

June 2024 Update from the Social Action Council

Dear fellow congregants,

The Social Action Council continues to meet bimonthly and our last meeting for this church year was May 21. Our first meeting next church year will be September 17. The following are highlights from our teams and other social action activities.

Check out the Social Action section of the annual report, which was recently distributed before the annual meeting. It contains an in-depth look at all the social action activities of each team for the church year.

Camp Starfish Volunteer Day

Our long-standing tradition of helping out at Camp Starfish continued with a volunteer workday Saturday, April 27. We had a successful service trip, where around 15 people participated in projects, including rebuilding the old gaga pit, renovating the garden and planting new plants, and cleaning up the beach and main road. We also painted bird houses and delivered some children's books that were donated by the church.

Advocacy & Witness

The summer Black Lives Matter vigil schedule is the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00. The dates are July 2, August 6, and September 3.

The End of Life Options Act was voted out of committee and is now with the Senate Ways and Means Committee for the first time. The deadline is July 30 to go forward for a vote, or the process would have to start over. There was a lobby day on June 5.

Many UU Wellesley members and friends have participated in Center for Common Ground postcard campaigns to get out the vote in mostly Southern states. This town-wide initiative is coordinated by Sheila Boyle. The Advocacy & Witness Team is deeply appreciative of her efforts!

Family Promise Metrowest

We had a successful host week, beginning June 10. We donated a shopping list of approximately \$250. We delivered 2 meals, including 1 provided by our support congregation MCC Sudbury, and provided \$200 in gift certificates for use at Walmart and Target. These were individual donations. The other two host weeks this year will be August 26, and December 16.

We had 5 walkers participate in the Walk to End Homelessness, and our walk raised \$1646, which beat our goal of \$1500! The walk raised about \$100,000 for Family Promise this year.

We also delivered 10 summer fun bags for kids across the programs as they wrapped up school. These bags included a combination of practical items (sunscreen, lip balm,

bug bracelets, towels, water bottles) and fun items (bubbles, glow sticks, water blasters) as well as \$25 Walmart gift cards.

The coordinator at Family Promise sent this note to our FP team co-leader Cean Tan, commenting on how much the families appreciated the meals during the host week and the summer treat bags.

"I had the chance to chat with both families on Friday and they were very appreciative about the meals and the groceries. One of the families specifically commented on how delicious the food was! Thank you!

We're in the process of distributing the summer bags. Three of them were picked up last Friday. I was able to witness their joy and appreciation."

LGBTQ

The second snack drive of this church year for the youth at OUT MetroWest was held in May and was as successful as the one in the fall was. Kathy Kaufmann delivered the snacks to OMW, and they were very grateful!

OMW has a new executive director, Mel Pace. She's a minister who was the projects and grants manager of a small organization in the Worcester area called Love Your Labels.

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.

UU Partners

Rev. Janet Bush, a former member of this congregation and the just-retired UU minister in Northampton and Florence, has joined the board of UUSC and will be doing a service for us in the fall.

Elaine was in touch with Rev. Marton about the two plate collections for the partner church. We raised over \$1500 in the first collection in April, and that will be used for Rev. Marton's salary supplement. The second one, in June, will be used for the summer youth program, and we have a goal of \$1200. We are hoping to invite Marton and his wife Lilla to visit us here in the fall.

Bristol Lodge

During the summer months we will give Bristol Lodge a check instead of cooking. Then we will resume cooking the monthly meals in September.

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 \$1225 for the Fistula Foundation, and \$712 for Camp Starfish. Thank you for your generosity every week!

Summer Plate Collections

The two summer plate recipients are 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.

Tracy McGrath, on behalf of the Social Action Council