

## Social Action

**Community Harvest Garden:** Gardeners donated 3000 pounds of fresh organic produce to local pantries and shelters and won the City of Plano Environmental Community Award, nonprofit category in 2017. The \$500 award funded two additional watering stations. Mike Owens installed 6 hose trees to improve access and safety. Early 2018 challenges have included extended hard freezes, February's 11 inches of rain, heightened crop damage from voles, and a shortage of gardeners. Marketing efforts in fall of 2017 included invitations to the HOA homes near the church, First Methodist Church next door, and CUUC members. A February Plano Star Courier article featured our newest member, 7<sup>th</sup> grade Girl Scout Maira Padani. Partnerships with Sai Congregation, North Texas Food Bank, and area Boy Scout troops continue.

**First Responders' Appreciation Day on September 11, 2017:** CUUC and The Sai Center of Dallas members and their children delivered filled containers of goodies to 71 area Fires Houses, Police Stations and the Plano 911 Response Center this year. This is our ninth year for this observance.

**Alan Ross TX Freedom Parade:** Community UU members again supported the LGBTQ community by joining with other North Texas Unitarian Universalists helping with the NTUUC booth and the Children's booth in the Family Section at the park for the Pride Festival September 16 and marching in the Parade on September 17.

### Barron Elementary

Our members provided the following support to Barron Elementary this year:

- Health supplies drive in the fall
- Boxtops for the Boxtops for Education Drive
- Coats from our Coat Closet for students in need
- 4 regular weekly volunteers assist teachers in the workroom
- 1 volunteer works in the library
- 4 volunteers are mentoring a young student each week
- 1 volunteer assists the PTA by serving as Treasurer
- 1 volunteer assists with kindergarten class
- Several volunteers provide a face-painting table at the Fall Festival each year
- Community UU will provide an Italian lunch for the teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week (first week of May)

### Guest At Your Table

Our Guest At Your Table collection for 2017-18 brought in some \$925.00 that was begun in Nov. 2017 and then sent to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee in Jan. and Feb. of 2018. Many thanks to everyone who contributed by checks and cash and hopefully all received a thank you confirmation from UUSC on your donations. Personally we wanted to thank Dick Hildenbrand, Connie Meints, and many collection plate counters for redirecting some of these checks to be mailed to the UUSC. In faith, Anne & Chet Smith

### Texas UU Justice Ministry

This statewide justice ministry works to promote Unitarian Universalist values in the public arena and seeks to have those values enacted into legislation and public policy. Since the Legislature

was not in session this spring, our activity was somewhat more limited and conference call sessions focused on training and immigration issues.

### **Human Right Issues of North Texas**

HRI provides legal and support services to refugees and immigrants who have suffered human rights abuses. They advocate for justice and promote international human rights for all. Their CEO Bill Holston is our guest speaker every July.

### **New Orleans**

A group of seven adults and seven high school youth traveled to New Orleans for a service trip from June 27th to 30th (some were already there for General Assembly). They participated in workshops about New Orleans history, institutional racism and oppression, conducted by the Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal (CELSJR). The project selected was to build a cedar fence around the home of Mrs. Weatherspoon (pictured in wheelchair) in the Broadmoor neighborhood. Materials were purchased through Share the Plate offerings supplemented by a few directed donations. Mrs. Weatherspoon and her family were quite pleased with the work that was done. Participating adults: Tom Brikowski, Stan Darnell, Dick Hildenbrand, Jo Howser, Seana Saxon, Gene Verinder and Vicki Verinder (House Mama). Youth: Justine Brennecke, Jazz Cao, Jack Dorman, Runa Gambill, Katey Newman, Genevieve Saxon and Kenneth Williams.

### **Plano Community Homes**

Plano Community Homes is a HUD housing project originally located in East Plano, but now has three locations in Plano and a new location in McKinney. Our Church has been a part of this project since its inception over 30 years ago and continues to have representation on the Board. Currently, Beverly Fleming is our representative on their board.

### **The Samaritan Inn**

Again, this year our church is helping sponsor a child from The Samaritan Inn to participate in summer camp activities. 33% of their residents are children. Going away to camp gives the children an opportunity to enjoy camp life and all of the adventures it offers away from their day to day issues. Construction will enter the final stages of construction this spring on two additional structures. One will be for general use to house new food service facilities, library, chapel, and offices. The second structure will be a three-story residence building to house up to 225 individuals. What a good effort!

**GOD'S PANTRY** – has experienced a client growth of 51% from last year with another 20% minimum expected this year. They have been able to keep up with this client growth due to support from local churches, businesses and individuals. There is a steady supply of capable volunteers to reduce the labor cost and all of the food is donated. Our donations of non-perishables, organic vegetables, and payment of their utility bills continue to be appreciated and very needed.

**MEALS ON WHEELS OF COLLIN CO** – this organization is also supported with donations twice a year totaling \$1332 this fiscal year. Volunteers are needed and welcomed.

**COLLIN COUNTY HOMELESS COALITION** – a survey of the homeless in Collin County was conducted on January 25, 2018. This year they counted 427 homeless people located

with 140 children counted. This is down 4% from last year. 62% were employed either full or part time. The top six reported needs of the unsheltered were housing, food, hygiene products/clothing, money, warm place/heat, and sleeping items. Community UU Church is represented in this coalition.

**Welcoming Congregation 2018 Report** – The Welcoming Congregation committee of the Community Unitarian Universalist Church submitted the request for renewal of the Welcoming Congregation status to the UUA on 4/19/2018.

- In addition two notebooks, one of articles used and a second of historical comments from 1991, committee notes and minutes are in the church library. Please use the materials in the library.
- Many of the articles are available in a password protected Dropbox.
- The Welcoming Congregation work is ongoing. Thank you for your support.

Anita VanOuwkerk, chair