

## **Social Justice Action Committee Meeting Minutes - June 3, 2014 7:00 to 8:00 pm, Social Hall**

***In Attendance:*** Akankha Perkins, Anne Marinello, Peter Rousmaniere, Jackie Fischer, Wendy Smith, Richard Schramm

We are delighted that Wendy Smith has joined the committee.

### ***Report from the Board***

Anne Marinello reported on the Board's May retreat deliberations. Of direct relevance to our committee was its receipt of our proposal for specific webspace to report on North Chapel collaborative activities and link to the organizations we are working with, and scheduling of consideration of the proposal for its July meeting (Mary Jeanne Taylor set this date in e-mail to Richard of May 26). Anne also spoke of positive feelings among the new enlarged board, faster moving along of its work, and a nurturing of new activities like "pastoral care" and "aging with vitality" study groups.

### ***Food Justice Activities***

We discussed the new permaculture garden and pizza oven, and noted existing efforts like food shelf collections, and grouped these activities under the category of "food justice." We used food justice as a focus for our work in the fall. (See below)

### ***Developing Guidelines for our Future Work***

We began our discussion of a plan for the coming year by looking at our successes over the past 15 months.

These successes included the provision of four update and action sessions on youth activities, environmental action and justice, local and global poverty and gun violence, and four social justice workshops on race, class and privilege, inequality and (later this week) immigration justice.

We also noted our success at concentration/immersion when we addressed a topic like race (February) and Class and Youth (March) in several different arenas (workshops, Sunday services, support of special gatherings like the Youth summit).

From this discussion we arrived at some guidelines for our forthcoming work.

First, we will strive to be flexible (nimble, agile) in responding to social justice concerns and projects going on around the North Chapel. (We saw the quick response by the North Chapel to the proposed construction of a permaculture garden as a model for us).

Second, we will strive to go beyond individual and separate education and/or marketing efforts to focus more on identifying and clarifying the relationships:

- among similar projects (e.g. linking those falling under the category “food justice”)
- across different projects (linking race, class, environment – the idea of intersectionality)
- across different approaches (linking workshops, Sunday services, fundraising activities, promotion) and between projects within and outside the North Chapel

We agreed to apply this last guideline in planning an integrative event around food Justice for the fall (see below)

Finally, we will strive to apply a “social justice lens” to projects outside of our committee’s domain. This means we will look more closely at the values that underlie our committee’s efforts (e.g. fairness and justice) and take steps to see that these values are honored in all of the work of the North Chapel whenever and wherever possible.

Jackie is following this guideline in agreeing to be our committee’s liaison to the pizza oven operations group.

### ***Separation of Church and State***

Peter reported on his efforts to remove the lit cross from the top of Mount Tom around Easter (and possibly change the lit star around Christmas).

### ***Next Steps***

Peter has agreed to chair the committee starting at our next meeting. He is open to sharing the chairmanship with others. Richard has agreed to continue taking notes and writing up minutes.

We agreed to organize a gathering in October around the theme of Food Justice and to begin our planning of this event over dinner at Peter’s house the evening of July 8<sup>th</sup>.