

Social Action Committee

Mission

We shall be known as champions of social justice. We shall lead and collaborate with other Lincoln churches and social action groups to promote the values we hold in common.

We shall monitor local and larger social issues in order to undertake actions our values inspire. We will make our church facilities available to community organizations.

CHURCH COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We focus energy on events, such as discussions and forums related to peace and social justice issues, as well as select church services.

GREATER COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Discussion Forum "*Doing Time: A Look at Nebraska's Prison System*" (Sundays in Oct. 2005, 7–8:30pm. Are our prisons preparing offenders for successful re-integration as productive members of society? How are we doing in securing "equal justice for all"? What is the impact of the current structure on the inmates, their families and the community? A diverse group of panelists will discuss these issues.

Food Pantry We are one of twelve Lincoln congregations participating in Lincoln Interfaith Council's *Emergency Food Pantries System*. We donate food and also encourage church friends and members to give cash gifts. Committee members, with other UU members and friends, volunteer to fill boxes with food at Eastridge Presbyterian Church (one evening a week for a 2-month period, each year).

Interfaith Housing Coalition Historic apartments "*The President*" and "*The Ambassador*" provide low-income housing through sponsorship by Saint Paul United Methodist, First Ply-

mouth United Church of Christ, and our church, ministering to the needs of residents. Two Unitarians serve on the non-profit IHC board; additional church volunteers assist with mission-centered projects, primarily renovation and semi-annual clean-up/maintenance.

Support for the GLBT Community As a *Welcoming Congregation*, we support the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community in the greater Lincoln area: We provide a meeting place for PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays); and sponsor Living Better Conference, an annual event that provides information to GLBT community for happier, safer living, comprising speakers, music, and good food. Our committee sets up, takes down seating, prepares and serves food.

Cultural Dinners Our committee sponsors ethnic dinners at the Unitarian Church, popular fundraisers that feature food and programs prepared by members of the cultural groups; funds go to programs or projects designated by those groups.

WORLD OUTREACH

Lectures Our Committee is one of the sponsors of the annual *Winter Lecture Series* Sunday evenings 7pm–9pm, Feb.–Mar. *China is the focus for 2006*. The series, started in the mid-1980s by the Nebraska Humanities Council and the Peace & Justice ministries at Vine Congregational Church & the Center for Sustainable Agriculture Systems (church member Chuck

Francis, UNL, heads this center), focuses on *peace, hunger, and social justice issues* in a specific part of the world, providing in-depth exploration. An area expert speaks during the first hour; a Q&A session follows a refreshment break. A festive ethnic dinner caps off this series. Our committee does set-up/take down and provides cookies and drinks during the break.

Human Rights—Fundraising for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Guest at Your Table We distribute and promote *Guest at Your Table* boxes (from UUSC), which are filled at home with spare change, over several weeks. Funds are used for UUSC & partner organizations, which focus on protecting & promoting human rights through approaches often far more cost effective in saving human lives than those of other organizations. Focus is on places where atrocities are rampant. This year's program will emphasize the work of UUSC and their partners in Guatemala, Burma, and the United States.

Justice Sunday We recognize this day in March.

Holiday Cards Our committee sells holiday cards to support the UUSC, grounded in principles that affirm the worth, dignity, & human rights of every person & the interdependence of all life—working to advance justice throughout the world.

The Coffee Project Begun in spring of 2005, in cooperation with UUSC and Equal Exchange, this project sells free-trade coffees to church members, thus supporting small-scale sustainable farming practices while raising funds for UUSC.

MLK Freedom Breakfast Every January, we participate in this breakfast honoring Dr. King and his important work. This event is sponsored by many other Lincoln organizations.

Support and Action—Local, Regional, International

Through membership, we support:

Lincoln Interfaith Council / www.lincolninterfaith.org
Nebraskans for Peace / www.nebraskansforpeace.org/index.html

Nebraska ACLU / www.aclunebraska.org
Planned Parenthood, 2246 "O" Street, 441-3300
Unitarian Universalist United Nations Association, contact is Marie Fischer, 486-2357

Through financial support, we assist:

Amnesty International / www.amnesty.org
Fresh Start, a community-based transitional living facility that helps single women rebuild their lives
Indian, Asian, and Hispanic Community Centers
Nebraska Pro Choice Coalition

Through action, we support:

Women's March in Washington (scholarship enabled committee member to participate)
Demonstration in White Clay, NE
Crop Walk for Hunger
AIDS Walk
Walk Against Domestic Violence
Gay Pride Parade in Omaha
Planned Parenthood and PFLAG lobby
Voter Registrar Training and Voter Registration
Participation in STOP: Criminal Justice Symposium

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We are open to new & innovative ways to serve others locally, regionally, and globally.