

Voting Rights Team Annual Report – May 2023

Chair and members: Sara Dalton (team leader), Anny Vijayan and Jamie McReynolds

Purpose of committee: The purpose of the team, formed in January 2023, is to promote and encourage voting by members of our congregation as well as the larger community.

Achievements: We tracked legislation regarding voting in the January/February session of the Virginia General Assembly and contacted legislators requesting their support of bills favorable to inclusive voting and requesting their opposition to bills designed to limit or restrict voting. In collaboration with the Montgomery County League of Women Voters and the MRF NAACP, we planned and hosted a Voter Information Forum for the community held on April 20 at UUC.

Expenses for the year to date: While we did not have funding for the current fiscal year as we were just formed in January, we spent around \$70 for printing flyers promoting the April 20 Forum and for purchasing refreshments at the Forum.

How does the team work to further our mission and vision: Our purpose and mission exemplify our 5th and 6th UU principles.

Goals for the coming year and how do they further our mission and vision: We anticipate having a table in Elarth following Sunday services at least 4 times prior to the Nov. election, with voter information materials available. We will also use the newsletter and UU updates to inform congregants of upcoming events related to voting such as candidate forums and critical dates. We will encourage 100% voter registration and voting in our congregation. The team leader, also a member of the League of Women Voters and the MRF NAACP will function as a liaison for our team with these local organizations related to voting. Team members will contact our elected Virginia Senators from new districts 4 and 5 and our Virginia Delegates from new districts 41 and 42 regarding bills in the 2024 Virginia General Assembly pertaining to voting and elections in an effort to encourage their support of more inclusive voting regulations vs more restrictive ones. All efforts toward voter participation reflect our 5th principle, “the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process with our congregations and in society at large.” We will make an effort to find someone in our congregation willing to take on the role of liaison with UU the Vote.