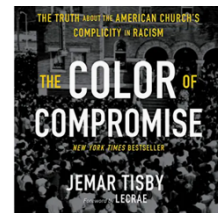


YEAR IN REVIEW 2021-22

PRAISE GOD!

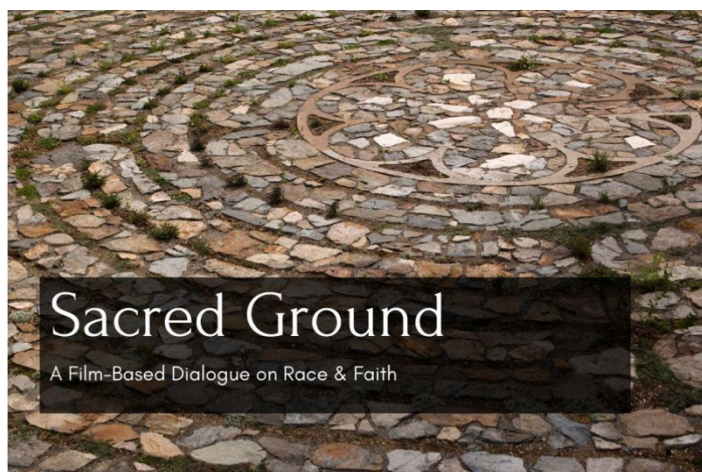
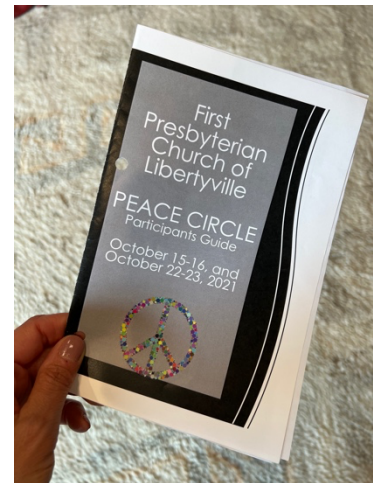
- **18 willing, capable and dedicated people** continue to serve on CARE Team and in at least one working group; a number which has remained steady or grown since the original Anti-Racism & Equity Task Force launched in June 2020
- **Multiple new members have joined First Pres or gotten more** involved because of our efforts in anti-racism and equity this year
- **Our CARE Team was made a permanent, standing committee of First Pres** in August 2021, transitioning from a task force and marking First Pres' commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization
- Starting in Summer 2021, **500 Yard Signs supporting the work of Uprooting Racism + Growing Beloved Community** started going on display at member homes, kicked off with a month of a new banner at church announcing our commitment
- We **launched a fresh new website** in late 2021 outlining our efforts, providing scriptural basis for uprooting racism, anti-racism terms and definitions, information and resources including book/podcast/movie reviews
- A total of **34 members read Jemar Tisby's book "The Color of Compromise"** during the summer of 2021, and joined a September discussion of the book, expanding their understanding of the role the Christian Church has played in systemic racism **Ten members** participated in a November 2021 **Pop-Up Podcast Discussion of Southlake**, an 8-episode podcast produced by NBC News about an affluent Texas suburb that became the center of a battle over belonging and backlash after a viral video exposed racism
- An idea born in our CALL working group in early 2021 lead to a cross-functional church-wide team effort to **survey our congregation in January 2022**, including a supplemental survey written by CARE team members. An impressive 332 First Pres members took the survey and 180 people took the supplemental survey on our Matthew 25 goal of dismantling structural racism, **teaching us rich**

[illegible]

lessons about the impact of our work and confirming both the need for it and the nature of our congregation's support for the work of CARE

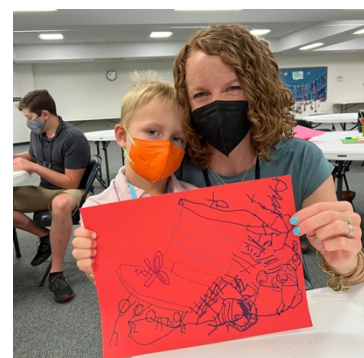
75% of survey respondents said they were either extremely or moderately supportive of our work to dismantle structural racism. Of the commenters on our free-response question, 65% expressed support for this work. Survey results were presented to the community in March 2021 and are being used to help drive our leadership decision-making in the future

- Hundreds of people over multiple weeks saw our beautiful **Black History Month display** during 10+ worship services, as well as our **Juneteenth Timeline**
- **50 of our church leaders participated in Peace Circles in Summer & Fall 2021** reflecting on racism and how it impacts our communities
- **More than a dozen participants watched Selma together at our in-person screening & 24 people followed up in our post screening zoom discussions,** considering together the story depicted in the film and the role of Dr. Martin Luther King in this important chapter of the civil rights struggle
- **Nine families picked up MLK Family Activities Packs** to help their family actively learn about the civil rights movement and the leadership Dr. King provided
- **More than thirty people viewed *Traces of the Trade* documentary** kicking off a season of study and reflection
- **30 seekers took a deep dive into the Sacred Ground 20-week study on racism**—these individuals from First Pres and our neighbor church St. Lawrence Episcopal, undertook a rigorous, wide-ranging multimedia enabled study of racism and its far-reaching types and long legacies, while also considering how we move forward with hearts full of God's love. They also made **rich new connections and bonds with other local Christians** seeking to uproot racism and grow beloved community
- **A total of 74 people from First Pres, St. Lawrence and Christ Episcopal Church in Waukegan** enjoyed fellowship during our **2022 Juneteenth Barbeque** meal
- **Around 60 people enjoyed the healing and mercies layered into our 2022 Juneteenth Ecumenical Celebration Service,** including beautiful prayers of reconciliation, messages and liturgical contributions by



Sacred Ground participants and clergy from other local churches representing multiple denominations and communities including Libertyville & Waukegan

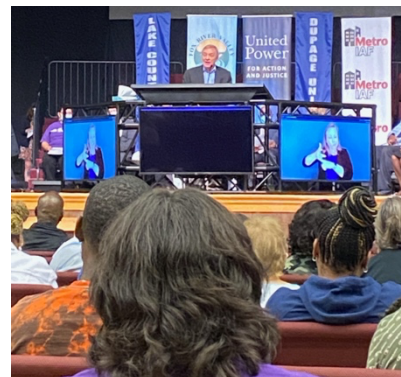
- **A beautiful gift of a meaningful painting** was created by one of the friends we have made through our partnership with Mosaic House + Hub, Joshua Brown, who collaborated with us, helping First Pres say an appropriate goodbye and express our gratitude to the pastor who helped launch and lead this team, Rev. Ryan Wallace
- Through the efforts of CARE Team members, First Pres **recommitted to our Lake County United (LCU) partnership.** We are represented with LCU by CARE Team members Sue Kalman & Kristin Marsden, as well as First Pres member Elyse Danckers, and have paid dues from the CARE budget. This continued partnership will connect us with opportunities to act for justice and equity in our Lake County communities
- One of our partners, **Mosaic Hub,** hosted a **grand-opening in Summer 2022,** with members of the CARE Team in attendance to celebrate with that community. First Pres also helped by leading an hour of prayer and thanksgiving in their new space, praising God for the amazing work happening in North Chicago through the work of our partners, and expressing our collective hope for the future
- During Summer 2022, our **Sunday morning Follow Me programming explored how we can Honor God's Diversity,** with curriculum that helped participants learn how to affirm people who are marginalized, center voices from the margins, work for liberation while challenging oppression, and use advantages to overturn inequality. Dozens of participants examined the work of Black, LGBTQIA+, disabled and indigenous artists to see how their art helps us to see the world with new eyes
- **First Pres members attended various "Democracy In Action" events** during Summer 2022. **Multiple members** showed up to advocate for a local attainable housing project for seniors at various Libertyville village meetings; a project which was approved. **Thirty+ members attended the May Assembly of Lake County United** and learned about working to advocate for essential housing for workers and people with special needs in Waukegan, a Gun Safety Consortium and community mental health initiatives. In July, **ten of our First Pres members attended an inspiring meeting** of around 2000 people representing more than 100 non-profit and religious institutions from four northern Illinois counties, held at the House of Hope Church in Roseland, South Chicago. Leaders from these organizations called on



public officials to join them in advocating for new approaches on gun safety, support for people experiencing mental illness, and the rebuilding of communities by building both owner-occupied homes and affordable, accessible and supportive rental housing on a large scale

- **Our indigenous Land Acknowledgement research commenced** and a statement was brought in drafting/iteration process thanks to the leadership of CARE Team member Dan Brame; work continues to get the statement vetted and presented to Session for consideration along with guidelines and a plan for use in the future
- **Team has been assembled and planning and brainstorming has been ongoing** for a monthly *Beloved Community News* e-newsletter to be launched later this year
- ACT Working Group did a book study on ***“Rediscipling the White Church: From Cheap Diversity to True Solidarity”* by David Swanson** and explored how the concepts relate to our work with partners; wrote a report on their learnings
- **Exciting new goals were explored and captured at a CARE vision meeting in early June 2022**; Draft Goals document for 2022-23 planning was created based on that brainstorming work and ways to incorporate more equity-related projects and goals around justice and care for Hispanic/Latinx and Asian American communities
- We spend some time **considering our successes** for the past year at our July 2022 meeting, as well as considering who we will ask to join us in making our ***“Stone Soup”***
- **Our three Working Groups, GROW (Gather, Reflect, Offer Wisdom), ACT (Action, Community, Transformation) & CALL (Communicate, Administer, Lead and Liaison) have clarified goals and are empowered to choose the specific projects that excite them** in 2022-2023 and beyond, and helping all of us continue to step down the lifelong path towards justice and equity

JULY 17 ASSEMBLY
4 - 5:30 PM



Are you intrigued by this work? Want to learn more?

Open and willing hearts are invited to join the CARE Team—we have a wide variety of opportunities available including working group roles, behind-the-scenes research projects, micro-volunteering jobs, and more.

Contact Vanessa Griffin (vngriffin@comcast.net, 773-330-2456) or Debra Alexander (dalexander@d56.org, 847-975-0859) to find out more.

JOIN US TO HELP UPROOT RACISM & GROW BELOVED COMMUNITY!