

New Brackett Church - SOCIAL JUSTICE Task Force Minutes July 26, 2022

Chair: Caron Chess; **Scribe:** Joanne Sterling; **Joanne:** Reading – **God of Tension and Beauty** by Cole Arthur Riley of BlackLiturgies

Attendees: Barbara Carter, Anne Coughlin, Helen Burton

June 28 Minutes: Approved as amended.

Reproductive Justice

Link to a list with descriptions (from Caron): <https://money.com/abortion-access-where-to-donate/>

We reviewed the options from Caron's list. Barb reviewed the ratings for some on [Charity Navigator](#), especially [Indigenous Women Rising](#) (no ratings) and [Bridgid Alliance](#) (transportation and support for people who need abortions). Joanne reviewed [SisterSong](#) and SisterReach, both recommended by the UUA. The website for SisterReach is unavailable.

[NYT ARTICLE ABOUT SISTERSONG](#)

Caron has been looking out for what is going on nationally. Organizations are looking for donations from people who are not in a state at risk.

The group discussed donating to a local organization; something smaller, such as.

[SafeMaine](#) – work through providers – clinics get money; helps Mainers who cannot afford the full cost
[Maine Family Planning](#) – high-quality reproductive health care

Another option is to support a specific state other than Maine because abortion is legal in this state.

We decided we needed to do more research and be clearer on what type of organization we wanted to raise money for and why. Also, we need to introduce our work and educate the congregation about Reproductive Justice before we ask for donations.

NEXT STEPS:

- **Everyone will do more research on Reproductive Justice organizations and bring back their findings**
- **Anne will make an announcement at the July 31 service about our work in Reproductive Justice.**
- **Anne will review the SJTF bulleting board to see what should be added about Reproductive Justice**
- **A worship service on Reproductive Justice is scheduled for September**

Our Whole Lives Sex and Faith Training

Website: <https://www.uua.org/re/owl>

Joanne reported on her findings about the Our Whole Lives (OWL), a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education curricula for use in both secular settings and faith communities. OWL

The curricula are made up of Interactive workshops and activities in the following age groups. Click to view the description of each curriculum.

grades K-1	grades 10-12	older adults
grades 4-6	young adults	
grades 7-9	adults	

Joanne reported that the Bridge Committee and the Board is interested in learning more about what would be required to bring this program to NBC and the PI community. The group decided that it would be appropriate for these groups to sponsor this program rather than the SJTF.

NEXT STEPS: Joanne will get more details about the program (costs, facilitator and training requirements, training dates, etc.) and take this information to the Bridge Committee and Board.

Reproductive Justice Resources

UUA

The UUA General Assembly (yearly meeting) voted on a position outlined in a **We Do Not Consent** letter. The letter includes many actions we could take. [Read the letter here.](#)

UCC

Links to reproductive justice resources on the UCC.org:

<https://www.ucc.org/reproductive-justice/>

Worship Resources

<https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/worship-resources-for-reproductive-justice/>

Affirming Women

<https://www.ucc.org/reproductive-justice-a-movement-affirming-women-families-and-communities/>

UUtheVoteMe.

Helen reported on the July 26 UUtheVoteME meeting. The group discussed setting up a buddy system between churches and adopting branding material. Three people from NBC attended the Voter registration training presented by MUUSAN and the ME League of Women Voters. Volunteers are requested for a voter phone bank in Arizona on Aug. 2.

The group is looking to work with the [ME Poor People's Campaign](#) (uniting people across Maine to challenge the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation and the nation's distorted morality of religious nationalism).

A state-wide meeting is planned for Sept. 10.

Caron said she will order 30 voter registration cards.

Helen will report during Joys and Concerns about opportunities to help with phone banks and voter registration.

Link to the national UUtheVote site: <https://www.uuthevote.org/>

Link to MUUSAN: <https://www.muusan.org/>

Wabanaki

Caron requested that we write letters to Senator King regarding HR 6707, the Advancing Equality for Wabanaki Nations Act, which was added as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act and passed the U.S. House, and is now before the U.S. Senate.

The Senate is expected to take this up in September after their August recess – but we want to have a steady stream of communication to Senator King over these next 6 weeks to keep the issue at the forefront of his mind. The focus is on letters from individuals, but organizations or congregations can also write a joint letter signed by a number of people.

Do NOT contact Sen. Collins individually, as she does not respond well to perceived pressure from constituents. The WA is working directly on lobbying her staffers. (See attached file in email for talking points.)

Communication

Joanne reported that the Worship Committee encouraged her to communicate more about the work of the SJTF. Also, if we want to ask the Assembly for support on any policies and legislation, we need to educate members beforehand.

The group discussed ways to communicate to the congregation and to the PI community. We will make more announcements during worship and Assembly meetings (next meeting: Aug. 28). For the PI community, communicating via the PI Facebook page (Lisa Penalver) would be better than NextDoor.

Next Meeting: Aug 26 – 4pm on Zoom.