

Social Action Committee meeting, Sept 5, 2016 3 p. m.

Present: Sue Beckham, Chair; Dick Beckham, recorder; Bettsey TerLinden; Mary Emberger;

Martha TerMaat, involved guest (welcome as a member!)

Martha TerMaat updated the Committee on preparations for the annual Amnesty International card writing campaign on behalf of political prisoners. Martha will do the December 11 Service—More about Amnesty International (and the letter writing campaign); After the service, those who are interested will write cards to prisoners across the globe who 1) need to know that somebody in the outside world is aware of them and cares; and 2) need their captors to know that the outside world knows and cares about the situation (when they get mail, the captors see and take notice!).^[1] That day, after or during the card writing, UUSRF will have refreshments (or lunch –WHO WANTS TO WORK WITH CATHY ON THAT?. (Later that afternoon, a Jewish music group will give a “dance” for UUSRF and guests followed with potato latkes and other Chanukah treats).

Mary Emberger suggested we do a program on the oil pipeline across the Missouri River which the Standing Rock Sioux have been protesting. She has passed on to Dick, as Program Committee Chair, a contact which may lead to a potential speaker. That program would be sponsored by this committee later in 2017 (unless by some miracle, the protest has been successful and the pipeline project has been cancelled). At the October meeting, Social Action/Outreach (or the Program Committee will have already arranged it) will consider such a service.

Bettsey TerLinden participated in **the fall school supply giveaway** and is willing to serve as SA liaison to that group. She asks that Sue send her Bob Gustafson's email address (which is Robert Gustafson bagustafson@sbcglobal.net) so that she can make contact with the group.

The Scholtus Service was discussed with Mary suggesting that, for weather reasons, we think locally in January. Both Fracking and Islam were raised as appropriate topics for this service. BUT for geographic reasons, we settled on the **Ecumenical Asylum Program** for 2017. Sue Beckham has contacted arranged for the service, January 15 or 22 (More by the end of this week)

For another service, we will try to find a good speaker in the immediate area who can address the group on Islam. This topic (and a service related to it) will be discussed again **in an October meeting**. And we will work toward **a Standing Rock Sioux Pipeline program**.

On budget matters, Mary asked If SA would be willing to donate to the

Ecumenical Asylum Committee. Yes we would but... see below. **Sue will check on that and the Free Mental Health clinic to see if donations are needed at this time.** UUSRF does have \$300+ for the Ecumenical Asylum Committee from plate contributions designated for that cause – Please let Sue know how you feel about just donating that sum **and making it our 2016-17 donation to the Ecumenical Assylum Committee** and using our budget for other causes in the meantime. AT an EAC meeting last evening (Sept. 12), Sue learned that winter clothing and other things for people who have mostly only **known equatorial seasons in Guatemala.** The most important things Heidi’s family may need is winterizing in the house—particularly windows so they can be adjusted for light and temperature and – and **most important,** some serious plumbing work may be needed since their drainage system which seems to be accruing mold.

Our Budget: The Social Action/Outreach Committee has agreed for several years that our budget should be used for local causes (usually that means River Falls, but occasionally includes situations in nearby communities such as Hammond, Roberts, etc.). Below is a list of “causes” to which Social Action/ Outreach Committee has donated in the recent past (**Please notify Sue if you think of other**):

- River Falls Community Arts Base (CAB)
- Free Medical Clinic
- Free Mental Health Clinic
- Habitat for Humanity Eco Village
- Our Neighbor’s Place (Shelter and homes for those with no place to live)
- River Falls Journal program to provide gifts (need and luxuries) for those who are likely not to have “Christmas”
- School Supply Program
- Turning Point (shelter for abused women and children)
- MORE??
- River Falls Food Shelf
- Pierce County Food shelf

[1] Meanwhile Martha has let the Chicago staff know that UUSRF will be coordinating a letter writing campaign and will identify prisoners for us to send greetings to.

