

2021 Annual Report from the Mission Committee

Mission Committee Members: Jen Brady, Susan Conrad, Rev. Heather Finck, Aimee Heinly, Judy Hunt, Ellen McCutcheon, Ruth Runyan, Ruth Sheets, Colleen Snavely, Susan Stuebner, Judy Walters, Christine Williams

The pandemic continued to change the way some mission projects were supported in 2021. The Mission Committee is grateful to the congregation for their continued support for mission outreach. This report of mission projects and the benevolence report summarize the important mission outreach your support made possible.

Appalachian Service Project – *Appalachian Service Project* sponsors home repair and build Mission Trips in Central Appalachia. In 2021, ASP had to be canceled for the second year in a row. We donated our 2021 trip deposit of \$2195 to ASP. We are planning a trip for the summer 2022. Our planned dates are July 16 – 23.

ASK Offering – FPUPC and friends generously supported the 2021 Easter *ASK Offering*. Store gift cards purchased from the ASK Offering were donated to local food pantries who gave them to clients or used them to purchase pantry items to refill their shelves. We received a 5% premium on the gift cards, which increased the overall card value amounts the pantries received. The following pantries received store gift cards: Dutchess Outreach (\$7400), Pleasant Valley Ecumenical Food Pantry (\$2100), Full Gospel Center Food Pantry (\$1650), The Pantry at Dutchess Community College (\$1500), and Trinity United Methodist Food Pantry (\$850).

Backpacks and More – Although the August 2020 and 2021 *Backpacks and More* events were cancelled, backpacks and supplies remaining from 2019 were given to children at local schools and Grace Smith House.

Brookhaven Christmas Gifts – Thanks to the generosity of the congregation and friends of FPUPC we were able to continue our tradition of providing gifts for the families living at the *Brookhaven Apartments* of Grace Smith House. To make the process safer and more convenient for everyone, gift cards were given again this year. Gift cards were purchased for 49 women and children residing at Brookhaven. The gift cards were delivered early enough that mothers could shop for their children's gifts.

Bridges to Community – *Bridges to Community* develops poverty alleviation strategies with local communities in rural regions of Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. Bridges to Community did not organize 2021 service-learning trips for volunteers, but they plan to re-establish in-person volunteer trips to the Dominican Republic in 2022. This year we donated funds to support this mission. When trips resume and youth from our congregation want to participate, the Mission Committee will support them.

CROP Walk 2021 – In response to COVID-19 the October 2021 the *Dutchess County Interfaith Council CROP Walk* was again a virtual event. FPUPC members and friends walked on their own and raised funds for *Team Moody*, uplifting the work that Mary and

Ken Moody supported for so many years and in so many ways. To date Team Moody has raised \$12,243.

Dutchess Outreach – The *Dutchess Outreach* client base increased in 2021. FPUPC's contributions to Dutchess Outreach enabled the organization to reach many Poughkeepsie residents. The store gift cards received from the Easter ASK offering were distributed last spring and summer at the Dutchess Outreach Farm Stand along with produce from local farms to help residents create healthier meals. The cards were also used to buy food to supplement food received from the regional food bank. The pantry model changed in August to allow residents to twice a month shop for food at the pantry instead of getting a pre-packed box. Clients have more dignity and there is less waste. Food donations from the congregation and monetary donations from the Mission Committee continue to help keep the pantry shelves full.

Earth Stewards – FPUPC maintained our status as an *Earth Care Congregation* for the third consecutive year through the Earth Steward's programming and initiatives and with support from FPUPC members and friends. The Earth Stewards continue to challenge us to be more faithful stewards of the Earth. The full Earth Stewards Annual Report follows.

Habitat for Humanity of Dutchess County – *Habitat for Humanity of Dutchess County* is currently building two houses in Wappingers Falls and volunteers from FPUPC have been involved. FPUPC volunteers also work at the Habitat ReStore which was awarded ReStore of the year in New York this year.

Holiday Meals – The Logan and Puckette families once again sponsored a “take-out” Thanksgiving dinner. The chance to have a home-cooked Thanksgiving meal was very much appreciated by those who participated. Thanks to all who made this community event possible.

Homeless Shelter Meals – The fourth Wednesday of every month FPUPC serves meals to the local homeless population through Hudson River Housing's Gail Webster House. As need has grown over the years and again with the pandemic, the need for space to house the shelter clients grows. Hudson River Housing hopes to have a new, larger facility in the future. As the pandemic spread, volunteers in 2021 were called to feed 110 people, up from 80 in 2020 and 60 in previous years. Many thanks to all those who donated to the FPUPC *Homeless Shelter Meal Fund*, made meals and desserts, donated food, coordinated the purchase of meals at restaurants, and delivered food to the homeless shelter.

Lunch Box – As in previous years, FPUPC sponsored meals at the *Lunchbox* for one Sunday in March and one in August. Thanks to the FPUPC members and friends who made donations to purchase the food. The Lunchbox staff and volunteers from our congregation assembled grab and go containers for clients to pick up. Due to the pandemic, Dutchess Outreach staff served the meals. Many thanks to Bonnie Biskup and Mitzi Loatman for keeping this important mission project close to our hearts.

Presbyterian Missionaries - As the COVID-19 pandemic rages here and around the world, FPUPC continues to financially support the Ministry and Service of four Presbyterian missionaries who have elected to stay and continue their work in the countries they serve. **Kay Day** teaches English and Practical Theology to Rwandan men and women preparing for pastoral ministry at the Protestant Institute for Arts and Sciences, a joint project of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda and four other protestant denominations. **Ryan and Alethia White** are the Mission Co-workers serving the Iranian Presbyterian Church in Berlin, Germany. This is a congregation of expatriates and refugees whose needs and stressors faced are so very great. Just as here, Ministry is challenging, with all the COVID-19 protocols. **Nadia Ayoub** is a Mission Co-worker serving in Greece with Perichoresis, a refugee relief agency, and the Greek Evangelical Church. She serves as Advocate, Counsellor, and Translator for refugees from many Middle Eastern countries.

In addition to the financial support we provide, all of them request our prayers for those they serve, and for their own physical, emotional, and spiritual health. They also ask that we advocate locally and nationally for justice and humanitarian aid with dignity, for people displaced by religious persecution armed conflict, and famine.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Conrad
Mission Committee Chair