

SJC REPORT FOR MARCH 2021

A meeting of the Social Justice Committee was held March 4, 2021 via ZOOM. Present were: Sonia D'Alarcao, Janet Dye, Joanna Elsmore, Betty Gilson, Laurie Lessner, Rev. Rachel Tedesco and Lisa Troy; plus guests Tom "Smitty" Smith and Michelle Arnal from the Concerned Citizens of Randolph. The following issues were discussed and decided.

1. Bank Balance is \$4,711.54 of which \$1,255.82 is for *Read to Me, Father* and \$131.00 is for RE scholarships.
2. Laurie and Sonia presented an update on the Welcoming Congregation Renewal program. It is in need of new leadership. They are scheduled to do an April Worship Service. Laurie will make sure that a group is organized to do the service.
3. Green Sanctuary Committee
 - a. Janet reported for the Green Sanctuary. At the April 18 Worship Service Gerry Wright will appear as Frederick Law Olmstead. He will do his presentation live from the church sanctuary.
 - b. Lisa has a recording of a book by Peter Reynolds that would be appropriate in a shortened version as the *Time for All Ages* at the April 18 service.
 - c. The committee is still collecting newspaper sleeves for a special project.
 - d. They have an idea for an event where they would give out food samples along with the recipes to introduce people to healthy eating. This will have to wait until COVID restrictions are eased.
 - e. They will be doing a program in conjunction with Earth Day. They are sharing a link to a recycling webinar on April 8, offered through Keep MA Beautiful (KMB).
4. Peace Committee
 - a. There is no date available for a spring worship service, so some projected plans will be saved for a summer worship service.
 - b. Alternate plans are under discussion.
5. BLM film series
 - a. The March and April films will continue to explore the baseless claim that there are biological differences between the "races". Each episode is about 57 minutes long with discussion guides available. Part 2 will be on March 23 and Part 3 on April 27. Here is the link.
<https://mem.intersity.org/resources/race-power-illusion-documentary>
 - b. Sonia suggested that it would be good to have breakout rooms for better discussions. She will manage those.
 - c. For May 25 we will discuss "A Most Beautiful Thing". It's based on a book by Arshay Cooper, and tells the story of an all-black rowing team, formed in a Chicago high school in the 1990's. It was suggested by Sam Baumgarten. It can be rented on You Tube for \$3.95 but may be available elsewhere.
 - d. There will be no June film. A suggestion for September is "All In" a documentary about Stacey Abrams. It is available on Amazon Prime.
6. Plate selections for March and future months
 - a. March will be *UU Mass Action*.

- b. April and May will be *Kids to Camp* through the Green Sanctuary Committee. GS will do the Bridging and weekly notices for this.
 - c. June will be *Family and Community Resources* in Brockton.
 - d. July and Aug. are for MainSpring House lunches.
 - e. We voted to support the Crayon Project for Sept. This sends boxes of crayons in a variety of skin colors to area schools.
 - f. Oct. will be Brockton Interfaith Communityd.
- 7. Mainspring (75) and Evelyn House (25) lunches will be made on Thurs., April 1 following the current protocol; volunteers dropping off donations at Betty's house by 8:45 am April 1.
- 8. Report on UU Mass Action 15th Anniversary
 - a. Rachel and Betty attended and reported on some of the speeches and music.
 - b. They are setting up a South Shore Task Force. Rachel will attend the planning meeting. Others are welcome to participate.
 - c. UU Mass Action is doing a Training series, *Building a New Way*. Rachel will attend the first session on March 17.
- 9. Rachel's report
 - a. Rachel reported on the latest plans for the Juneteenth celebration and rededication of the BLM banner.
 - b. She also had some good news. At Rev. Paul's request, she attended a Zoom meeting of the Greater Bridgewater Interfaith Council (GBIC) Thurs. afternoon since he couldn't make it. She spoke about our BLM banner dedication in January and our hopes that we can repeat something like this on Juneteenth as part of a wider community celebration. The proposal was well received, even though two other churches are also going through transitions to new ministers, the Methodists and Swedenborgians. She hopes to pursue this with the other churches, the BSU Catholic chaplain as well as BCCR, DICE and Stand Up for Justice. She proposed we do our ceremony outside near the BLM banner. But also have a gathering on public space like the Bridgewater Common or the Academic Quad. Somewhere visible to the community. The GBIC folks suggested a list of speakers, people we already know.
- 10. Concerned Citizens of Randolph
 - a. Members of this group had held a fresh food distribution in the First Parish parking lot Sun., Feb. 28 with a one time permission. They would like to continue doing this on Sunday afternoons.
 - b. Guest Smitty Smith explained the history of the group and answered questions about their program. He and Michele are students at BSU but the program is not connected with the university. They work with the group Concerned Citizens of Randolph which does food distributions in Stoughton, Randolph and Canton on other days of the week. They would like to add Bridgewater on Sunday afternoon from 1:30 – 2:30.
 - c. The fresh food is supplied by the Dorchester Nazarene group. There is no cost, but donations are welcome. Smitty and his dad pick up the food.
 - d. No ID is required to receive the food which is passed out in a drive through manner at this time. It is not restricted to the community where the drive is held.
 - e. We asked whether they had contacted the Bridgewater Food Pantry. They have not, but will in the future. Since they are giving fresh food, this should not be a conflict.

f. Sonia and others were concerned about any liability in case of an accident. We agreed there should be some sort of written agreement. She will work with Laurie and the Parish Committee to get this set up.

g. We were all in favor of allowing this activity. However, we would like to have a church member present each time just in case of any issues, including need to use the church building.

11. Other business

a. Betty shared information the SJC received inviting us to the Red Cloud Indian School Boston Virtual Event, one of our previous plate charities. It is March 11, 2021 at 7:30 pm on zoom. Email WWW.REDCLOUDSCHOOL.ORG/BOSTON.

b. Sonia reported on attending a Woman's Conference today in CA (via zoom) with an amazing list of presenters. One was a speaker for Jane Goodall's program *Roots and Shoots*. It deals with the intersectionality of people, animals and the environment. She suggested that it would be a good program for Green Sanctuary and RE to work on together.

Next SJC meeting will be Thurs., April 1 at 7:00 pm on the church zoom.