

To Whom Should We Give our End-of-Year Donations?

How can we give responsibly in a needy world? Your Social Justice Coordinating Team would like to suggest that your donations in the holiday and end-of-year giving season be given to meet local, national, and global needs with a focus on advocacy for change locally, nationally, and internationally for global justice and peace.

Charity or Justice?

In this season, we are besieged by many charities. Most appeal for support of the sick, the poor, and the needy. Many, such as the Smile and Make-a-Wish Foundations, March of Dimes, and food banks, serve individuals rather than advocating for change in the laws and regulations that *create* their suffering. In times of global recession, some of these organizations do need our support.

But we believe that our donations should not only provide balm for the wounds of injustice but also should *change the conditions that create injustice and poverty*. As well, as a result of the state and national elections last year, many of the organizations working for justice will need additional support to combat the efforts that are already being made to undo some of the protections that have been put in place over the years.

What Can We Do?

Justice is the public face of love.

As Frances Moore Lappe said, "We must demonstrate how government can be reclaimed as a vehicle through which we can act on our deepest values..."

Thus, our focus should be on seeking justice and peace by changing the structures of life that are shaped by governments.

We can do this by contributing to organizations that work to change government and public policy in a way that is generous, caring, visionary and strategic.

Although not exhaustive, here is a list from your Social Justice Coordinating Team of organizations that support justice:

Friends Committee for National Legislation – www.fcnl.org (issues: military spending, environment and energy, immigrants and refugees, criminal justice, economic justice, voting and elections, peace building)

Oxfam America Advocacy Fund – www.oaaf.org (works to change the laws that keep people in poverty)

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) – www.aclu.org (works to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and the laws of the United States)

Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) – www.splcenter.org (works to fight hate and bigotry and seek justice for the most vulnerable members of our society)

Heifer Project – www.heifer.org (works to end world hunger and poverty through the “teach a man to fish” philosophy)

NAACP – www.naACP.org (works to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination)

Doctors Without Borders – www.doctorswithoutborders.org (helps people worldwide where the need is greatest, delivering emergency medical aid to people affected by conflict, epidemics, disasters, or exclusion from health care)

Polaris Project – www.polarisproject.org (works on all forms of human trafficking and serves victims of human trafficking slavery)

Amnesty International – www.amnestyusa.org (monitors and lobbies for human rights worldwide)

Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) – www.finca.org (works to alleviate poverty through lasting solutions that help people build assets, create jobs and raise their standard of living)

Lambda Legal – www.lambdalega.org (works to achieve full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work)

Planned Parenthood – www.plannedparenthood.org (provides reproductive health services both in the United States and globally)

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee – www.uusc.org (advances human rights through grassroots collaborations)

National Resources Defense Council – www.nrdc.org (works to safeguard the earth—its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends)

Environmental Defense Fund – www.edf.org (guided by science and economics, works to tackle environmental threats with practical solutions)

Oil and Water Don’t Mix – www.oilandwaterdontmix.org (works with other organizations to keep oil out of the Great Lakes)