

**Social Justice Council  
Annual Report  
2019-2020**

**Social Justice Council Members:** Brenda Black, Davalene Cooper, Kate Philbin, David Murphy, Patti Smith, Laurie Ann Yeisley-Drogin , Dana Kintigh (Board liaison)

The Social Justice Council (SJC) works to facilitate and support social justice activities and projects at Old Ship Church. The committee identifies a focus for social justice work, usually for a period of three years. This focus is not intended to be exclusive, but to help the committee in deciding to which projects and events it should dedicate its resources and energy. This has been the third year of Old Ship's Social Justice focus on Protecting Vulnerable Communities. Usually, the committee would have reviewed whether this should continue to be our focus as part of our work this spring. However, the pandemic affected all of our work since March. We will revisit this issue next year, and anyone in the congregation who would like to comment on this focus should feel free to talk to one of the committee members.

The pandemic also affected our last planned forum in late March on the Trump Administration's plan to revoke Temporary Protected Status to thousands of immigrants who came to the United States following natural or political disasters in their home countries. We will reschedule this program for the fall, social distancing rules permitting.

The committee also has begun to discuss whether Old Ship would be interested in sponsoring and supporting an asylum seeker. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has a program where congregations support an asylum seeker in their community. This action would require us to provide housing and other assistance to an asylum seeker while he or she awaits final resolution of his or her claim. The details related to this program are found in a handbook, available at the following link: <http://uucsj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Congregational-Sponsorship-Handbook.pdf>. The committee plans to facilitate discussion of this possibility in the next year.

As described below, the committee undertakes a number of activities each year in support of social justice. However, the committee also supports initiatives from others within our congregation who wish to bring a social justice project or event to the congregation as a whole. As such, we encourage anyone who has such a project to contact the committee for assistance and support.

Finally, we want to thank everyone for their support of our efforts to create a more just and peaceful world!

**This year, the SJC has continued to lead Old Ship's efforts to:**

- Hold ongoing **“Feeding Others” food collections** to support the Hingham Food Pantry using the model of asking for a donation each time Old Shippers come to the Meeting House or Parish House. Donations are recognized each week as the collection basket is brought forward during the service. We are happy to report that our total donations are up and have been more consistent over the church year, actions that are greatly appreciated by the Hingham Food Pantry.
- Held a **food drive at Stop and Shop** in support of the Hingham Food Pantry,
- Provide **meals for Father Bill’s Homeless Shelter for Adults**: With help from Sharon Prehn, we have maintained six cooking teams each of which cooks and serves dinner meals on a quarterly basis.
- Maintain an action alert network, our **Social Justice Action Alert Network**, to share information about actions members of the list may take to support issues affecting vulnerable populations. The list has about 65 members of the community. Davalene Cooper maintains the list and sends out the alerts. If you would like to join the list, contact Davalene at [davalenecooper@verizon.net](mailto:davalenecooper@verizon.net).
- Continued our support for **UUSC this year through the monthly coffeehouse at Old Ship as well as through the annual Guest at Your Table** fundraising program. The latest UUSC Annual Report includes the following awards for Old Ship for the last fiscal year: Creating Justice Banner Award (25-50% of the congregation are UUSC members), James Luther Adams (a budgeted gift to UUSC of at least \$1 per member, funds received through the annual Christmas Eve offering at Old Ship), and a special recognition award for Guest at Your Table (total gift of more than \$5000).
- Supported the **holiday collection of personal toiletries and other needed items for Father Bill’s Programs**. This was in place of our usual support for holiday gifts for children in foster care.
- Support the actions of **Hingham Net Zero and 350MA.org node to respond to climate change and the impact on vulnerable populations** through information in the monthly newsletter and alerts about potential actions through the Social Justice Alert email distribution.
- Support the programs of the **UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury** and provide information to the congregation as requested.
- Continued the process of becoming **recertified as a Green Sanctuary**. Late this spring, the report required for recertification was submitted to the Green Sanctuary Program. We are unsure of how long it will take for them to review our report, especially given the pandemic, but once we are approved, the report will be posted on our website under the Green Sanctuary tab.
- Maintain an **updated presence on the Old Ship website**. Additionally, this spring when we moved to virtual services and meetings, the committee identified a number of organizations and programs in need of financial donations and/or volunteers. That list is also included at the end of this report.
- Raise funds through specially designated **Social Justice Special Plate Collections** each month to support organizations who are focused on helping vulnerable communities. Due to the pandemic, our last three special plate collections did not take place. Some of the organizations planned for the last three

collections may be the recipients of next year's collections. Here is the list of recipients for this past church year.

Month	Recipient	Amount Collected
October 2019	No More Deaths	\$550.78
November 2019	Friends of the Homeless of the South Shore Dinner	\$769.51
December 2019	UUSC Guest at Your Table Program	\$4,123.73
January 2020	Mass Climate Action Network	\$604.57
February 2020	Honduras Hopes	\$923.00
<b>Total Collected</b>		<b>\$6971.59</b>

We invite members or our community to make suggestions for the recipients of these special collections for the 2020-2021 church year.

**The SJC offered opportunities for our congregation to increase our knowledge and enhance our readiness to act for Social Justice with the following programs:**

- ❖ In September, we hosted a climate change discussion in connection with the Worldwide Climate Strike. The discussion followed Ken's sermon on this topic.
- ❖ In October, we sponsored a Crafts Fair with handcrafts from Guatemala, baskets from Honduras, and information about tea from Malawi. Old Shippers were able to purchase items and learn about the organizations and programs supported by these purchases.
- ❖ In January, the Green Sanctuary Team hosted a program titled, "Electrify Your Life." The program included demonstrations and discussions of technologies individuals could adopt in their homes and lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprint and have an impact on global climate change. The committee provided a soup lunch for those attending the program.
- ❖ In February, Hingham residents Peter and Kathy Swanson shared their work and experiences in Honduras. They are board members of Honduras Hopes, a New Hampshire based non-profit that works on issues related to health, education, and entrepreneurship in rural Honduras. Following this forum, Cal Larsen organized a special collection of used eyeglasses for those served by Honduras Hopes. Old Shippers donated more than 90 pairs of used eyeglasses that Peter and Kathy will distribute during their next trip to Honduras.

**For 2020-2021**

Our plans for next year are somewhat in flux as we will need to continue to respond to challenges presented by the COVID19 pandemic. However, we envision continuing many of our recent social service actions which have received support from the congregation, and we will offer guidance and support to any in the congregation who

would like to lead an action or learning opportunity to help a vulnerable community. We will help with communicating opportunities to act in service to such vulnerable groups through the newsletter, announcements, and the Social Justice Action Alerts email distribution. Contact Davalene Cooper [davalenecooper@verizon.net](mailto:davalenecooper@verizon.net) to be added to the alert email distribution.

**We plan to:**

- Lead the Annual Food Drive to restock the Hingham Food Pantry at Stop and Shop
- Provide information about ways to act in support of vulnerable populations via the Social Justice Alert Action Network
- Consider how our congregation might intersect with the UUA's Get Out the Vote Campaign as part of the 2020 Presidential and Congressional Election
- Organize and administer eight monthly Social Justice Special Plate collections, expanding potential recipients to organizations serving a range of vulnerable populations.
- Support our Green Sanctuary Group in their efforts to educate our congregation about ways to reduce the human impact on climate change and to act for climate justice for communities currently experiencing the impact of climate change. Please see the note at the end of this report regarding our need for leadership of this program.
- Support the UUSC through the Guest at Your Table fundraising and other educational programs
- Program a recognition of U.U. Justice Sunday

We hope the Children's RE program will continue to provide bag lunches for Father Bill's residents on a monthly basis and that the Youth Group will continue to identify actions they can take to serve others.

**Leadership Needed for the Green Sanctuary Program**

We have many Old Shippers who are working on climate change and other environmental issues through other committees or organizations. We were fortunate for the past two years to have Laura Burns and Turner Bledsoe as leaders of the Green Sanctuary Program. Unfortunately, Laura and Turner both have had to step away from leading this work as they are providing leadership to other Hingham and South Shore Climate Change organizations. We want to thank both of them for their work on starting the process Old Ship to be reaccredited as a Green Sanctuary congregation. And to the extent there is overlap between their other work and Green Sanctuary, they will keep us informed.

We appreciate that Carol Valentine and Louise Smith drafted the final report, with the help of many Old Shippers who have been involved in different parts of our Green Sanctuary projects and programs. That report has been forwarded to the Green Sanctuary Program at the UUA. Once the report has been accepted and approved, we will post it on the Green Sanctuary section of our Social Justice Council website, <http://oldshipchurch.org/green-sanctuary.html>.

Going forward, however, we are looking for new leadership for Green Sanctuary. There are many aspects to the Green Sanctuary program—climate change issues, recycling issues, making sure our buildings at Old Ship are as green as possible. If this sounds like something you, or a group of you, would like to do, or to learn more about what is required, please contact Davalene Cooper, chair of the committee for the next church year.

**During this pandemic, the Social Justice Council invites you to continue to Serve Others and protect vulnerable populations by helping in any of the following ways:**

### **Local Food Pantries**

The **Hingham Food Pantry** is still accepting actual donations of goods. You may find the specific receiving dates on the Hingham Food Pantry's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/HinghamFoodPantry/>. The pantry is located at Second Parish, 685 Main Street, Hingham (back of the church). Please place your donations in the carts in the parking lot and please do not leave food at any other time. Please check expiration dates on items. They cannot accept outdated items.

List of Present Needs:

- Pasta Sauce (red)
- Canned Tuna
- Cracker Sandwiches
- Cookies
- Mashed or Scalloped Potatoes (Boxed)
- Regular or Decaf Instant Coffee

Or order and donate foods to be delivered for the Food Pantry:

Here is how: [Instacart.com](https://www.instacart.com) is a great way to order donations online. Items can be sent to Brooke Bartletta (note the "t" in Bartletta), 52 Fearing Road, Hingham, MA 02043.

Monetary donations are also always welcome.

Checks may be made out and mailed to: Hingham Food Pantry, 685 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043 or Venmo @Brooke-Bartletta (note the "t" in Bartletta) with a note of Hingham Food Pantry in the "What's It For" section. Brooke will provide Hingham Food Pantry with a check.

\*\*The Hingham Food Pantry would like to offer help to any local family who may need assistance during this difficult time. Please help get the word out that should anyone need help, please call the Pantry at 781-740-8180.

The **Weymouth Food Pantry** is accepting monetary donations to allow purchases of the foods needed at this time when their usual supply of rescued foods from grocery stores is severely reduced. <https://www.weymouthfoodpantry.org/donation-page>

**Aunt Dot's Kitchen, the Wellspring food pantry in Hull** needs some extra help. They need non-perishable foods, as well as fresh produce. Gift cards to supermarkets and

monetary donations are especially helpful and greatly appreciated. To donate, go to <https://wellspringmultiservice.org/donate/>

### **Meals for Homeless Individuals- an opportunity for a family or small group**

Father Bill's/Mainspring has opened a new temporary shelter for homeless men in the Quincy YMCA. They need groups or individuals to assemble 50-100 individual bag lunches offsite and deliver them to Father Bill's. For information:

<https://helpfbms.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Bagged-Lunches-April-2020.pdf>

There is a group from Glastonbury Abby making lunches on Tuesdays and they could use a few more people to help. If you are interested, contact Davalene Cooper and she will put you in touch with the group: [davalenecooper@verizon.net](mailto:davalenecooper@verizon.net)

Father Bill's also needs cash donations to meet the additional services it is providing during this time of crisis. To donate or explore other ways you can help, go to <https://helpfbms.org/support/coronavirus/>.

### **Medical Care for the Homeless**

Boston Health Care for the Homeless: People experiencing homelessness are especially susceptible to the COVID19 virus. This organization has been providing health care to the homeless in Boston for more than 30 years. Now, they are now screening and testing patients for the virus, operating two new medical tents and other facilities. These efforts will lead to losses of about a million dollars during this crisis, so cash donations are needed. To donate or learn more about these efforts, go to <https://www.bhchp.org/covid-19-response-efforts>.

### **Helping Low Income and Homeless Children**

Cradles to Crayons in Boston has established an Emergency Essentials Fund to help its community partners meet urgent needs for new diapers, school and art supplies, hygiene items and other essentials for children. The Emergency Essentials Fund will allow them to leverage their logistics expertise and bulk purchasing power and serve thousands of families in need. For more information or to donate online, go to <https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/boston/>.

### **Cloth Masks Needed: if you can sew, directions available on the internet**

The Black Ministerial Alliance is asking for cloth masks for the African-American residents of Dorchester and Roxbury who are more at risk for Covid 19 due to the high rate of diabetes. Contact Laurie Ann Yeisley-Drogin for details on where to mail the masks so they reach those most in need them: [giraffe@drogin.net](mailto:giraffe@drogin.net) (UPDATE: The masks are going directly to the Family Van for distribution in Chelsea, Roxbury, and Dorchester. The predominantly Spanish speaking population in Chelsea has been hit particularly hard by COVID-19, and mask requests are being met with door to door delivery from the Family Van.)

### **Helping the UUUM meet needs of the domestic violence survivors and youth**

UUUM (UU Urban Ministry) is requesting donations to their Emergency Fund to help meet the needs of the domestic violence survivors and youth they serve: funds will allow

them to help with groceries and cleaning supplies, rent and utilities, and provide access to technologies to help them keep safe and connected. Donations can be made through this link [Your support](#) or by check (send to UUUM Emergency Fund, 10 Putnam Street, Roxbury, MA 02119).