

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany
Social Responsibilities Council September 7, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

Present: Patty Burch, Ed Hancock, Jaye Holly, Karen Kaufmann, Martha Musser, Jean Poppei and Jessica Rae

SRC Members Absent: none

Others present: Lois Griffin, Ann Kearney, David Musser, Don Odell, Renee Panetta, Robb Smith, Sam Trumbore, Jacqui Williams and Betsy Wright

The meeting was called to order at 11:55 AM.

Jean Poppei, chair, opened the meeting with a reading written by Dorothy Day, "Commitment."

The group honored Karen Kaufmann, past chair, with a gift for her commitment and hard work as chair.

Jean suggested that at a future meeting we discuss SRC's role. In the past, SRC has served as a coordinating council. At this time, SRC's only subcommittee is Green Sanctuary, which could stand on its own. What should our role be in the future?

Changes to the Agenda

Renee asked to add a report on composting to the agenda. At Sam Trumbore's request, Jean added a request to provide funding for Michael Hornsby to attend a class in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Jacqui asked that members discuss sponsoring the North Star Interfaith Peace Walk.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Approval of the May 11, 2014 minutes was postponed to allow members to review the minutes.

Reports/Updates

Focus Food Pantry

Patty Burch reported that collections will remain on the fourth Sunday of the month; the first collection will be September 28. Overflow shelter meals will begin in November, running through April. "Making the soup bags" will begin in October and run through April, depending on the weather. The plan is to make soup bags on the fourth Sunday of the month, along with the Focus Food Pantry collection. This timing will allow Patty to transport both the collection and soup bags to the pantry on the following Monday.

Sheridan Preparatory Academy

Martha Musser reported that FUUSA volunteers have not met yet this year with the Sheridan principal. We plan to discuss how we can better meet the school's needs. Possibilities include increasing the range of volunteer activities both inside and outside the classroom, connecting with additional teachers to discuss how volunteers could be helpful in their classes, and providing funds for school and student needs, such as classroom supplies and field trips.

Standing on the Side of Love

Jean Poppei reported that a new fusion coalition for justice is building and UUs are a key part of the movement. There will be a voting-rights-organizing call for UUs on Thursday, September

11, 2014 at 4 pm Eastern Daylight Time. You can join the meeting through the website www.anymeeting.com or by calling (213) 416-1560 (pin 885 360 202#). During this call, you can learn more about the planned Selma event in March. Jacqui recommended that we focus on local issues, rather than national issues.

Public Witness—Solidarity with Ferguson

Jessica Rae and Jacqui Williams reported on events held in Albany and Troy. They attended the Albany event, which was an Information Installation (“Know your Rights”) as well as an opportunity to honor lives lost to police brutality; representatives of the Social Justice Center, the Public Defender’s office, and other groups answered questions. The Troy event was an interfaith Peace Walk and the Reverend Beth Illingworth spoke about building bridges between police and the community.

NYCLU Dinner honoring Ira McKinley

Members discussed hosting a table, which costs \$100, or providing \$100 for two members to attend at \$50 each. Individuals with financial need can get tickets for \$20. Rob Smith commented that sponsoring a table represents support for the cause. Jacqui moved that SRC donate \$100 to sponsor a table. Jaye seconded the motion. The motion carried. Some FUUSANs plan to buy individual tickets to attend the event.

Social Justice Workshop

Karen reported on the Justice Works workshop she attended on August 2 and 3. The well-attended workshop was sponsored by Citizens Action. Because the workshop was New York City focused, there were not as many opportunities for networking among capital district attendees as Karen expected. Professor Imani Perry discussed her academic studies on racial equality. Karen was impressed with the Rochester UU’s social justice coordinator and suggested that we invite him to speak at FUUSA to share ideals for promoting social justice. Jacqui suggested that we invite the new CRUUNY social justice coordinator, Evin Carvil-Ziemer. Renee suggested that we open the event to all CRUUNY congregations.

Coming Event

People’s Climate March on September 21: Jessica reported on plans for the march, which hopes to draw as many as one million people. Information about the march and buses to New York City can be obtained at www.peoplesclimate.org. UUs should meet at 1 Central Park West. Robb reported the the Reverend Peggy Clark is establishing a meeting place for metro area UUs. No decision was made about sponsoring the march.

Current Issues

Financial Support for Class Attendance

FUUSAN Michael Hornsby, a member of the Beloved Conversations Network, has the opportunity to participate in a graduate-level class, "Multicultural Congregations and Faith Formation," taught by Mark Hicks, “which uses All Souls [UU congregation in Tulsa, Oklahoma] and the African American UU congregation, Church of the Restoration, as a ‘text.’” According to Mark, “The class aims at moving AWAY from the framework of critique and

analysis of oppression (alone!) in order to attend to the spiritual needs at the center of building a multi-racial, theologically diverse congregation. We'll be worshiping, doing panel discussions, taking a tour of the Race Riot neighborhood, learning from scholars of multi-racial congregations, and Unitarian Universalist lay people. We'll focus on their process, their successes, and their continuing struggles.”

Sam Trumbore requested that SRC donate \$400 to offset Michael’s expenses for attending this class. Jaye and Lois spoke in favor of making this donation. Members discussed the possibility of providing more than \$400. Jacqui suggested that the Religious Education Council might be asked to donate additional funds.

Jaye moved that SRC donate \$400 for Michael Hornsby to attend the class in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with the possibility of donating additional funds at a later time. Patty seconded the motion, which was approved.

Room Donation for League of Women Voters

Lois announced that the League was requesting the use of Channing on October 21 for a forum on the redistricting proposition on the November ballot. The League is in favor of this proposition. Ed moved that we make the room rental donation to the League of Women Voters for the October 21 forum on redistricting, contingent on the League submitting the required forms. Jacqui seconded the motion, which was approved.

Discussion of Room Donation Form

SRC members discussed the need to place a statement on the Building Use section of the FUUSA website, so that a wider range of non-profit organizations have the opportunity to apply for a room donation. SRC members approved wording of a statement in the previous church year and the Building Use Committee approved the placement of the statement. The statement, however, was never placed on the Building Use section. Martha is working with the office administrators to make sure that the statement appears prominently, that the donation form is updated, and the administrators concerns are addressed. Members discussed the possibility of giving wider public notice of the possibility of room donations. Members expressed concern that given the limited number of donations available, more advertising would generate many more requests than could be approved and selecting the most worthy would be difficult.

Thoughts on Social Justice Work—five modes (from Dick Gilbert’s workshop materials)

This discussion was tabled until a future meeting.

Continued Discussion on SRC Re-Organization

Jean announced that appointed members have not been designated and that discussion of re-organization is on-going.

Forum Scheduling

Jean announced that she and Betsy Wright, Green Sanctuary Chair, had agreed that Green Sanctuary would hold three forums including the September 14 forum “How Goes Our Solar?” SRC members agreed on holding an October 26 forum on the ballot proposition on redistricting. The League of Women Voters will be asked to participate, perhaps along with Aaron Mair. Other possible forums for the year, suggested at the informal summer members’ meeting, include mental health, inequality in schools with Commission King, medical marijuana, juvenile justice,

fair elections (move to amend), Palestine, and a forum with Jack McEneny. Sam agreed to send the monthly themes for services, so that the forums could be coordinated, when possible.

Additional Discussions

Peace Walk on September 21

Jacqui inquired about the status of FUUSA participation in the second annual North Star Interfaith Peace Walk to be held on International Peace Day, Sunday, September 21. She indicated that the SRC Peace Team had not responded. After some discussion, the SRC voted to be a sponsor of the Peace Walk. It was also suggested that Leah Purcell be contacted to get involvement of younger people. The 2 pm walk will begin at the Masjid As-Salaam, 276 Central Avenue, and end at the Sister Maureen Joyce Center, 369 Livingston Avenue. The Peace Walk flyer will be posted in Channing Hall.

Composting at FUUSA

Renée noted that she has been working with Amy Lent to try and set up a composting system at FUUSA, and they are working with County Waste, FUUSA's waste hauler in carrying this out.

Potluck

Members agreed to hold a Friday Family Potluck in February.

Coffee Hour

Karen reminded members that we had agreed to be responsible for coffee hour on September 14.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50.