

October 2024 Update from the Social Action Council

Dear fellow congregants,

The Social Action Council continues to meet bimonthly and our first meeting for this church year was September 17. We will meet in November, January, March, and May. The following are highlights from our teams and other social action activities.

Advocacy & Witness

The Black Lives Matter vigils are back to the regular schedule of the first Sunday of each month after service at noon. We had 30 people at the October vigil!

The Indigenous Peoples Day sub-team hosted the fall congregational read, of *Whiskey Tender* by Deborah Taffa, on Tuesday October 15. Ten people attended and we had a great discussion. If you didn't get a chance to read the book we still recommend it!

The Reclaim Our Vote postcard campaign just wrapped up. Many UU Wellesley members and friends have participated in this Center for Common Ground postcard campaign that Sheila Boyle led to get out the vote in mostly Southern states. The Advocacy & Witness Team is deeply appreciative of Sheila's efforts, and of all those who helped with postcards. 180 volunteers from UU Wellesley and beyond sent out 58,000 postcards!

Just Desserts

We plan on hosting a Just Desserts program on November 12 about immigration justice, and one on December 10. The program in November is "Addressing Immigration Injustice: An Interfaith Approach." The Executive Director of UU Mass Action, Jo Murphy, has committed to being a presenter, and the team is working on getting others so we will have an interfaith panel.

Family Promise Metrowest

We donated an Italian-themed basket for the Keeping the Promise fundraiser auction. Thank you to Cean Tan for organizing and delivering the basket.

December 16 Host Week - We need volunteers

Our final Family Promise host week for this calendar year begins on December 16. We need the following volunteers:

- Provide two dinners that week

Volunteers can make and deliver an evening meal to Family Promise on Tuesday Dec 17 or Thursday Dec 19.

- Provide groceries that week

One or two volunteers can purchase groceries using a list they provide, and deliver them to Family Promise on Monday Dec 16 by 4:30.

- Provide gift cards for Stop & Shop, Walmart, Target, or Dollar Store

Volunteers can purchase a gift card that will be distributed to the families.

Family Promise is located at 6 Mulligan Street in downtown Natick. Meals and groceries should be dropped off there. Anne-Laure Lehman will be coordinating the host week, so contact her for more information or to sign up. Stay tuned for information in the weekly updates.

LGBTQ

We plan to do two snack drives for OUT MetroWest programs again this year, one in November and one in the spring.

Join Us for Free at the Annual OMW Gala!

We had a plate collection September 15 for OUT MetroWest to sponsor the annual gala, which is Thursday November 7 at 6:30 at Jack's Abby in Framingham. The festivities will include music, dancing, a photo booth, a raffle, and more. Tickets also include a delicious buffet dinner from the Jack's Abby kitchen, one drink (alcoholic or not), and the knowledge that you are building communities where LGBTQ+ youth can thrive. Because of UU Wellesley Hills' sponsorship, free tickets are available. If you are interested, please contact Kathy Kaufmann.

Asylee and Refugee

A number of UU Wellesley members attend the orientation held by Temple Beth Elohim for volunteers of their New Americans Immigration Fund refugee program. Several people have completed the volunteer paperwork as well. If you are interested in learning more about this program, contact Elaine Mittell.

Organizers of the informal, interfaith network supporting refugee families in Massachusetts are asking for help funding hotel rooms on an emergency basis. They are seeking individuals who are willing to receive a last-minute call/text, and then pay for a hotel room for 1-2 nights. See the weekly updates for more information, and if you are interested in helping out, please contact Elaine Mittell.

UU Partners

Mark will be contacting UU Urban Minister's Mary Margaret Earl about preaching for us some Sunday. Urban Ministry is doing well and the Meeting House renovation is close to complete.

Rev. Janet Bush, who was a long-time member of this church and who just retired as a UU minister, is now a member of the UUSC Board. She will be preaching for us on Sunday January 26.

Bristol Lodge

We are back to the regular schedule for providing Bristol Lodge meals. We deliver the monthly meal on the third Monday of each month, and cook it at the church the day before that after Sunday service. We need volunteers each month to cook the meal. If you would like to help cook, please contact Jim McLaren.

Wellesley Food Pantry - Thank you for donating

The Food Pantry is in need of supplies and monetary donations, due to a very low donation rate this summer. In response, for three weeks in September we held a food drive for the emergency needs of the food pantry. Doug Poutasse delivered the food that we collected to the pantry after our third week of collecting. We also did a plate collection for them on October 20 to further support their current needs. Thank you to everyone who brought food in for the drive and/or donated to the plate collection.

Social Action Plate Collections

We continue to use all of our plate collections for helping our social action partners and other organizations doing urgent work. We are making a difference in many peoples' lives through our collections. For example, we raised \$1500 for the Beyond Bond and Legal Defense Fund to help with the urgent local immigration housing crisis, and \$950 for Circle of Hope in Needham, which allowed them to fill 15 Welcome Baby Bags. Thank you for your generosity every week!

The two summer plate recipients were World Central Kitchen and the Foundation for Metrowest, which is now called Community Foundation for Metrowest. World Central Kitchen continues to aid and feed people in disaster areas worldwide. And the Community Foundation for Metrowest provides aid locally to our neighbors in need, improving the quality of life in over 30 MetroWest communities. We raised \$660 for WCK and \$585 for the Foundation for Metrowest.

Tracy McGrath, on behalf of the Social Action Council