

Social Justice Annual Report 2009-2010

At this time our ministry focuses on these three areas or communities:

- Homeless
- Migrant/Immigrant Families
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)

The focus on the homeless and migrant/immigrant families allows us to channel our energies and gain in-depth knowledge of the issues facing each community and to also develop solid partnerships with other churches and like-minded organizations – thus increasing the impact with our combined efforts. This year we have also have expanded the number of UUSC projects that we are involved in.

The three ministries plan projects to address the issues faced by each group. Some projects are **Outreach** – like feeding the Homeless, bringing children’s clothing to the Migrant camps or gathering donations using *Guest at Your Table* boxes.

This past year we consciously increased our **Justice** efforts – wanting to address systemic issues. Examples include supporting the Coalition of Immokalee Workers campaign against PUBLIX and economic justice thru our *Free Trade Chocolate and Coffee sales*.

We also increased our partnerships with other organizations – The Society of Friends, Coalition of Downtown Churches, the National Farm Worker Ministry and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Each ministry’s report is on the following pages.

We use a shared leadership approach and plan projects so that it is easy for all congregants to participate. YOU have, and we are most THANKFUL!

Marilyn Barber, UUSC
Karen Coale, Migrant Ministry
Reggie Craig, Homeless Ministry
Karen Frank, Free Trade Coffee

**Homeless Sub-Committee of the Social Justice Committee
Annual Report
For 2008-2009**

Chair: Reggie Craig
Members: Dorothy Byrne, Geneva Nelson, Sally Watt, Pat Yochim
, Connie Millet
Betsy Filz, John Fournoy, Jill McCracken, Pamela Dubrule

As part of our mission statement “Serving as a beacon for social activism and service”,

The Homeless Subcommittee takes to heart and carries this mission forward advocating for the rights of the homeless in South Pinellas County.

Our members continue to be on the front line of homeless issues with direct outreach, political action and support to local agency’s.

- This past year we have teamed up with other downtown churches and created “Celebrate Outreach” who’s focus is on the downtown homeless, we have hosted a panel discussion, with local homeless advocates, a Christmas memorial service dinner as well as holding several monthly meetings at our church.
- We continued to expand our support of ASAP and, Beacon House by raising and distributing thousands of dollars through share the plate and fundraisers such as stone soup auction, monthly pancake breakfasts
- We continue with the ASAP brunch’s twice a year.
- We have supplied countless van-loads of clothing, food, hygiene items, blankets and so on to those in need.
- We continue to serve meals at Beacon House twice a month.
- We have teamed up with others, to help serve the hungry from our own Mirror Lake neighborhood, every Friday in our playground

In the coming year we hope to have a stronger political participation, expand our direct outreach and expand our work with other faith based groups. Future projects may include participation in a Cold Night Shelters, and Family Promise programs

We have deep gratitude to our congregation for their tireless support of money, in-kind donations and countless volunteer hours. Together we do make a difference.

Reggie Craig
Chair Social Justice Homeless Subcommittee

Migrant/Immigrant Ministry Annual Report 2009-2010

Chair: Karen Coale

Members: John Dubrule, Luis Echeverri, Adele Romano, Kathy Runde, Christina Schale & Sally Watt

As part of our mission statement of “***Serving as a beacon for social activism and service***”, this ministry identifies outreach and justice projects that support farmworker and immigrant families. We organize supporting activities that enable and encourage members and friends of all ages and means to participate

Major Activities for 2009/2010 Church Year:

1. Throughout the year we have supported the Coalition of Immokalee Workers efforts to have PUBLIX only buy their winter tomatoes from Florida growers that pay a fair wage and have safe working conditions. In November we hosted a dinner for the Coalition and then on that same weekend joined an interfaith and student march between two PUBLIX stores in St Petersburg. In January we participated in a rally at a newly opened PUBLIX in Pinellas Park, and at its conclusion presented letters to the store manager. In March the Coalition brought their very moving ***Modern-Day Slavery Museum*** to UU St Pete. On the weekend of April 16th -18th the Coalition will be marching from Tampa to Lakeland – the home of PUBLIX headquarters. Members of UU St Pete will carry our Church banner at both the opening rally on April 16th and will join the closing on April 18th.
2. We increased our involvement in Comprehensive Immigration Reform by partnering with other UU congregations via the Unitarian Universalist Association’s ***Standing on the Side of Love with Immigrant Families Campaign***. Joined with 90 other congregations in signing ***Cards to Congress*** during the March 21st service. Our 94 cards will be combined with those from other congregations and presented on Capital Hill. To assist in educating the congregation on this complex issue – we have begun to include explanations in InfoNet and Scope.
3. This year marked our Congregation’s sixth year of participating in the National Farm Worker Ministry’s Holiday Gift Distribution in Plant City. We provided underwear and socks for 700 children. Collections from our Congregation and the Cluster were most generous.
4. As we saw on our monthly visits to farm worker camps over the winter – these families were hit hard by the freezes and continued cold weather. We provided bags of food for families, blankets and clothing for the children. Sorting the clothing has proven most helpful with the distribution – and doing it after service and coffee hour – has been an opportunity to engage members who are not available to visit the camps.
5. We adopted two local families. Via our bi-monthly food collections during the service we have provided them with food that they have difficulty funding on their own. One family, Martina and Alan, joined us for a First Sunday luncheon, and we are working with them to meet their requirements for permanent resident status. Using your generous share the plate funds – we took the other family on a *back to school* shopping trip.

All of the above accomplishments were only possible with your generous support. THANK YOU!

UUSC ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL, 2010

The UUSC presence in UU St. Pete became more active this year with two co-representatives to coordinate activities. We continued the Guest at Your Table collection over the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays with a generous response of over \$700. This was quickly followed by a special collection Sunday in January for Haiti Earthquake Relief for which \$600-700 was collected.

The sale of Holiday Cards was reinstated in the fall with \$320 being sent to the UUSC.

The UUSC representatives were invited to participate in the meetings of the Social Justice Committee and have been attending this spring. This is resulting in increased communication and better coordination of activities.

On March 21st, 2010 the church participated in the UUSC's Social Justice Sunday with the focus on Economic Justice. Pat Robinson, Chairperson of the Worship Committee did an excellent job of coordinating the programs of the UUSC with our own church's work in economic justice. Members of our Social Justice Committee participated in the service.

We look forward continuing these projects and to expanding the role of the church with the UUSC through individual and church memberships, and through involvement of RE in Cluster projects for the children.

Marilyn Barber
Caleb Cain
Co-representatives UUSC