

2023 Annual Report from FPUPC Mission Committee

Mission Committee Members – Susan Conrad, Rev. Heather Finck, Aimee Heinly, Judy Hunt, Ellen McCutcheon, Julie Mecca, MaryAnn Russo, Ruth Runyan, Colleen Snavely, Susan Stuebner, Judy Walters.

As co-chairs of the Mission committee, Ellen McCutcheon and Colleen Snavely thank the congregation for its continued support. The committee routinely meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm on Zoom, but we did enjoy an in-person dinner and meeting this Sept at Ellen's house in Poughkeepsie. The report below details the community projects that FPUPC members participated in, and lists local and world outreach made possible by the generosity of the congregation.

ASK Offering – The congregation rallied to support Grace Smith House with over \$14,000 this year for the Easter ASK offering. Your donations enabled them to replace old carpet with vinyl flooring in the common areas and replace the furniture in the family lounge area.

Brookhaven Christmas Gifts – Aimee Heinly again coordinated the purchase of gift cards for Brookhaven apartment families. Thanks to the gift cards from the congregation and a \$2500 allocation from the Discretionary Mission funds, we were able to provide each family with \$150 in gift cards.

Crop Walk 2023 - Team Moody (in memory of Ken and Mary Moody) continued to be a contributor to the Dutchess Interfaith Council Crop Walk this year, raising \$6435.

Dutchess Interfaith Council of Churches– We continue to support the Dutchess Interfaith Council with Mission committee Funds. DCIC sponsors the annual CROP walk and a music festival. We also supported their Migrant Coat and Boot drive this fall.

Dutchess Outreach Food Pantry – The Mission Committee donated money to Dutchess Outreach quarterly to support their various programs including the Pantry and the Lunch Box. Thanks to those in the congregation who donate money, non-perishable food items, and time to this organization. The pantry serves hundreds of households every month.

Dutchess Outreach Lunch Box – We provided two Sunday noon meals this year in March and August thanks to cash and dessert donations from the congregation. We are planning to provide meals on March 10th and August 18th in 2024.

Earth Stewards – The committee once again fulfilled requirements to be designated as an Earth Care Congregation for the 5th consecutive year thanks to Ruth Sheet's careful documentation and several projects. Renie Milliken organized an art fair. Eight Sunday School students contributed to the art fair. They described their artwork during the April 16th coffee

hour and received garden gloves and a certificate for their participation. A few congregation members participated in the April 22nd Lagrange Trash Bash on Earth Day to clean up Todd Hill Road.

In 2023, Partners for Climate Action of the Hudson Valley granted Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church a grant of nearly \$11,000 for a pollinator garden. Neal Townsend and Paul Lent scrounged up 3 tanks that we scrubbed clean. Neal and the Earth Stewards put together a rainwater collection and pumping system that enabled us to deliver water to the garden 400 ft away. We recruited spouses, and Boy Scouts to move mulch and topsoil. The Earth Stewards led congregation members and friends, and Arlington students to plant 400 plants in the spring. We staked drip hoses around plants to semi-automatically water each quadrant of the garden for 90 min twice a week for 8 weeks to get the plants going. Fortunately, rains from July through October took care of the watering. In the fall we added another 200 plants. The pollinators swarmed to the garden with many bees, butterflies, and even a hummingbird! We will officially name the garden in February with congregational input and add a foot path this spring to lead from the parking lot to the garden.

Homeless Shelter Meals – On the 4th Wednesday of every month in 2023, we either provided a meal to the Homeless shelter or provided funds for the shelter to buy a meal. The Homeless population varies between 120 and 150 residents. Thanks to all who donated funds, food, and time to prepare and deliver meals. We are endeavoring to reduce the cost in 2024 by asking congregation members to cook some meals and purchase fewer from restaurants.

Hope on a Mission – Several members of the Mission Committee provided and served breakfast on Main Street in Poughkeepsie on Dec 9th. We also packed Christmas bags with toiletries, snacks, and hats and gloves on Dec 13th.

Presbytery Mission – This year we allocated funds to support these disaster relief and local Presbytery concerns:

- Disaster Relief for Ukraine
- Disaster Relief for the Turkey/Syria Earthquake
- Disaster Relief for Hurricane Idalia
- Disaster Relief for Maui Wildfires
- Disaster Relief for Israel and Gaza
- Hudson River Presbytery Prison Partnership

Direct Missionary Support – Our donations go to a general Presbytery International Mission fund but we earmarked these donations in honor of Ryan and Alethia White and Nadia Ayoub whom we have supported in the past. We called into a coffee hour this month to hear from Alethia White who attended the COP28 conference on climate change.

Discretionary Mission – We provided additional monetary support to the following organizations and causes in 2023, both local and worldwide.

World Central Kitchen

UNICEF for Ukraine

Hope on a Mission

Dutchess Outreach Coupons for Hunger

Hudson River Housing

Hudson Valley Helps Refugees – Helped to Purchase an Ambulance for Ukraine

Clearwater Education Fund

Child Safety and Drug Awareness Fund

Presbyterians for Earth Care

Rural and Migrant Ministry Summer Camp

Habitat for Humanity

Arlington Backpacks for Food

Grannies Respond (for asylum seeker needs)

Doctors without Borders

Sparrow's Nest

Migrant School Supplies

Respectfully Submitted,

Colleen Snavely

Ellen McCutcheon

Mission Committee Co-Chairs