

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Unitarian Church

VOLUNTEER POSITION: Social Justice Liaison

PURPOSE: To promote involvement in the various social justice activities engaged in by our membership. Budgeted funds will be will used for activities generated by members and friends of the church and are not to be used as donations to outside causes or groups.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS and ABILITIES: The person who holds this position should be fair and knowledgeable and not identified with any special cause.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE: We want to encourage congregational members to be involved in social justice issues. Many want to be directly involved in an issue, but not involved in a committee trying to coordinate it all. Our previous Outreach Committee, which formerly allocated the money in the budget for outreach work no longer functions. In its place, we have created the volunteer position of Social Justice Liaison.

JOB DUTIES: That Social Justice Liaison will:

- Be knowledgeable about social justice issues and activities.
- Communicate with all groups of members who are working on social justice issues to know what they are doing and who the main contact person is.
- Publish contact information on the various social justice involvement activities in the newsletter, the directory, the website and on a handout and will keep this information up to date.
- Serve as a point of contact to help people figure out how they can be involved.
- Convene representatives of the various social justice groupings together, if there is a reason, e.g. to plan a service highlighting social justice involvement or to put on an informational event at coffee hour.
- Help anyone wishing to convene a group of members to work on a brand new issue area by letting them know how to submit newsletter articles and use the listserv; also try to connect them with others who might be interested.

- Authorize expenditures of the Social Justice line item, in accordance with the purpose above.

As Social Justice Liaison Pro Tem, the above job description fell to me in January of 2010. As part of this description it fell to the Liaison to "convene" a group to work out details of implementing Kathy Gibson's legal opinion on Centro Maya accepted by the board. Attorney Bill Stengel and accountant Larry Breitbart were asked to be part of that advisory group. They, along with Gary Anderson and myself, prepared a plan for implementation.

The implementation plan for the project, referred to as the Centro Maya Project, the Guatemala project, and in one record the Jeanne Nakamaru Fund, recommended setting up a 501(c)(3) or affiliated with one.

Bob and Jeanne Nakamaru met on March 30 with the team of Larry Breitbart, Bill Stengel, and Gary Anderson to help Jeanne set up an accounting method with an eye toward setting up a 501 . The Nakamaru's chose to affiliate with Casa Guenajuato Quad Cities to sponsor the Centro Maya Project under their 501(c)(3) status. This was accomplished by March 29, 2010. The funds at the church and at Merrill Lynch were transferred by our treasurer to that organization.

The Centro Maya Project will now be a welcome part of our church without being part of internal record keeping.

As a working part of our church it is clear there are three the Community Meal and weekly donations to the 2nd Baptist Food Pantry are our only truly internal activities occurring regularly. Caroline Vernon with Ross and Judy Lance lead the preparation and delivery of a lasagna meal every other month to the Salvation Army meal site. Others are recruited to help or donate each time. And one we all see each Sunday and perhaps don't realize it's a UUSC project--the Equal Exchange Coffee Project. Julie and Jim Ross and Jeanne Nakamaru faithfully order, stock the shelves, and sell the coffee and tea.

Diane Kinser and Becci Irving weekly pick up the donated bread and pastries from Hy Vee and transfer them to church then to Second Baptist Church food pantry. They have begun also taking donated soup which is more involved and often needs a third volunteer. Our interim minister has found herself in the position of leaving her office as she worked late at night to access the kitchen for soup deposit.

The R. E. kids thanks to the leadership of Sara Moulton and Lori McCollum and others have faithfully worked on collecting funds and supplies for the Homeless Teen Shelter and over the winter collected for the Mitten Tree and visited the Animal Shelter taking treats.

The Green Sanctuary remains one of our long range goals also.

Progressive Action for the Common uses our church for their many meetings. They also do rent office space for \$100 but currently do not pay rent for meeting space. Several of our members are involved. They provide a structure as we provide a space for many social/action concerns.

ACLU also rents the community room once a month and members are invited to attend.

The building use committee is currently working on new ways of making fair use of our church building by nonprofit causes our members support and still cover our building use expenses.

We also made an effort to work with First Presbyterian Church and Boys and Girls Club to assist in a program that helps inner city parents and children. One member became involved and the church voted to send \$100. But to date no active involvement has happened.

As a congregation we've responded to the earthquake in Haiti with participation in Kids for Hunger led by Ann Hailey and the flood in Nashville through a Sunday offering. And we've had good fun supporting member's causes by playing trivia to help raise funds.

On June 19th, thanks to LaDonna Anderson's initiative, we' had a successful Blood Drive with the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center.

The final portion of this report deals with a need that has not been met well by our congregation. We need to assimilate UUA initiatives into our conscious awareness. At times when there is a disaster UUA makes an immediate appeal and we immediately respond. But we are generally uninformed about issues that request congregational study and votes sent in so they can be voted on Nationally. We have a history of turning in "Not Available" when asked how our congregation voted on issues to be brought forward.

This spring a Nancy Huse, Ann Gruber, Sandra Evers and I to Cedar Rapids to learn about one study action issue that will be brought forward at G.A. in June on economic justice. Sandra Evers also led an adult education class on a related topic.

Another study/action issue for this year's G. A. is "Abolishing slavery" in connection with that Maggie Tinsman has been asked to speak on Human Trafficking in Iowa and beyond on June 6th. It is hoped our delegates to G.A. will be there.

As a congregation, we did vote to add our name to OneIowa's list of organizations that support nondiscrimination in the Iowa Constitution. OneIowa is an example of a cause supported by the congregation as the vote demonstrates, but has no one taking responsibility to be the contact. It is also true that we have no one at with time to take responsibility for a Unitarian table at Pride Fest this year.

On April 28th the leaders or contacts from the many interests decided that over the summer social justice would take the 10 o'clock time slot for forum if possible.. In August Connie Barrett will be arranging for Casa Guenajuato Quad Cities to give a presentation. June will be given to Maggie Tinsman and Human Trafficking to help us prepare to be informed before the 2010 G.A

Attached is a list of member interests that have been shared with us. It will help others know who to connect with as they look for their special areas of concern. Also although one member

may be listed often there are many more who also support this issue. And don't forget some good causes just need us to run, walk or play trivia to support them.

Second Baptist food pantry	Diane Knser Leo
ACLU	Schubert. LaDonna
Mississippi Valley Blood Bk	Anderson. Elaine
Boy's & Girl's Club	Kresse Connie
Casa Guanajuto	Barrett Jeanne
Centro Maya	Nakamaru. Caroline
Community Meal	Vernon Marcy
Crop Walk	Doyle Sandra
Disability Assistance Dogs	Evers. Elaine
First Presbyterterian Meal	Kresse Gary
Green Sanctuary	Anderson. Joann and Tom Crane
HDC and autism Health Issues	PACG Lori
Homeless Teen Shelter Immigration	McCollum
Kids for Hunger	Ann Hailey. Sarah
Mitten Tree	Moulton. Elaine
NAACP	Kresse
Naturalization	Elaine

	Kresse
OneIowa	
Organ Donation	LaDonna Anderson.
PACG	Caroline Vernon
ProChoice/Abortion Rights	Elaine Kresse John
QCAD	Bowman.
QCAWC	Emily Smith Kathryn
Serra Club	Allen.
Sisters of Humility	Sue Witte
UUSC	Ann Hailey
Women's Shelter	
World Relief	Elaine Kresse
River Action	
Interfaith Day of Prayer	
Pride Fest	
Community Garden	Sue Witte

What we've learned this year is that rather than having no social justice involvement, we as members are fully involved by our personal commitment to social justice/action throughout the community

From donations of money, food, and blood, social justice is alive and well. Tracking what we do is another matter. Figuring out how to let people know what is going on in a timely manner is another matter all together.

Areas of major church involvement that need to work closely with social justice would be "Denominational Affairs" "Interfaith Presence at the Thanksgiving Service" and "Building Use."

Last but not least it should be noted that a feature film ***Heroes of the Spirit***, a film about Waitstill and Martha Sharp's work in WWII, is in post production. It is one of the many possibilities presented to me as Social Justice liaison.
"Wouldn't it be great to have a premier here?"

Yes, it would. Anyone want to work on that. Google Journey to Freedom or Heroes of the Spirit. The film is in post production and there are excellent U tube videos.