

# 2020

## Committee for Social Justice Annual Report

**Members of the Committee for Social Justice:** Michael Schley, Chair; JD Ice, Vice Chair; Katie Hirscher; Lori Edwards; Jessica Brueggeman; Juan Ayala-Carmona; Mark LaMantia; Sherry Hay; Elizabeth Lusk; Charlotte Sullivan; Judy Ice; Sue King; and Rev. John Semmes on the steering committee and the following individuals on the general committee: Audrey Hum, Cindy Ingalls, Dan Cook, Dustin Ingalls, Frank Edwards, Gary Greene, Harry Hurd, Heather Horton, Jennifer Volpacchio, Jerry Perkins, John Fisher, Laura Kent, Marcia Fort, Marcia Hurd, Megan Jones, Melissa Peacock, Nettie Carson, Pat Cash, Shelley Kane, Stephanie Mitchel, Tom Cadwallader, Tracey Colores, Trenna Perkins and Jennifer Younce.

**Meeting Time:** 7pm, second Thursday of each month

**Mission Statement:** As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called both individually and collectively to fearlessly apply our faith to advocate and break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression. We are called to act on our beliefs and work to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate injustice.

The Committee for Social Justice is a new committee authorized by Session in August, 2020 following the Session's commitment to "becoming a church who lives out God's work of justice in our world." At the close of 2020 the committee had 36 members.

The committee works to raise awareness of social issues by providing forums for education and discussion. The committee also supports meaningful action within the democratic process to fight systemic poverty, structural racism and other issues of societal injustice. In the words of the prophet Micah, we seek to "act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God." In 2020 the committee:

- Held a four-week class on criminal justice and incarceration titled "Illuminate: A Loophole for Racial Justice"
- Organized a "Vote" campaign to encourage and assist SAPC members in voting in the general election.
- Arranged for presentations on education and housing by directors from the North Carolina Justice Center.
- Organized issue groups on housing, education and criminal justice.
- Proposed a position statement on the eviction crisis to Session which was approved and organized a letter-writing campaign to elected officials to urge passage of critical legislation to avert mass evictions in January.
- Developed an interim website (later to be incorporated into the SAPC website) to facilitate access to committee meeting recordings, relevant information on social issues and information about committee events.

### **Goals for 2021:**

- Continue offering educational programs for Saint Andrews members on issues of societal injustice as inspired by our faith.
- Undertake advocacy initiatives where needed and bear witness to justice in our world.
- Continue research and action in the focus areas of housing, education and criminal justice.
- Build relationships with other churches and organizations that are involved in social justice.