

Social Justice Fund Announces Grants for 2021

We are so pleased to announce the Garrett-Larsen Social Justice Fund grants for this year. It seems notable that most of our applications this year involved helping people find safe and affordable shelter, one of the most basic human needs. The steering committee met on Nov. 11 and 18 to consider the applications, and made the following awards:

\$1,000 to Monadnock Quaker Meeting in Jaffrey, to help build a short-term emergency shelter within their Meetinghouse. The funds will go toward comfortable and secure quarters for up to four people, as well as furnishings and bedding. Members of the Quaker Meeting are coordinating with local churches and social service agencies for referrals.

\$500 to MATS (Monadnock Area Transitional Shelter) for its Hope Fund, which offers reliable transportation (including car repairs, vehicle registration, and gas) for guests who are experiencing homelessness, to help them toward independence. The Hope Fund is only one part of MATS's main mission, which is to provide transitional housing and support for individuals and families in need of shelter. Since 1991, 746 people have lived at MATS, including 391 children. MATS connects individuals with community resources, legal aid, and counseling to prevent recurring homelessness.

\$500 to the Sacred Ally Quilt Ministry for their work in racial justice. Our former interim pastor, Rev. Chris Owen, is creating a documentary film about this project, which will premier in New York City in May of 2022. The quilts, created by nine New Hampshire UCC churches after the death of George Floyd, are traveling to schools and churches throughout New England to inspire conversations about racial justice. Our grant was given with no restrictions to support the project.

To the many people in our congregation and wider community who have contributed to this fund: all we can say is Thank You! You are all a blessing. When Rev. Dawn Garrett-Larsen concluded her ministry in Nelson in 2019, this fund was our way to honor her and carry forward our desire to help the cause of social justice in the world. It is all about being a good neighbor, in the best and widest sense.

We will invite the recipients to attend a worship service in the new year, either in person or on Zoom, to tell us about their projects.

Steering Committee, Garrett-Larsen Social Justice Fund
Betsy Street, Deanna Zilske, Judy Waterston, Avery Hurley, Steve Cady, Susan Peery