

## SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Social Justice Committee continues to strive to be a “visible presence in the community” by participating in both service activities and activism. Some of the things we have done this year are listed below:

- **Racial Justice Group** – subcommittee that has been working all year on providing information to the congregation through films, suggested readings and discussions about systemic racism in preparation for possibly adopting the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment at the Annual meeting in June. This proposal is on the Annual Meeting ballot.
- **Welcoming Congregation Renewal Team** – subcommittee that has been working on fulfilling the requirements to renew our Welcoming Congregation status with the UUA.
  - This was accomplished in February 2023 and the group has started on next year’s work as this is an annual renewal. Achieved through providing education to the congregation (offered “Trans Inclusion in Congregations” class) ; supporting community, state and national LGBTQ+ organizations; providing at least two LGBTQ+ services; recognizing at least six “Days of Observance”.
  - Also has worked on researching and providing information to the congregation on the importance of flying a Progress flag outside our church to show our support for the LGBTQ+ community which is being attacked on a daily basis in our state and federal legislatures. We want to be sure they know that we are a safe and welcoming space for them to worship. We will have a proposal on the ballot at the Annual meeting to achieve this.
- **Holiday Giving** –
  - Gift bags – 76 bags with \$25 gift cards to adults with addictions, homelessness, and mental illness. We worked with Twisted Sisters on this – they provided hand made items for all the bags.
  - Project Christmas Cheer – (with Children’s Spiritual Exploration) Provided Christmas gifts to 13 families

- Caroling party at Empower – program for adults with intellectual disabilities – gift bags (without gift cards) were given.
- **Service Projects in the community**
  - Began providing volunteers to help serve meals at Hope Mission and at their Recovery graduation – will continue
  - Held three Red Cross blood drives – have collected 66 units of blood
  - Carteret County Intervention program – a few members are participating in mentoring program for middle school students.
  - Provided volunteers for Voter Registration drive at Carteret Community College
  - Wrote 980 postcards to get out the vote to voters in North Carolina (with UU the Vote)
  - Prepared lunch for 200-300 people at MLK Birthday Celebration
  - Regularly collected food in the Social Hall and delivered it to local food pantries
- **Other Activities:**
  - Sent out weekly emails to our membership and also published in the Wave “Opportunities for Action” from UU Justice NC
  - Meganne Smith did a Valentine’s Day concert to support “Side with Love”
  - Changed our name from Social Action to Social Justice
  - Collected \$7000 at 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Collections for Carolina Abortion Fund, Holiday projects, Family Promise and Coastal Carolina Riverwatch