

MINDFUL EATING TEAM

Submitted by Co-Chairs Cathy Muha and Colleen Crawley

Our Mission: *The Mindful Eating Team of UUAA, acting with the denomination's Seven Principles as our guide, inspires and supports the congregation and the wider community to become informed about and advocate for food justice. We promote equitable and sustainable food systems that benefit farm and food workers, human health, animals, plants and the environment.*

Our activities address all five Core Values of UUAA. Our programs challenge us to understand how our food choices affect the planet and other beings. We promote social justice and environmental issues locally and beyond. We search for truth in love, never dictating but encouraging exploration of how our values inform our food choices. The inherent worth and dignity of every being underlies our work, and we recognize food's impact on the environment and its role in the interdependent web of all existence.

We meet the fourth Tuesday of every month. Core group members are co-chairs Cathy and Colleen, and Guala Lauzzana, Connie McGuire, Merrill Crockett, Ruth Vail, Eileen Wright, and Sheila Sanders. This year, Guala stepped down as co-chair, after many years serving in that position.

Activities

Our weekly Social Hall table provides information and opportunities to sign up for activities. On first Sundays we feature samples of local, healthy treats, and during summer we offer Produce Sharing.

We have a website: <http://uuaa.org/social-justice/324-me-home-page> and a FACEBOOK page: <https://www.facebook.com/MindfulEatingUUAA/>. Our bi-weekly newsletter is sent electronically to over 530 people.

Other activities included:

- Veg UUAA hosts a Plant Friendly Family Potluck at church every other month.
- We hosted farm workers from Florida when we showed the movie "Food Chains" and again when they returned to explain their struggles to us. We also heard from EMU students who had researched this topic.
- 2016 was our fifth season on the Food Gatherers Farm Project, working with our Maple Road neighbor Farmer Bill Schmid, raising and donating over 3,200 pounds of fresh produce and \$3,500.
- We raised \$1,175 for CROP Walk.
- Our Fall Harvest Potluck featured Amanda Edmonds, Director of Growing Hope and Mayor of Ypsilanti.
- We continued to host the "Meet Your Farmer" series, featuring the Dyer Family Organic Farm.
- We showed the documentary "Just Eat It", a story of food waste, and followed up with a food waste challenge to the congregation.
- Merrill taught "Gardening in Small Spaces".
- The Mindful Eating Team provided a Social Justice Moment. That same Sunday, Amanda Edmonds joined the Seeds of Revolution sermon.

Future Ideas, Plans, Goals

Our goal remains to find creative ways to carry out our Mission, such as:

- Contributing a fundraising dinner for the congregation's Auction.
- Hear more from local small farmers in our "Meet Your Farmer" series.
- Educate ourselves and the congregation on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and repercussions if SNAP is cut from the next Farm Bill.
- Continue to grow our core group membership.