



American Ethical Union

Inspiring Ethical Communities

2 West 64th Street • New York, NY 10023 • www.aeu.org
Phone 212.873.6500 • Fax 212-624-0203 • office@aeu.org

ANNUAL SOCIETY REPORT

Society Report for __Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County

Leader(s): _____Joe Chuman

President(s): _____Susan Lesh

Administrative Director/Office Contact: _____Linda Bennett

Please provide brief updates on the following areas of your Society that occurred or developed in 2018:

Ethical Action: We are affiliated with the following groups:

Climate:

- Greenfaith is a New Jersey group that inspires, educates and mobilizes people of diverse religious backgrounds for environmental leadership. Several of our Society members are members of this group.
- 350NJ is a local affiliate of 350.org, a grassroots network of volunteer-run campaigns in over 188 countries to prevent climate chaos.
- Coalition to Ban Unsafe Oil Trains is a grassroots movement that calls for the end of transportation of Bakken crude oil through the watershed and communities. Several of our Society members are members of this group and we participate in protest rallies.

Racial Justice:

- Northern New Jersey Sanctuary Coalition is a not-for-profit coalition of societies, religious institutions, and individuals from North New Jersey to address the needs of political asylees and asylum seekers.
- New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice is a membership-based coalition that creates and achieves policies in NJ that welcome and support immigrants to become rooted economically, politically, and socially within the state.
- Being White and its Hidden Assumptions is our continued workshop series that focuses largely on unconscious bias and personal experience.

Economic Justice:



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- Family Promise is a sheltering program from working homeless families with dependent children. We support a host organization by providing meals and acting as overnight hosts 2 weeks out of the year.

Ethical Education (children ages 2-13): We provide weekly ethical education to children ages 3 - 13 using a 3 year cycled curriculum. Classes are broken into age groupings. We currently run a Primary class, an Elementary class, a Junior class and a Senior class. Seniors who are 13 participate in a Coming of Age project, working for a year with a mentor from the Society membership, culminating in a graduation presentation.

Youth of Ethical Societies (teens ages 14-18): Youth are offered a youth membership in the Society and go through an induction ceremony. They have the opportunity to work in the Sunday School classrooms as assistants or teachers. Many attend the annual YES conference held by the AEU.

Future of Ethical Societies (young adults ages 18-35):

Communications:

- Meetup - we continue to promote our Sunday platforms, Sunday School programs and adult education offerings on this medium. This year, we have begun to post a follow up to the Sunday platform summarizing the talk. We post a video monthly when our leader, Dr. Chuman, speaks at First Sunday platforms.
- FaceBook - we have pulled our various FB pages into one for the Society and have engaged more active participation by encouraging posts from different committees, thereby ensuring more posts per week. We also have increased participation from our followers by more active liking and sharing.
- Twitter - we have a much more active presence on this medium, with a dedicated volunteer who posts and retweets several times daily.
- Ethical FOCUS - monthly newsletter to members and subscribers with articles written by ECSBC members

Finances: We successfully held a Building Campaign to raise over \$50,000 to conduct building repairs and improvements.

Membership: This past year has been very successful in adding new members, partially due to a "Schmoozing committee". Members were asked to be part of this committee which has the goal of identifying new people attending platform and talking to them. There is a weekly follow up email so the committee members can let everyone know who they spoke with,



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how they found out about us, and what they may be looking for. A list of names is generated at the monthly Membership meeting to invite them to a "get to know you" meeting, to allow people to find out more about our Society.