



HILLSBOROUGH ORGANIZATION FOR PROGRESS AND EQUALITY Inc.

5103 N. Central Avenue Tampa, FL 33603

813-221-HOPE (4673)

www.HillsboroughHOPE.org

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Dear Prospective Minister:

I want you to know that it has been a joy and inspiration to have the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa as a member congregation of the Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality for the past 22 years! Actively engaging in civic participation with the members and clergy of the UU Church and other diverse interfaith congregations of HOPE has enabled all of us to live our values of justice, fairness, community and democracy, while holding the institutions and systems in Hillsborough County accountable to these same core values.

It has been great to get to know individual clergy and leaders of the UU Church as they served on the HOPE Board, listened to the community concerns of members and neighbors, worked to build the congregation's justice ministry network, served on issue committees to research and develop long term solutions to serious community problems, helped with logistics and media, and worked to turn out the UU membership and it's friends to our large public meetings to get commitments from decision makers.

The congregation has shown its collective commitment to achieving justice by faithfully submitting its congregation membership dues over the years. And, individuals of the congregation have helped build the capacity of and taken ownership for the justice work of HOPE by personally investing, asking other individuals to invest, and meeting with corporate officers. There were many years when the UU Church got the award for raising the most money from individual investments!

Through the collective power of HOPE, the Hillsborough County School System established the Alternative to Out of School Suspension Program, the Bus System extended late night bus service, Federally Qualified Health Centers increased by two health clinics and 34 additional dental chairs, the County established the Birth Certificate and Identification Program resulting in 3,000 birth certificates and IDs to the homeless, and the City of Tampa removed a question about a criminal record from the city's job applications.

We look forward to continuing and deepening this long term relationship with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa, as we move forward to build our capacity to tackle the pressing issues that face our community today and tomorrow.

We look forward to the opportunity to work with you. Please feel free to call me at any time.

Respectfully,

Rev. Sharon Streater
Lead Organizer
Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality
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