

Justice League Meeting Notes 11/12/17

Members:

- Marjorie Bedzek
- Melissa Bishop Co-Chair*
- Timothy Bishop*
- Carol Foster
- Jann Halloran*
- Clark Huff
- Vivian Littlefield*
- Harriet Lubchenco*
- Dick Lubchenco*
- Isaac McCorkle*
- Maurice Murray*
- Kim Murray Co-Chair*
- Deena Rowe
- Janet Stevens*

*Members present

Worship: Vivian opened the meeting with a chalice viewing and quote. The members read the Touchstones and Rules of Accompaniment. Kim led a spiritual practice in writing. Members did their own writing exercise and several shared their ideas and experience. Janet closed with a reading.

Group reflection: Melissa asked members to reflect on the Sunday Service focusing on veterans. Many positive statements were made about the personal stories and members thanked Marjorie and Isaac for their insightful comments. It was noted how many veterans have challenges with mental health issues, suicidal challenges, how many families of veterans have challenges supporting a returning veteran. It was also noted that many veterans have difficulty seeking help. The military encourages strength so admitting weaknesses/illness is not easy. The overall service was seen as a very special and meaningful event since it allowed individual stories and recognized members of Prairie who were veterans or had veteran family members. Melissa will send a link to a YouTube video on veterans' challenge with suicide. Also a link to Isaac's veteran friend who is in need of financial help will be sent to members. It was suggested that these be made available to the entire congregation. (Note: These have been sent – please check your email!)

Service Sunday reflections: The first Service Sunday at Drifter's Heart of Hope went very well with good attendance. Suggestions for the future included letting the agency know how many are coming and what ages. This is a challenge since people may not be able to decide to attend until the last minute. Janet led the project for those who did not choose to attend. They made dog and cat toys for MaxFund animal shelters. This went well and gave people a chance to get to know each other. The financial donation for Drifter's was \$120. Jann asked for help to find a way to let the congregation know about all the donations made to area charities. Kim volunteered. Melissa suggested that Jann do a sermon about the importance of financially supporting charities as part of Prairie's social justice goals.

Review of Mission/Vision Statements: Reviewing the statements made at the last meeting, there were suggestions for changing them. After some discussion and several suggestions, the following was supported: ACTING TO EMPOWER OUR COMMUNITY TO CHALLENGE THE CONDITIONS THAT CREATE INEQUALITY AND INJUSTICE. Kim will formally present to the Board in December for approval.

Action Plans

- **Sick Leave Survey:** One of our community partners, *Together Colorado*, which worked on raising the Colorado minimum wage in the last election, will be advocating for paid sick leave to all Coloradans in the next election. Currently, only 42% of our workers do not get paid sick leave. We would like to support this effort by

participating in a survey. We agreed to do so, and Kim will ask the Board in December if we can distribute the survey to the congregation.

- **Guest at Your Table (GAYT):** GAYT is an annual fundraising and education program that supports the broad UU community human rights work. This year, GAYT highlights the empowerment of refugees and displaced people. One of our major focuses is serving the people who are most overlooked or discriminated against in the midst of humanitarian crises such as forced migration, large-scale conflicts, genocide, and natural disasters. We will support GAYT with inspirational words from Jann, as well as financially. Susan Ermisch will discuss this next Sunday and families take small boxes home for making contributions, not pennies and quarters! Boxes are then returned.
- **Interfaith Alliance monthly meetings:** We need to nominate an individual to attend the monthly meetings of Interfaith Alliance, another community partner. Melissa had been representing Prairie, but now has a conflict. The group focuses on legislative issues and racism. Dick volunteered to attend. Yeah Dick!
- **Sanctuary Coalition:** We need to formally join the Sanctuary Coalition, a group of allied faith groups who are actively pursuing justice through the non-violent protest of unjust immigration policies and processes by providing sanctuary to individuals who request it. While we cannot literally provide sanctuary, we can make financial donations, participate in prayer vigils, marches and rallies, make phone calls, and write letters. We need to go to the Board, asking for them to bring it to a vote in the annual congregational business meeting. Harriet and Kim will take it to the Board on 12/10.
- **Voter Registration:** *Voting is the cornerstone of a democracy, but sadly far too few people vote. Moreover, there remain wide gaps among those who do vote, which undermines representative democracy. A functioning democracy is critical to our mission* (paraphrased from *MassVote*). It was enthusiastically proposed that we promote voter registration in Colorado. Some 100,000 are not registered to vote. A class on the topic will be offered in a future learning hour, to be led by Isaac and friend.
- **Miscellaneous mentioned at meeting**
 - Select a common read for the entire congregation. An immigration theme was suggested.
 - Support the state efforts on gun violence.
 - Brainstorm on new names for committee (Justice League is, uh, copyrighted). Timothy suggests "Justice Alliance."
- **Miscellaneous not mentioned at meeting**
 - Let's create an electronic newsletter that includes the activities of the Justice League committee, notices about area issues and activities, educational opportunities etc.
 - Consider working with the area League of Women Voters to prevent voter suppression.
- **Suggested viewing**
 - YouTube video on suicide (Note: link sent in email)
 - "13th" now available on Netflix
 - "Whose Streets" (Note: see Melissa's email on this)
- **Suggested Reading**
 - "Policing the Black Man," ed. Angela Davis
 - "Citizen, An American Lyric," Claudia Rankine (Note: Kim to send email on this)
 - "Humiliation and hostility: A riot lives on," Elaine McArdle and Kenny Wiley, <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/humiliation-hostility-riot-lives>
- **Suggested Attendance**
 - Unity March Against White Supremacy 5280 12/2

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 14, 2017 MARTIN LUTHER KING SERVICE.

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER. (Note: Fickle Kim wants to have a meeting. More on this in forthcoming email.)