

NVHC Change, NVHC's Social Action Committee Charter

1. Mission:

“For I have singled [Abraham] out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right (*tzedakah u'mishpat*)” (Genesis 18:19). Losing no time, Abraham boldly initiates a plea (and succeeds!) on behalf of the innocent in Sodom. His intervention dramatically illustrates that a defining feature of the covenantal relationship Jews have with God is the autonomy we have been given to improve our world (*tikkun olam*) by seeking to alleviate suffering, prevent abuse and exploitation, and elevate humanity.

NVHC Change, NVHC's Social Action Committee, supports NVHC's commitment to *tzedakah u'mishpat* and *tikkun olam* by enabling and coordinating our congregation's participation in social justice, community service, charitable giving, issue advocacy and learning (collectively “social action”). The committee creates opportunities for the congregation to work on social action by:

- building relationships among congregants to create a community of people interested in social action,
- maintaining a comprehensive and updated list of all social action activities at NVHC,
- identifying congregational social action priorities and resources, and
- partnering with social action organizations.

2. Committee membership:

The NVHC Social Action Committee (“SAC”) consists of NVHC members interested in social action activities and leaders of social action activities at NVHC. The Chair or Co-Chairs are proposed by the SAC, appointed by the President of NVHC and approved by the Board of Trustees.

All congregants are invited to join the SAC, attend the meetings and participate on a regular or occasional basis. Decisions are usually reached by consensus but if a vote is taken, all congregants who attend meetings are permitted to vote. Non-congregants are permitted to join the SAC and be voting members of the SAC with the approval of the SAC Chair. The SAC Chair shall maintain an email list that includes the NVHC members who attend the meetings and any other NVHC member who requests to be on the SAC email list (“SAC email list”). The SAC email list shall also include the President, who is *ex officio* of all NVHC committees, and Clergy (if they request).

The VOICE core leadership team shall be part of the SAC but will make decisions with respect to VOICE activities, hold its own meetings, and report its activities to the SAC, with approvals of the SAC and Board only if necessary and appropriate. The VOICE core team shall work with and

coordinate with the SAC Chair as appropriate to publicize VOICE activities and encourage congregants to participate. Any decisions on VOICE dues and fundraising for VOICE shall be made only with the SAC and Board.

3. Duties, Reporting, Authority:

In performing its duties, the SAC will:

- Act to fulfill its stated mission.
- Report on its activities to the Vice President for Programs and Committees and the Board of Trustees as appropriate and requested, no less than annually.
- Request approval of the Board before using NVHC's name to sponsor an event with outside organizations or other similar endorsements.

The SAC is authorized to promote volunteer participation by members of the congregation in initiatives of organizations with which NVHC maintains ongoing affiliations, including URJ, RAC, Cornerstones, HIAS, JCRC, VOICE, Fairfax County Public Schools, JCADA, MAZON, and other organizations as may be authorized by the Board of Trustees.* Additional organizations will be shared by the SAC Chair with the President, and Board approval will be sought only if the President determines it is necessary because of the nature of the organization.

4. Committee Meetings:

The SAC shall meet every four to eight weeks, or as necessary to plan, organize, and discuss social action activities at NVHC. The SAC may discuss its activities and related issues by electronic or telephonic communications between some or all of its members. Any action that requires a vote or recommendation to the Board of Trustees will be taken at a committee meeting after notice has been given to everyone on the SAC email list or by electronic vote sent to the SAC email list. (See detail on decision making process below.)

Meeting dates will be announced to all on the SAC email list, and will be put on the NVHC calendar. Allocation meetings for the Tikkun Olam Campaign will also be announced to the entire congregation in the NVHC weekly email newsletter.

5. Decision-Making Process:

The SAC shall make its decision regarding programs and campaigns by informal consensus. Alternatively, if the SAC Chair so elects, decisions may be obtained through a formal vote, either in person or through informal electronic communications.

If a decision is being made which results in a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for a particular action (e.g., sponsorship, endorsement, policy on social action), a quorum of eight

members of the SAC must be present, and actions shall be taken by a majority vote of those present at the meeting. In addition to a vote taken at the meeting, the SAC Chair may elect to email the entire SAC email list for a vote, providing them substantially similar information as reasonably practical as presented at the meeting. The SAC Chair may decide to do this if attendance at the meeting is low, and/or a vote at a meeting is close or split and the issue is controversial.

For electronic votes, at least a quorum of eight must participate in the electronic vote, and actions shall be taken by a majority vote of those voting.

Decisions regarding the details of any program, how to publicize activities, and similar operational details, may be made by the SAC Chair with such consultation with the members of the committee, clergy or staff as the SAC Chair deems appropriate.

6. Responsibilities of the SAC Chair:

The SAC is a collaborative group of NVHC leaders who are active in social action activities. The SAC does not run all activities, and the SAC Chair does not lead all activities. The responsibilities of the SAC Chair (or a designated member(s)) shall include:

1. Set the meeting date for the SAC meetings after consultation with members, set the agenda for the meetings, announce the meeting date with the agenda to all on the SAC email list, ensure that someone takes notes and action items at each meeting (“minutes”), circulate the minutes to the SAC email list and ensure that the minutes are posted on the SAC common drive. The SAC common drive may be used to post other SAC materials as well.
2. Maintain the SAC email list, as well as lists of volunteers for social action activities, and members interested in social action activities at NVHC. Lists may be posted on the SAC common drive.
3. Act as the clearing house for new activities for social action activities – receiving emails from clergy and staff, and pass the information to the SAC as appropriate, for discussion and action.
4. Publicize and seek volunteers for, and participation in, social action activities to the SAC email list or if appropriate, to the congregation in the weekly.
5. Answer emails from NVHC members about the SAC and from those seeking to participate in social action activities.
6. Handle operational details for social action activities and programs.

7. Work with and provide support as needed to SAC members who are leading social action activities at NVHC.

8. Develop and seek leaders for social action activities and succession planning.

9. Manage the Tikkun Olam Campaign with the help of the SAC.

10. Authorize expenditures from the Donor Designated Fund (DDF) applicable to the SAC, with all such expenditures consistent with NVHC allocation of funds approved by the SAC and Board, and the Policy for Donor Designated Funds.

The SAC Chair may designate one or more members of the SAC, including a Vice Chair, Secretary or other SAC member, to carry out any of these responsibilities, with continuing consultation with the SAC Chair and members of the Committee, as appropriate.

7. Tikkun Olam Campaign:

Purpose:

The SAC instituted a Tikkun Olam campaign in 2018. The campaign is a consolidated annual “ask” to raise funds from the congregation for social action activities, instead of periodic requests for contributions. NVHC does not include funds for external charitable organizations in its operating budget. The funds raised from the Tikkun Olam campaign are used to:

- Support NVHC’s volunteer activities for external organization (e.g., Cornerstones’ shelter meals, weekend snacks for FCPS).
- Pay annual VOICE dues and other sponsorships (e.g., Reston Pride event)
- Make a collective gift from NVHC to selected organizations that we partner with (e.g., Cornerstones, HIAS, MAZON).

Process:

- The overall approach for the annual Tikkun Olam campaign (timing, goals, general use of funds) shall be presented to the Board of Trustees for its input and approval prior to the start of the campaign.
- The SAC will determine the details of the campaign in consultation with clergy, staff, the Strategic Development Committee (SDC) Chair, and/or President as needed.
- Most actions relating to the Tikkun Olam Campaign will be decided by the SAC and announced to the SAC email list with opportunity for the SDC Chair, President, or Clergy to offer input.
- Matters requiring input from Clergy, President and SDC Chair include the timing of the campaign and campaign letters that are sent to the entire congregation whether by mail or email or temple weekly.

- The SAC will coordinate with the President and SDC Chair regarding NVHC fundraising practices (e.g., donor recognition).
- The SAC will set target goals and announce a proposed allocation of funds at the start of the campaign. After the close of the campaign, a meeting will be held to allocate the funds, and this meeting will be announced to the congregation, as well as the SAC email list. The final allocation of funds must be approved by the Board of Trustees per the Donor Designated Fund policy.

** Organizations listed:*

Cornerstones – www.cornerstonesva.org

Fairfax County Public Schools - www.fcps.edu

HIAS – Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society www.hias.org

JCADA – Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse www.jcada.org

JCRC – Jewish Community Relations Council www.jcrc.org

VOICE – Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement www.voice-iaf.org

MAZON – A Jewish Response to Hunger www.mazon.org

RAC – Religious Action Center www.rac.org

URJ – Union for Reform Judaism www.urj.org

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, 8.22.2018