

## **History of the Working for Justice Steering Group**

Working in consultation with the Strategic Planning and Nominating Committees, the Working for Justice Steering Group was formed to encourage, guide and oversee efforts by members and friends at UUCB to prevent hate and prejudice within our congregation as well as in the larger community.

Is it possible to transform ourselves at the same time that we contribute to change in the larger world? The formation of a new social justice initiative that would realize the UUCB mission “to work for justice” began with a series of meetings over the summer of 2010 to consider questions about social action—efforts that UUCB could do as a community that would make a difference in the wider community while deepening our own spiritual growth.

In October of 2010, a group of about 40 participants brainstormed social justice issues that could engage the whole congregation and voted on those they thought could be transformative—deepening relationships among participants and encouraging community collaboration. The group selected three issues—immigration, poverty, and preventing hate and prejudice—for presentations to the entire congregation. At the Dec. 5, 2010 Sunday worship service, three members shared information about each issue and its potential engagement of the congregation. Voting for their preference, members and friends selected the issue of preventing hate and prejudice.

In January 2011, the newly formed Working for Justice Steering Group took as its charge the goals for social action emerging from meetings of the previous months. The Steering Group seeks to guide members and friends in efforts to prevent hate and prejudice that will:

- Enrich the spiritual journeys of members and friends in our congregation;
- Engage our congregation in actions that nourish both giver and receiver;
- Encourage community collaboration by responding to an already expressed need and building on existing initiatives;

Oversee activities and work toward diminishing hate and prejudice in UUCB, Brunswick and surrounding communities.