

Social Justice Activities for the Religious Education Program of All Souls 2017-2018

September 19-23 Live Below the Line

To give a glimpse into the lives of 1.2 billion people who have no choice but to live below the line every day – and who have to make \$1.50 cover a lot more than food. Live Below the Line is an initiative of the Global Poverty Project, an education and campaigning organization whose mission is to increase the number and effectiveness of people taking action against extreme poverty.

October 15 Crop Walk

CROP Hunger Walks are community-wide events sponsored by Church World Service and organized by religious groups, businesses, schools and others to raise funds to end hunger in the U.S. and around the world.

November UUSC Guest at Your Table

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is UUSC's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about their work to advance human rights. (Nov 19-Jan 1)

December STEPS Gift Drive and Party

STEPS to End Violence (STEPS) is a holistic program of services for victims of gender-based violence with a focus on prevention, intervention, and policy advocacy. STEPS has been providing holistic, trauma-informed services since 1986. Begun with a staff of two as a court advocacy project for battered women defendants, the program has since grown exponentially and now reaches over 5,000 New Yorkers each year. (Nov 12-Dec 17). The Party is on December 14.

January 15 MLK Jr. Day of Action

Martin Luther King Jr. asked, "What are you doing for others?" Families are invited to find an activity to help make our community better or sign up to help with Monday Night Hospitality here at All Souls. Activities can be found at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/mlkday>.

February 28 Pink Shirt Day

Bullying is a major problem in our schools, workplaces, homes, and over the Internet. On February 28, 2018, we will wear pink to symbolize that we as a society will not tolerate bullying anywhere.

March 4-18 Operation Refugee

Refugees and displaced people have fled their homes in fear of their lives. 65.3 million people around the planet have fled war, conflict and persecution. Nearly 5 million are Syrians sheltering in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, North Africa and Turkey. As part of the global community we need to make sure they all have food, shelter and protection. By taking the 2-5 day challenge, we are showing refugees that we are with them, they are not forgotten. The funds raised will supply refugees with food, medicine and the support they need to survive, showing that there are people who really care about them.

March 25 Easter Baskets

Families gather in Friendship Hall before services to prepare Easter Baskets for children at Bellevue Hospital. Cardboard cartons (the ones used to hold a pint of strawberries) are filled with “grass” made from shredded paper, candy and small toys, then wrapped in cellophane and tied with curled ribbon.

April Autism Awareness

Nearly a quarter century ago, the Autism Society launched a nationwide effort to promote autism awareness, inclusion and self-determination for all, and assure that each person with ASD is provided the opportunity to achieve the highest possible quality of life. This year we want to go beyond simply promoting autism awareness to encouraging friends and collaborators to become partners in movement toward acceptance and appreciation. Special workshops, events and other activities-

April 22 Earth Day

The first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, activated 20 million Americans from all walks of life and is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement. Twenty years later, Earth Day went global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage. Event to be determined.

May/June Operation Backpack

Family homelessness is at a record high in NYC with nearly 13,000 families and more than 23,000 children living in the City's homeless shelters. One of the most devastating consequences of homelessness is the impact it has on a child's education. We collect backpacks filled with school supplies for children living in homeless and domestic violence shelters. A filled backpack relieves parents of a financial burden and provides

a sense of normalcy to the otherwise chaotic lives of these children, helping them to look and feel more like their classmates.

Other Social Justice Activities:

*Making sandwiches and fruit bags for Monday Night Hospitality (MNH)

*Desserts for Monday Night Hospitality by Class

*Bake Sales/Hot Chocolate for the MNH hosted by the 7th and 8th graders

*5th grade Bake Sale for the UN-UNO Every Child is Our Child Program

*Heifer International Farm Weekend for 7th and 8th graders

*Mitten and Cap drive (Mitten Tree) at Christmas Time

*Pop-up activities and events possible throughout the year

*Mission trip by high school youth group- This year we will spend a week in Appalachia, in McDowell County, one of the poorest counties in the United States. (9th- 12th grade)