

March 13, 2020

Present: Sarah Lawton, Anne Hodges-Copple, Prince Singh, Dora Mbuwayesango, Brant Lee, Ruth Frey, Susanne Watson Epting, Lallie Lloyd

To Do for next meeting:

- EVERYONE read summary of our testimonies
- EVERYONE write your reflection: Why I do this work (social justice advocacy)

**Next meeting Fri Apr 3 11amPT, 2pmET**

Check in – How are we doing in the age of COVID-19?? Personally, our families, our communities, congregations, dioceses??

Notes from check-in:

- Concern for our elders; for people who are unhoused, food insecure, unemployed, and/or underemployed; urban v rural life; elders & college students
- How are we being challenged to recast the meaning of communion & community?
- How can we be present to others in this new normal?
- Shift to online virtual gatherings
- In times of turmoil, we turn toward each other – how can we gather without gathering??
- Bp Prince got a word of thanks from MD who appreciates his decision to reduce public gatherings: when religious folk are mindful of medical stresses and take helpful actions, it makes a difference.
- How might we use this as a compulsory ‘fast’?
- How do we on this Task Force make ‘theology’ something that’s about what we do in the world and not abstracted or disconnected from ‘real life’?
- No one has anything useful or helpful for people who are food insecure in NYC
- Webs of ‘support’ are so fragile for the marginalized; they disappear under stress
- Helplessness
- COVID 19 illuminates that we are all affected – all one body –

Sarah:

- April TF meeting has been cancelled or postponed
- How do we move forward??
- Everyone – Answer the Q: Why Do I Do This Work??
- How do we move to a ‘product’?

Discussion:

- What is our witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ at a time like this (COVID-19)
  - All these things we are doing as church ‘advocacy’? This is what advocacy looks like: worship, reconciliation, anointing, Eucharistic feast

- This is what it looks like to be the Body of Christ seeking the well-being of the whole
- Sin is inherent in this breakdown
- Bearing witness to what we know and see
- Doing theology: If not us, who? As diverse as we are, we are yet a subset of the diversity of human experience – we certainly do not include the full diversity of human experience.
- Perhaps what we offer at the end is a methodology that ppl might apply in their contexts
  - We can lift up, share and expose one methodology of doing theology of social justice advocacy
  - By grace we've figured out a way to bear witness – always from only our vantage point(s)
  - What kind of methodologies might we lift up for others' consideration?
- Because our system is broken, we have segregated experiences (housing & schools, for example)
  - It is possible to be in a community and still not hear all the stories
  - Possible to not know ppl who suffer
  - To not know why paid sick leave is important? Universal health care?
- What is the theology that connects advocating for these positions into a Christian witness??
- We seek methodologies for theological inquiry, yes, and also a critique of what's missing from the stories we hear, given we always get only an incomplete perspective.
- We are all experiencing COVID, but we are experiencing it differently, because of our social, economic contexts as well as our legal status and racial/ethnic identities.

Susanne:

- Does anyone have access to any of the educational platforms??

Brant has access to WebEx

Lallie, Sarah, and Prince will consider how we might chunk the work out so smaller groups can move things forward going forward and present proposal at our April 3 Meeting.

How do we do a teaching regarding the theology of social justice & political engagement?

--Notes by Lallie Lloyd