (we've learned how to use this for the Green-IN).
- Email: The church currently has a small email listserv designed to provide information between newsletters. Do we want to create a listserv specifically for social justice communication, collecting email addresses in the lounge, through one-on-ones etc? This would allow us to communicate directly with people who have indicated an interest in hearing from us about SJ issues and be a vehicle for information that requires urgent action.

Questions: Who would manage these tasks?

Respectfully proposed,
Betsy Devlin-Foltz, SJC Secretary

²Do we want to create a generic email address such as socialjustice@cedarlane.org or cedarlanesocialjustice@gmail.com that would be picked up by or forwarded to the current SJC chair or other officers when the chair is unavailable, to ease transitions etc