

Special Offering Proposal 2021 – 2022

At the March 2021 annual meeting, the members were asked to vote on Special Offerings for the following year. The Social Justice Team has voted to keep the three charitable organizations presently receiving Special Offerings from the congregation and to add two new ones.

The five charities will be:

All Faiths Food Bank - The economic impact of COVID-19 has increased food insecurity in our community. Business closures have affected lower-income families and people with hourly wages in particular. For every \$1 given the food bank can purchase 5 meals.

CHAPS (Charlotte HIV/AIDS People Support) is a 501(c)(3), all volunteer agency that provides supplemental food and hygiene products at no cost to persons in need living with HIV/AIDS and their dependents in North Port, Venice, Englewood, Nokomis and Laurel. Hygiene products cannot be purchased with food stamps, and they can be vital to a person with a compromised immune system. All monetary donations from UUCOV are directed to purchases for clients residing in South Sarasota County.

Family Promise of South Sarasota County's Open-Door Program gives families with children that are facing homelessness a chance to get back on their feet. They do this by helping with rent payment if the family falls behind, or by helping pay 1st, last, and security deposit on a rental home, or by paying for 1-3 days of emergency shelter in a motel while housing is being secured.

Good Samaritan Pharmacy & Health Services provides medical services to uninsured, financially needy members of our community. Over 30% of Sarasota families have income below 200% of the poverty line and can be devastated by one medical crisis. Good Samaritan Pharmacy & Health Services provides free access to prescription and over-the-counter medications as well as access to physician services, including diagnostic testing. Even during this pandemic, they continue to provide prescription medication and virtual doctor visits to both new and preexisting patients. They are a 501(c)(3) located in Nokomis, staffed almost entirely by volunteers. Our donations would be used to purchase medications.

RIP Medical Debt is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2014 to raise money to be used to erase medical debt for poor individuals who earn less than two times the federal poverty level. So far it has raised enough to wipe out \$1.5 billion in debt for over 650,000 individuals. It purchases bundled debt portfolios at the rate of \$1-to-\$100 (so that every \$1 donated erases \$100 in debt.) UUCOV would join an ongoing campaign by Florida Humanists to help the campaign achieve its \$20,000 goal (thereby erasing \$2,000,000 in debt). The first goal is to wipe out debt in Charlotte, Collier (where Immokalee farmworkers live), and DeSoto Counties in Florida. To date \$19,150 has been raised. Any additional funds will be allocated to communities most in need in the state of Florida.