

UUCR Social Concerns Social Justice Committee Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report

Committee Members

Linda Dutton, Amy Warner and Lynn Dolinger shared facilitator duties at bi-monthly meetings of the Committee, and Diane Shields served as secretary. Other active participants were Bob Bjork, John Ramsey, Linda Weimer, Betty Kerr, Caren Samuels, Carol Dobson, Marilee Taussig, Gayle Folger, and Rev. Sue Browning. Additional UUCR members served on the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee, including Pam Cleary and Clara Daining, with Philip Dutton serving as an advisor.

Community Outreach Collections

While we were only able to complete four of the six scheduled collections, we still raised more than \$2500 for the following: Bayside HOYAS, Holiday Sharing sponsored by the Kent County Department of Social Services, the Community Food Pantry and Mid-Shore Pro-Bono. We believe that having guest speakers from beneficiary organizations has significantly impacted the plate collections and our knowledge of the work these organizations are providing.

Chester Valley Ministers Association (CVMA)

Linda Weimer represented UUCR at the meetings of the CVMA, reporting on the congregation's relevant activities and bringing back to us information from our neighboring churches. We also sponsored the MLK Breakfast, which the CVMA hosts every January.

Strategic Plan, Goal III

Acting under the auspices of the SCSJ Committee, Lynn Dolinger has been chairing a sub-committee to implement Goal III of the congregation's Strategic Plan (2019 – 2021), the purpose of which is to "Undertake a church-wide focus and community activism regarding racism and racial equity." She has also been serving as liaison to the Board for this Goal. Several members of the SCSJ Committee, as well as other interested congregational members, have been serving on this ad-hoc committee and have been actively engaged in implementing its recommendations since last July. We developed action plans for Years 1 and 2, with emphasis on congregational education in the first year with increased outreach into the community in the second year. With the support of the SCSJ, we have hosted book, film and video presentations and discussions, worked with Rev. Sue to inform worship, created a racial justice lending library, hosted Sunday information sessions regarding podcast opportunities and promoted relevant community events, all the while exploring and participating in community partnerships, including the Social Action Committee for Racial Justice (SACRJ) and the James Taylor Lynching Memorial Coalition. Many of the events we hosted have been attended by non-members from the community, thanks to exceptional promotional efforts. In Year 3, we plan to develop and present a Community Action Plan to further engage members in racial justice activities in the future. In conjunction with this Goal, the Board approved a distribution of \$3,000 from the Chalice Lighters Grant to co-sponsor a 2-day workshop, "Undoing Racism", which was held in September. Several of our members participated in the workshop and follow-up discussions, many of which were hosted by UUCR.

Welcoming Congregation Renewal

Amy Warner and Caren Samuels have been working on renewal of our Welcoming Congregation status in cooperation with Rev. Sue. They have outlined objectives to be completed in the coming year and had planned some activities in April, including an Outreach Collection for Mid-Shore Pride. Unfortunately, both the event and the collection had to be cancelled. They will be revisiting objectives and activities in the fall.

Financial Distributions

In addition to the Community Outreach Collections, we allocated our \$400 Operating Budget to the following organizations: Community Mediation Upper Shore, CVMA, For All Seasons, Homeports, Kent County Adult Day Care Fdn., NAACP and the SACRJ food distribution program in response to the coronavirus. In addition, the Board allocated an additional \$600 to the Committee in April, from the music budget that would not be used with the cancellation of in-person services. After researching need, we decided to send the money to the Food Bank for support of community-wide coronavirus response food distribution programs, including the one coordinated by the SACRJ.

Respectfully Submitted by the SCSJ Co-Chairs Lynn Dolinger, Amy Warner and Linda Dutton, April 2020