

## **Committee/Group Name: Social Justice Working Group**

**Purpose of Committee:** To promote social justice by

- Ensuring that a strong and visible commitment to social justice is central to the purpose, identity, and activity of the church.
- Nurturing a culture, within the church and its many communities, in which social justice is understood, valued, and integrated in the spirit of goodwill; and
- Educating the congregation on issues related to social justice and facilitating participation by members of the congregation in social justice activities.

**Members:** No fixed membership; 23 recipients on email list; Ali Hammington, Chair.

### **Major Actions of 2019-2020**

#### Sunday services

- July 14 2019: "We are all Family". Annual genocide memorial service presented by Audrey Brooks. Soup Sunday followed.
- September 29 2019: Orange Shirt Day. Service presented by Eryn Straube and Audrey Brooks. Soup Sunday followed.
- February 9 2020: Joining Hands, Changing Lives. Service presented by Ali Hammington along with guest speakers from SMiLE Edmonton. Soup Sunday followed.

#### Organized UCE participation in events (with others)

- SMILE Street Parties outside the Hope Mission, one Sunday evening per month
- Homeless Connect (coordinated UCE's participation as a centre for contributions, October and April)
- Collected blankets for distribution at the SMiLE sidewalk parties (Sep-Nov). Also collected cash donations which were used to purchase blankets from Bissell Centre.
- Amnesty International Write for Rights Campaign (December)
- No Women Without campaign to collect feminine hygiene products for distribution via WIN House
- Continued to collect clothing donations for Bissell Centre

#### Other activities and events

- Made a donation of \$942.25 to Welcome Home, a nonprofit organisation providing support to newly-housed individuals
- Began the process to have UCE designated a Green Sanctuary

- Discussed the preparation of a letter to the board recommending a ban on disposable plastics
- Updated the UCE Social Justice pamphlet
- Prepared a list of charities for Sharing Our Abundance for submission to the board
- Provided a column on social justice in the UCE's monthly newsletter
- Increased awareness of UCE's social justice activities within the church and in the community through social media (thanks to the Communications Committee)
- Assisted with Soup Sundays
- Continued coordination of UCE's support of weekly distribution of food hampers for the Food Bank, until service was discontinued due to Covid-19.
- Initiated discussion for a planned multi-church Social Justice conference in fall 2020, now likely to be postponed due to Covid-19.

### **Outcomes Achieved**

- Promoted increased awareness in the congregation on topics such as poverty and homelessness
- Organized UCE participation in community activities related to social justice

### **Planned Actions for 2020-2021:**

- Plan for special projects involving social justice
- Prepare for the annual Interfaith Genocide Memorial (July)
- Provide Sunday services featuring social justice themes
- Continue to develop ways to work on issues related to poverty, homelessness, and reconciliation and to explore ways to support Indigenous actions
- Collaborate with Communications Committee to promote UCE social justice concerns

### **Recommendations for Board Consideration**

- Please continue the practice of having a member of the Board serve as liaison to the Social Justice Working Group.

**Submitted by: Ali Hammington**

