

Outreach Responsibilities

The committee meets once per month for about 2 hours. Specific projects require additional time commitments. The committee is responsible for allocating funds designated in the annual budget that go to the conference for the church's wider mission. Outreach also promotes four offerings and appeals in the UCC that are targeted to specified needs. The four all-church offerings are: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross. The committee is responsible for discerning how best to use funds in the annual budget designated for sponsored projects. It is accountable for how monies are spent annually.

Sponsored projects include, but are not limited to, aiding the homeless, supporting military veterans, providing disaster relief, and combatting world hunger. Two missions that are historically supported financially from sponsored project funds are the Monson Open Pantry and the Monson Town Fuel Fund. Sponsored project money may be used to purchase items for distribution such as cleaning products for CWS emergency clean-up buckets or food and supplies for a fundraising event. For the past four years, the Outreach Committee has put on a free annual Mardi Gras dinner. This dinner builds community as we enter the Lenten season and raises funds for worthy causes. This year's dinner benefitted Soldier On, a local organization that connects homeless veterans with necessary resources and helps them work towards home ownership. This year, the Outreach Committee partnered with the Christian Ed Committee to sponsor an Easter egg hunt. The event was free, but people were encouraged to donate money or items from the Bay State Children's Hospital wish list.

The Outreach committee works to form partnerships with other organizations. Supporting the work of CWS, by holding an annual CROP Walk, not only provides funds directly to our local food pantry, but it also funds projects worldwide that providing safe drinking water, starting farms and educating people in how to manage their resources. For the last two years, we have accepted a challenge from two other churches to collect coats for the needy. We host blood drives and support our scouts and their missions. We are working with people from other congregations to create mats for the homeless from plastic bags, and dresses for girls in Africa.

For the past two years, the Outreach Committee has managed the Sunday morning Let's Eat breakfast program. The breakfast is served every Sunday, before worship, during the academic year, supported completely by donations, and open to the public. The program works autonomously from the Outreach budget. At least 2 committee members volunteer to work each Sunday in the kitchen for this mission. Mission objectives include providing a well-balanced meal for those that may or may not have the ability to pay and bringing people together in fellowship to promote community.

The Outreach Committee tries to find a balance between advocacy and relief. Communicating and educating the congregation and the community about the needs of the less fortunate maximizes our impact.