



Giving Public Witness to Peace and Justice Team

Pastor Chuck Hubbard, Team Leader

The Public Witness Team meets on the second Saturday of each month at Shepherd of Life Lutheran Church, Arlington. We welcome those who would like to work with us as we live out a profound sense of call as people of Jesus committed to healing in the world.

We acknowledge that many of the churches throughout the synod are doing that in their own way, addressing social needs in their own communities. The Public Witness team can be a helpful resource to the church as it attempts to intelligently and faithfully confront the social realities that are often divisive within the church itself: racism, human caused environmental degradation, the just treatment of women, immigrant and refugee care, as well as charitable relief for the hungry and the homeless.

A few things for which we are thankful . . .

. . . for the immigration attorneys and staff at Schwamkrug, Freshwater and Lopez (Richardson, TX) who conducted “Know Your Rights” presentations in a number of contexts for the benefit of those at risk for deportation and for the people who love them;

. . . for Shepherd of Life Lutheran Church, Arlington, for its willingness to establish a relationship with a non-Lutheran faith community and have courageous conversations on the reality of racism in our society, and for hosting such important events as the hearings on the proposed ELCA social statement on justice and women;

. . . for Rejoice Lutheran Church, Frisco, and its efforts to build a coalition across religious lines, so that the prevailing social issues faced by the people of Frisco might better be addressed; and

. . . for the faithful people of St. John Lutheran Church, Dallas, who in so many diverse ways bring attention to racism in our culture, believing that if we are willing to face it, we can change things for the better!

We just had our first workshop on “The Church’s Role in Undoing Racism”. The presenters, Mrs. Joyce James and the Rev. Joseph Barndt, provided compelling and hearable presentations on the need to understand deep roots of racism in American culture and its pervasiveness in our institutions.

It is estimated that life expectancy for people of color in America, particularly blacks, is a few years less than that of whites due to race related stress. Racism has physical consequences. National Geographic is taking a hard look at the evidence for institutionalized racism within its own business culture. That is a courageous step; it needs to be done by other institutions, including the church. Good News: We can do something to promote healing – including racial healing – in the world.

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