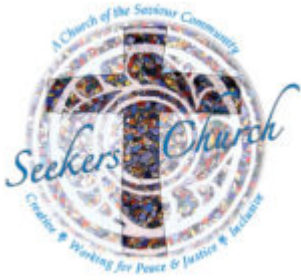


Domestic Giving 2021



The recipient organizations of our domestic giving vary somewhat from year to year. The general rule is that one or more Seekers are personally involved in these organizations in some way. Recipients are chosen by consensus during an open meeting of the congregation at the start of every year.

Seekers Church donates generously to missions and ministries within the United States, with an amount budgeted that equals a bit over 25% of expected offerings for the year. The community has agreed to several conditions to ensure that our giving is connected to and reinforces our personal efforts and passions. These connections should reinforce Seekers values, involve significant personal support from Seekers' members, and foster a change from charity to solidarity. We want to support systemic and lasting change. Smaller grants may be given to incubate new ideas for mission, support emergence of call, bear witness to God's work in the world, or support Seekers' members living out their call to mission. Once the Domestic Giving budget is determined by Stewards of Seekers Church each year, all members of the faith community are invited to request support for missions or ministries in which they are personally involved, and all are invited to come to an annual meeting to determine the final giving budget, usually in the first quarter of each year.

For 2021 the community affirmed support for 27 domestic missions and ministries listed here. For easy access to more information on each group, the name of each organization

is linked to its website.

HOUSING

[Center for Wisdom's Women](#)

[DSI \(Direct Support of Immigrants\)](#)

[L'Arche of Greater Washington](#)

[Manna, Inc.](#)

[N Street Village](#)

[Silver Spring Village](#)

EDUCATION/CULTURE

[For Love of Children \(FLOC\)](#)

[Free Minds Book Club](#)

[Justice Arts Coalition](#)

[Maryland Choral Society](#)

[Museum of the Palestinian People](#)

[Pyramid Atlantic Art Center](#)

[Standing Rock Youth Project](#)

CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR

[Christ House](#)

[Dayspring Overlook Retreat House](#)

[Festival Center](#)

[Potter's House](#)

OTHER

[Arlington THRIVE](#)

[Caron Foundation LGBT HIV/AIDS Retreats](#)

[Cedar Lane UU Church Sanctuary Project](#)

[CKC Urban Farming](#)

ADVOCACY

[Center for Medicare Advocacy](#)

[Congregation Action Network](#)

[Equality Virginia](#)

[Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake](#)

Here is a brief description of each organization and the connection to Seekers Church. To visit their web sites, click on the name of the organization.

HOUSING

[Center for Wisdom's Women and Sophia's House](#)

In the middle of Lewiston, Maine lies one of the poorest census districts in the state, one of the poorest in the country. Forty percent of the residents live at or below the poverty line. Within that neighborhood there is a safe and sacred space run by and for women. At the Center for Wisdom's Women, local women from the neighborhood learn social skills and job training to help them in recovery.

Now Sophia's House, an updated convent, has added small apartments for low-income residents and returning citizens post-incarceration. Klara Tammany, the visionary director, visits Seekers when she comes to DC. The Banksons and Cynthia

Dahlin have been long-time sponsors.

[DSI \(Direct Support of Immigrants\)](#)

Direct Support for Immigrants (DSI) is a Takoma Park and Silver Spring, Maryland-based non-profit organization that grew out of the Takoma Park Mobilization. They are all local volunteers who believe strongly in affirming values of inclusion and supporting immigrants no matter their origin or immigration status.

The mission of DSI is to assist immigrants to the United States by:

- Learning about challenges that immigrants and their families face and identifying ways to support them in overcoming those challenges;
- Educating immigrants about the resources available to them and connecting them to these resources;
- Providing social, emotional, material, financial and other types of support to immigrants facing serious challenges;
- Encouraging positive community interactions between immigrants and non-immigrants; and
- Advocating for immigrants' rights and needs in the local and broader community.

Through these activities DSI is working to transcend barriers of race, language, ethnicity, country of origin, and social and economic class, to develop stronger, more vibrant communities. Sallie Holmes is member of Seekers Church and an active member of DSI.

[Justice Arts Coalition](#)

Justice Arts Coalition (JAC) unites teaching artists, arts advocates, currently and formerly incarcerated artists, and allies, harnessing the transformative power of the arts to reimagine justice. Through the sharing of resources, stories,

and learning opportunities, JAC is building a nationwide collective of people who are committed to increasing opportunities for creative expression in carceral settings, amplifying the voices of those most impacted by mass incarceration, and shaping public dialogue around the intersection of the arts and justice. Initially formed by veteran teaching artists in 2008 as the Prison Arts Coalition, JAC has remained a grassroots, volunteer-led project throughout its recent transformation into a national 501c3 nonprofit organization.

The work of Justice Arts Coalition is grounded in the beliefs that creative expression is both a human need and a human right; essential to healing, reconciliation, and community-building. Participation in the artistic process significantly affects a person's self-worth and sense of purpose and meaning. And, art is an individual expression of universal human experience, increases empathy and serves as a bridge between diverse groups.

Justice Arts Coalition values human dignity, equity, and integrity. Artists and advocates inside and outside of prison come together to share our passion for art experiences that welcome a multitude of voices, inspire creative expression, embrace authentic dialogue, and reveal our shared humanity. JAC puts relationships first, and will not sacrifice human connection and direct support for organizational expansion. They remain committed to amplifying the voices of system-involved artists. Their leadership and guidance in all JAC activities is sought and encouraged. Sandra Miller serves as the Seekers Church link with the Justice Arts Coalition, promotes at Seekers and beyond, and participates in the pARTner Art Project, a pen pal relationship between artists inside and outside the carceral system.

[L'Arche of Greater Washington](#)

L'Arche is an inter-denominational Christian community that

welcomes people of all backgrounds to share life together. In the Washington DC area, community life is centered around four communal homes and the 14 members who have intellectual disabilities, known as “core members.” L’Arche is unique among residential service providers in that core members and assistants (people without intellectual disabilities who support core members) choose to live life together like a family. They come together around the dinner table, for house meetings, and for weekly celebrations. Core members lead the community through their creativity and compassion. As core members’ needs change each community responds by adapting their routines and their physical spaces. Each community member is encouraged to discover and deepen his or her spiritual life and live it according to his or her particular faith and tradition. Those who have no religious affiliation are also welcomed and respected in their freedom of conscience.

L’Arche of Greater Washington, D.C. is a faith community; a licensed provider of professional services; an advocate with and for people who have intellectual disabilities; and a member of a worldwide federation of autonomous L’Arche communities. Emmy Lu Daly was instrumental in establishing L’Arche communities in the Washington DC region, and her son Fritz has been a long-time core person.

[Manna, Inc.](#)

MANNA, Inc. is a nonprofit developer of quality, affordable housing in the District of Columbia. The mission of MANNA is “to help low and moderate income persons acquire quality housing, build assets for families through homeownership, revitalize distressed neighborhoods, and preserve racial and ethnic diversity.”

The mission of MANNA is not one of simply building and selling houses. They focus on revitalizing entire neighborhoods through homeownership. MANNA’s strategy also includes

educating first-time homebuyers for the process of home purchase and for continued success as homeowners. They also train homeowners and their neighbors throughout the city to become community leaders and advocates. Currently MANNA is developing more condominium projects than any other nonprofit developer in the District.

Since 1982, MANNA has been serving low and moderate-income families, assisting them to fulfill the dream of homeownership in Washington, DC. In that time, they have created and preserved nearly 1,200 units of affordable housing for low and moderate-income DC residents and their homeowners have accrued over \$160 million in equity. Their financial literacy and homeowner training program has been replicated more than 200 times across the nation.

Manna's work focuses on three principal areas:

- Renovating or building affordable homes for rent and homeownership;
- Educating first-time homebuyers for the process of home purchase and for success as homeowners; and
- Training first-time homeowners and their neighbors throughout the city to become community leaders through MANNA's Housing Advocacy Team.

Manna supports the commitment of Seekers Church to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need. Doug Dodge is a founding member of the Manna board of directors.

[N Street Village](#)

N Street Village began as a women's shelter on 14th and N Streets in Washington DC in 1972. It has grown to encompass eight sites, with several different programs to help women move from homelessness to home, and from having no health services to being supported with medical and mental health services. N Street Village's goal is to empower homeless and low-income women in Washington, D.C. to claim their highest

quality of life by offering a broad spectrum of services, housing, and advocacy in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. Last year, N Street Village served nearly 2,000 homeless and low-income women, offered nearly 200,000 meals, along with health, dental, mental health and wellness services. Eighteen percent of the women entering were living outdoors before arriving, 53% are over 50 years old, 80% are African American and 50% have experienced domestic violence.

N Street's goal is to meet each individual woman exactly where she is on her unique journey to healing and recovery. They recognize that those they serve face a variety of challenges, and some individuals may face numerous obstacles simultaneously. Some of the most common challenges for the women of N Street Village include: health or mental health problems, substance abuse or addiction, a history of trauma, a lack of educational and vocational opportunities, job loss or eviction, domestic violence, a criminal background or other barriers to employment, or functional illiteracy. And sometimes the biggest challenge for a woman arriving at their front door is the loss of her own sense of dignity, self-worth, and hope.

The need for advocacy for inequality in income, education, healthcare access and housing has brought N Street to the table with Mayor Bowser's coalition to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. The residents of N Street have formed principles of racial justice, appearing on N Street Village's Advocacy Page, which line up very closely to Seeker's values to stand with the poor and marginalized in our society.

Cynthia Dahlin, a Seekers steward, has led poetry and autobiography classes at N Street Village for 20 years. During this pandemic year, she has collected homemade masks to bring to the shelter, where 400 women and 51 families are provided supportive housing each night.

[Silver Spring Village](#)

Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organization that offers programs and needed services for adults who wish to “age in place” – to remain as long as possible in their own homes, amid familiar people and surroundings, and engaged in the community. Our network of “neighbors helping neighbors” supports individuals and also builds a stronger community. Mirroring the neighborhoods within our service area, Silver Spring Village is a welcoming organization with a diverse membership and volunteer corps. They offer their members opportunities for enrichment and social engagement as well as access to “neighborly” assistance that supports their independence. Members make new friends, learn new things, and have easy access to needed help.

Silver Spring Village provides examples and opportunities that support the “Down the Road” ministry of Seekers Church. Jackie Wallen is currently serving on the board of directors.

[Standing Rock Youth Project](#)

The Standing Rock Youth Council is dedicated to removing the invisible barriers that prevent our native youth from succeeding. The objectives of this group are to provide a collective voice and represent tribal youth in all matters that concern them; to serve as a means of mobilizing and coordinating the actions of youth, other community members and organizations toward positive goals; to promote the development of future tribal leaders; to help solve problems facing tribal youth; to coordinate school and community service projects and provide opportunities for the youth to interact for fun and fellowship.

Roy Barber is maintaining the link between Seekers Church and the Standing Rock youth project.

EDUCATION / CULTURE

[For Love of Children \(FLOC\)](#)

For Love of Children (FLOC) provides educational services beyond the classroom to help students succeed from first grade through college and career. They bring together students, volunteers, families, and community partners in proven programs that teach, empower, and transform.

In operation for more than 50 years, For Love of Children (FLOC) has served more than 10,000 children and youth and has been one of the most respected nonprofits in the community. FLOC was founded in 1965 by a consortium of churches and concerned citizens to assist 900 abandoned and abused children, who were then being warehoused in the District of Columbia's overcrowded and understaffed "Junior Village." FLOC and its partners arranged viable schooling and living alternatives for these kids, and secured the closing of Junior Village in 1973. FLOC's early leaders also founded DC's first Child Advocacy Center and co-founded the Consortium for Child Welfare, a city-wide collaborative of 16 foster care and adoption agencies. Fred Taylor, one of the co-founders of Seekers Church was instrumental in the birth of FLOC.

Today FLOC provides out-of-classroom educational services to DC's under-resourced youth to help students succeed from second grade to college and beyond. They serve 600 students annually with the support of over 400 volunteers. FLOC brings together students, volunteers, families, educators, and partners to teach, empower, and transform the community through education. They envision a city where every child's potential is unlocked, regardless of circumstance, to have success in life.

Seekers Church has been supporting FLOC since we were called into being as a faith community. Currently the Eyes to See, Ears to Hear peace Prayer Mission Group provides ongoing support.

[Free Minds Book Club](#)

The Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop is a non-profit organization in Washington, D.C. that brings the tools of books and writing to incarcerated youth and formerly incarcerated youth and adults.

Often times the incarcerated poets are in solitary confinement for as much as 23 hours a day and are also placed far from family and friends who might otherwise visit them. This leads to extreme loneliness and the sense that they have been forgotten by the world. In response to this, Free Minds organized Write Nights, evenings when communities gather to read and share their responses to the poems written by these incarcerated youth and adults.

Before the coronavirus pandemic made it necessary to stop holding indoor gatherings, typically as many as a hundred volunteers gathered monthly for Write Night at each of two alternating sites: Western Presbyterian Church in downtown DC, and Seekers Church. On Write Nights the Seekers sanctuary is filled with tables of people of all ages and ethnicities, including students from DC colleges and universities and native Spanish speaking volunteers as well. With pen in hand, volunteers sit at tables together to read and comment on the powerful poems written by incarcerated youth and adults. The formally incarcerated poets, also known as Poet Ambassadors, circulate throughout the tables for the hour and a half session informally creating a bond between community members and the group of formerly incarcerated youth and adults. This small act of communicating with these incarcerated men (and now women) by reading and commenting on their poetry has a hugely positive effect on the attitudes of those incarcerated when they receive back their poems with positive comments filling the margins around their poetry.

COVID-19 has had a profound effect on Free Minds members. The public health crisis has magnified the racial, economic and health disparities they experience. In many cases, prisoners have been confined to their cells and almost all prison-led

educational and rehabilitative programming has been paused. Already vulnerable to the social isolation of incarceration, the members are experiencing heightened stress, anxiety, and depression as they remain trapped in cramped and unsanitary spaces. During these times, Free Minds is hosting Write Nights on line in sessions attended by as many as three hundred volunteer participants. Free Minds has also adapted quickly finding new ways to keep communications open with the incarcerated poets and to continue to support the Poet Ambassadors in helping them to find job and educational placements as they are released from incarceration.

Marcia Sprague volunteers regularly at Write Night and, during times when Write Night is in person, often helps with setting up the space and coordinating evenings at Seekers.

[Maryland Choral Society](#)

The Maryland Choral Society (MCS), founded in 1971, is a community choral group dedicated to quality performance of a wide repertoire of musical styles and periods. A mixed chorus of approximately 40 members, MCS is based in Prince George's County, Maryland, and has members from throughout Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Northern Virginia.

MCS strives to be a leading force in the advocacy and enhancement of the choral arts industry, to cultivate educational opportunities, to nurture intergenerational experiences, and to create musical excellence throughout the DC/Metro region.

The work of MCS is as much about community as it is about the chorus. Music is a shared language, transcending politics and economics, overcoming warfare and personal tragedy. Throughout history, human beings have looked to music to soothe pain and to announce great joys. Choral singing is one of the most powerful unifying forces known to humankind. In lifting our voices together in song, we cross boundaries that exist

between groups of people, we learn more about each other, and we celebrate our very existence.

Katie Fisher sings in the chorus and a number of Seekers attend and appear to be uplifted by the concerts!

[Museum of the Palestinian People](#)

The Museum of Palestinian People (MPP-DC) is a home in Washington DC where visitors can experience the Palestinian people's history, culture and spirit. It is the first museum in the United States to celebrate the culture and people of Palestine. Their vision is to create a permanent place in Washington DC where diverse American audiences experience the Palestinian People's history, culture and spirit.

Their outreach vehicles include in person and online exhibitions, performances and public conversations to show facets of Palestinian culture and history to new audiences, connecting with both presenters in country and in Palestine, reaching audiences worldwide. They make their programs easily available to educational institutions and public spaces.

MPP showcases and celebrates the history and culture of the Palestinian people, which evolved and thrived over centuries. They tell the story of everyday life in Palestine from the perspective of the people who live there, as well as those who live in the diaspora. They present Palestinians as heroes, for we prefer to be seen as heroes of our own stories rather than victims. We focus on those qualities of our culture that explain why we have remained so resilient and strong in the face of oppression. Their goal is to provide an opportunity for everyone to feel touched by a very special people and place on this earth.

Bshara Nassar first came to the attention of Sandra Miller, and hence the Eyes to See Ears to Hear Peace Prayer Mission Group when he was a participant in the New Story Leadership program in 2011. Since that time Sandra has met with Bshara

three or four times a year, including by phone during the pandemic, to offer support and encouragement. Eyes to See met with Bshara once a year for 4 years through 2020, including meeting at the museum to explore the tremendous progress the breadth of what MPP-DC is offering in terms of education, Palestinian artist shows, and providing a place for local Palestinians to connect with one another and the larger community.

[Pyramid Atlantic Art Center](#)

Pyramid Atlantic is a 501c3 nonprofit center for contemporary art, fostering the creative disciplines of papermaking, printmaking, and book arts within a collaborative community. They equip, educate, and exhibit in their historic Hyattsville, MD home. Pyramid brings groups of all ages into the space for educational tours, and also takes its educational show on the road, offering all ages of youth in schools the opportunity to learn more about creating art, offering guided tours to children and adults of exhibits in area museums and galleries, participating in national conferences about the arts, and offering opportunities to study with internationally recognized experts in various artistic disciplines. Pyramid is a vital participant in the Hyattsville Arts District, taking part in that organization, as well as joining various street fairs serving the entire DMV.

Seekers is committed to fostering the many facets of connection to the Grateful Soaring Spirit through the arts. Additionally, Seekers is committed to education. Both of these guiding principles are in direct relationship to the work of Pyramid Atlantic Arts. One of the stewards of Seekers Church is a member of Pyramid in order to feed the creative spirit shared with Seekers Church, as well as volunteering with the organization.

CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR

[Christ House](#)

Christ House opened in December 1985 as the first 24-hour residential medical facility for homeless persons in the United States. Today, Christ House is still the only facility of its kind in the Washington, DC. metropolitan area, where over 6,000 people experience homelessness every day. To the best of our knowledge, there are only 22 stand-alone residential medical facilities for the homeless like Christ House in all of the U.S. Since our inception, we have had over 9,500 admissions.

Patients are admitted to Christ House from area hospitals, shelters, clinics, and medical outreach projects. They suffer from a variety of illnesses and injuries including cancer, hypertension and stroke, liver disease, kidney failure, diabetes and related amputations, HIV/AIDS, respiratory disease, major lacerations, fractures, and ulcerations of the skin. Many are malnourished, anemic, depressed, and desperately disconnected from healthy sources of support.

In 2020, Christ House provided health care for 140 patient admissions and 7,122 patient-days of care. The average length of stay was 39 days and 54% of patients had no income at time of admission.

Jean Adams, a longtime member of Seekers Church taught in the art program for many years and sustains our contact.

[Dayspring Overlook Retreat House](#)

Overlook Retreat House (at Dayspring) is available for individual and small group self-guided retreats, and is open year-round. Retreatants share a 3-bedroom living space (sleeps up to six people) with a kitchen and dining area, as well as a small library of books and art materials for soulful and playful exploration. Overlook is near the farmhouse on

Dayspring Farm, overlooking Lake of the Saints, in the midst of 210 acres of natural beauty. The Banksons and Kolya Braun-Greiner sponsor this request.

[Festival Center](#)

The Festival Center is an organization rooted in a faith that compels them to be a meeting place and a participant in the struggle for the common good. Their call is to be in solidarity with God, each other, and all of creation. Through hospitality, education, spiritual development, and practice, the Festival Center serves as a hub for all people to work against all forms of oppression and to strive for a just city and a just world.

The Festival Center shares with Seekers a deep commitment to shared leadership empowering others within the normal structures of our daily lives (work; family and primary relationships; and citizenship) as well as through special structures for service and witness. They desire and welcome participation in all aspects of Festival Center life of people of every "race", gender identity, and sexual orientation, in pursuit of deliverance from bondage to freedom in every personal and corporate expression. Sandra Miller has served as Board Chair, Board Secretary (currently on sabbatical), and currently serves as the art coordinator, as well as an ad hoc advisor. Additionally, members of Seekers have taught in its School for Liberation (formerly known as Servant Leadership School) and participated in many Festival Center events.

[Potter's House](#)

The Potter's House is a nonprofit café, bookstore, and event space in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, DC. As the very first Church of the Saviour mission (in 1960), The Potter's House has been a key place for deeper conversation, creative expression, and community transformation. In our rapidly changing city – one in which development so often

means displacement – The Potter’s House has birthed many other CoS ministries over the years. It bears a strong family resemblance to Seekers Church as another place of support for creative, inclusive people working for peace and justice. Marjory Bankson provides active, ongoing support.

OTHER

[Arlington THRIVE](#)

Arlington Thrive is the only organization in Arlington County, Virginia that provides same-day, emergency financial assistance to County residents who experience sudden financial crisis such as temporary unemployment or illness. Most clients are the working poor, elderly and disabled people on a fixed income, and the homeless and formerly homeless who need funds as a “safety net” until they are able to get back on firmer financial footing. Arlington Thrive’s clients are among Arlington County’s most vulnerable residents. Families with children are given the highest priority, and one-third of the individuals served by Arlington Thrive are children. During the coronavirus pandemic this emergency support is more important than ever. The commitment of Seekers Church to be in solidarity with those in need supports the mission of Arlington Thrive. Cynthia Dahlin is a longtime volunteer and supporter of Arlington Thrive.

[Caron Foundation LGBT/AIDS Retreats](#)

The Caron LGBTQ/AIDS retreat began in the 1980s as a safe, supportive place for those with HIV/AIDS and in recovery to come together. Over the years, the retreats have expanded to be inclusive of all in the LGBTQ community, regardless if they are impacted by HIV/AIDS. Their core group of faithful participants has grown into a special extended family and welcomes others to join the family. Although the in-person retreats have been postponed due to the current pandemic, the Foundation is having mini socials periodically on Zoom. Larry

Rawlings is a long-time supporter of the Caron Foundation.

[Central Texas Food Bank](#)

The Central Texas Food Bank provides vital relief for a 21-county service area, through more than 250 partner agencies and direct programs. As a food handling organization, the Central Texas Food Bank always takes precautions to combat the spread of germs. Their protocols are now even more stringent as we continue to focus keenly on food safety and sanitation in order to reduce risks.

They are experiencing a dramatic increase in need for their services as more people are impacted by shutdowns and work stoppages and are working hard to convert their distribution model to emergency food boxes only while distributing food in drive-through settings wherever it is safe and practical to do so.

This domestic giving grant was to respond to a crisis in Texas due to the failure of the electrical grid causing massive blackouts, and lack of food and water. Seekers does not have an ongoing link to this group, but looked for a trusted service agency in the center of the crisis area especially serving low-income people.

ADVOCACY

[Center for Medicare Advocacy](#)

The Center for Medicare Advocacy is a national, non-profit, law organization that works to advance access to comprehensive Medicare coverage, health equity, and quality health care for older people and people with disabilities. Founded in 1986, the Center focuses on the needs of people with longer-term and chronic conditions. The organization's work includes legal assistance, advocacy, education, analysis, policy initiatives, and litigation of importance to Medicare beneficiaries nationwide. Their systemic advocacy is based on the

experiences of the real people who contact the Center every day. Headquartered in Connecticut and Washington, DC, the Center also has attorneys in several additional states. The Center's staff act as consultants and trainers for groups that are interested in learning about health care rights, Medicare coverage and appeals, or in developing Medicare advocacy projects.

The Center's work to ensure fair access to Medicare, a social insurance program, is in line with Seekers' commitment to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need. Trish Nemore maintains close connections and, with other Seekers, attends the Center's annual Medicare Summit.

The Center's work to ensure fair access to Medicare, a social insurance program, is in line with Seekers' commitment to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need. Trish Nemore maintains close connections and, with other Seekers, attends the Center's annual Medicare Summit.

[Congregation Action Network](#)

The Congregation Action Network is a network of faith communities in Washington, DC, and the Maryland and Virginia suburbs acting in solidarity to end detention, deportation, profiling, and criminalization of immigrants, and demanding and upholding justice, dignity, safety, and family unity. Since 2017, this collective of more than 70 Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Humanist, Hindu, Buddhist, and other congregations, has brought its faithful resistance to bear in the DC/MD/VA region to provide support and solidarity to neighbors, friends, and family who fear being detained, deported or profiled.

In the face of hate and discrimination, the Network is committed to showing love, compassion, and hospitality. A primary focus for the Network is Deportation Defense: pulling out all the stops to keep a neighbor facing deportation from

being deported. This includes advocacy, community organizing, fundraising, family support, media outreach, and communications. Seekers has been a member of CAN since its inception and members of the community are active in the Montgomery County Cluster of congregations. Trish Nemore and the Eyes to See Ears to Hear Peace Prayer Mission Group nurture our partnership with CAN.

[Equality Virginia](#)

Equality Virginia, an organization which educates about and advocates for policies to support the human rights of LGBTQ people of all ages in Virginia. Equality Virginia has worked on local and state policies concerning safety for LGBTQ youth in schools, marriage equality, housing discrimination, police violence against transgender persons, employment discrimination and harassment, and services for older LGBTQ persons. Last year, Equality Virginia built coalitions and worked on electing delegates who could turn control of the statehouse to Democrats who promised to bring positive bills to the floor for votes, and this resulted in the Virginia Values Act, a bill combining many rights which had not been tackled head on in previous years. The details of these bills can be found in the newly redesigned website, linked above.

The organization staff helps coordinate events for education and advocacy around the state, leading up to a highly respected lobby day which combines education of the many volunteers who come to lobby and sessions for legislators on particular issues. Particular groups are organized to help gather energy around an issue which will be focused on in the future. Cynthia Dahlin first attended the People of Faith group to work on marriage equality, and then moved into the lobbying corps. This year, the legislature is meeting via zoom, but EV spent money it might usually spend on our lobbying packets on upgrading its website, finding engaging ways to use interactive tools along with zoom, so that legislators can get answers to how attendees feel about

various questions as they meet with us. There are Bills and Bagels sessions every Monday morning, and they have been well attended by Delegates and Senators—due to zoom, I may actually know more legislators by sight than before! Cynthia Dahlin has been an active participant in the work of Equality Virginia since 2013.

[Interfaith Action for Human Rights](#)

IAHR represents people of faith who educate and advocate in Maryland, DC and Virginia for corrections systems that avoid unnecessarily punitive practices such as solitary confinement and that instead focus on rehabilitation and successful reentry.

IAHR envisions a societal system of corrections that is free of racism, rehabilitative rather than punitive, and that honors the dignity of each human being, helps people return to society well prepared to carry on with fulfilling and productive lives and holds those in power in the system responsible for implementing these principles. IAHR also envisions a society that minimizes the use of corrections by addressing the need for economic opportunity, education and healthcare of all of its members.

IAHR contributes to the realization of our vision by bringing interfaith-based action to bear on prison reform in MD, DC (and the Federal Bureau of Prisons), and VA by advocating for the end of all forms of brutality & torture in prisons and jails; limiting the use of solitary confinement to 15 consecutive days and working toward its elimination; the development of rehabilitative alternatives to the current system of mass incarceration and improvement of education, medical care, and mental health services for those incarcerated, providing supportive correspondents as well as legal and other services to those who are incarcerated and educating the general population on prison reform.

Sandra Miller is an active link between IAHR and Seekers Church, and has successfully promoted within Seekers and beyond the pen pal program, as well as being an IAHR pen pal.

[Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake](#)

Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC) educates, supports and inspires people and communities of faith to advocate for the waters of the Chesapeake through policies and practices that promote a healthier environment and healthier people, “forming faithful stewards, caring for sacred waters.”

IPC envisions a time when people of faith throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed understand their sacred duty to love and respect the Earth and all the life within it. We are developing a watershed wide network called the One Water Partnership through which faith communities can collaborate and support each other’s actions to heal the Earth. We envision a time when people of faith will act individually and collectively to cherish and protect the land and the water, so that the Earth, its breath, its essence, its creatures, and its people will thrive and be joyful. Kolya Braun-Greiner serves on the IPC staff as Program Coordinator.

IPC’s work, supported by Seekers, bears witness to God’s restoration of the world by engaging diverse faith communities in environmental stewardship, strengthening congregation green teams through its Faithful Green Leader Training, equipping them to plan actions and projects which will reduce water pollution, foster wildlife habitat and conserve energy. IPC offers ways for Seekers community to “put our faith into action” by participating in actions and advocacy that support the healing and flourishing of God’s Creation, rooted in our own watershed of the Chesapeake Bay. Through our support of this work we are fulfilling our Commitment/Call to care for every part of God’s creation.

[Silver Spring Justice Coalition](#)

Silver Spring Justice Coalition (SSJC) is a community response for Montgomery County, Maryland to end profiling, brutality, and other misconduct by police. SSJC envisions a state and county where community and individual needs for safety are met while harm by police is eliminated. They aim to create a paradigm shift in police-community engagement. Race, class, ethnicity, religion, immigration status, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, and mental health status must never again put people in Montgomery County at risk of state-sponsored discrimination and violence. SSJC has actively and effectively advocated for: policing reform in the state of Maryland; removing armed officers from county high schools and replacing them with social workers, restorative justice practitioners and other student support services; and demanding investigations of and accountability for local killings and abuse by police in Montgomery County. Paul Holmes, a member of Seekers, is our link to SSJC.

Texas Nicaraguan Community

The mission of the Texas Nicaraguan Community is to provide humanitarian assistance to Nicaraguan nationals in Nicaragua that are suffering from hunger, lack of medical attention, persecution, and any other lack of human rights. They help meet the needs of Nicaraguans inside and outside Nicaragua. Their campaigns include a food bank, anti-hunger campaigns and medical support for those most in need. Oswaldo Montoya and Rosa Campos are active links between Texas Nicaraguan Community and Seekers Church.