

Meeting Notes  
Task Force on the Theology of Social Justice Advocacy  
January 9, 2019

In attendance:

Andrew Dietsche  
Ruth Frey  
Sarah Lawton  
Brant Lee  
Guy Leemhuis  
Lallie Lloyd  
Dora Mbuwayesango  
Reuben Varghese  
Suzanne Watson Epting

Most of this convening meeting was spent discussing the mandate and (broadly) a framework for how to approach it.

We agreed that it will take some time working together, gathering resources, and reflecting to discern where we go in terms of “work product.” It’s okay that it feels a little chaotic now. We expect to spend 2019 in the task of gathering resources and reflecting, and to use our time in 2020 to pull together our work for the church. We don’t have a sense of what that product will be yet (theological essay, curriculum, case studies, something else?). We do want our outcome to be both reflective of our past but also aspirational, hopeful, and relational, and that our work be of use to the church at all levels including diocesan and congregational.

We agreed that it makes sense to try to meet monthly, at least to start; later, if we have work teams (for example, focusing on theological resources or case studies) then the work may be focused there and the overall group may meet less frequently. Sarah will send out a Doodle poll for the next meeting and also for finding a regular meeting time.

We agreed that it would be helpful to spend time sharing with each our own understandings of the theology of social justice advocacy, so that will be a focus of the next meeting. We also agreed that it would be helpful to have some readings to reflect upon and direct our attention. Sarah will post the Blue Book report from the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church that led to Resolution A056 and the mandate for our work. Guy will post some short theological essays/chapters that are used at the Claremont School of Theology in their class on the theology and practice of social justice advocacy in multi-faith settings. We ask everyone to read these materials before our next meeting to help us in our sharing and reflections with each other.

At the next meeting we will also take some time to discuss our process and norms as a committee – for example, how we can ground our work in prayer, and how we can share leadership of this task force.