

First Pres Committee on Anti-Racism & Equity (C.A.R.E)

YEAR IN REVIEW 2022-23

- **A group of 23 First Pres members continue to serve with love and dedication on C.A.R.E.** and in at least one working group as we finish our third year of work together. This group includes the following First Pres members:

Debra Alexander, Dan Brame, Kathy Chapman, Amy Christan, Betsy Davison, Juli Dunsing, Anne Gohmann Villareal*, Vanessa Griffin, Anna Groebe, Rev. Amy Heinrich, Rob Heinrich, Kim Henderson*, Sue Kalman, Leslie Koehler*, Mike Kollasch, Mary Kovatch*, Carmen Lago, Kristin Marsden, Beth Schrag*, Tucker Olson, Brian Smith, Bob Shears and Fred Ulanday.

** new members this year!*

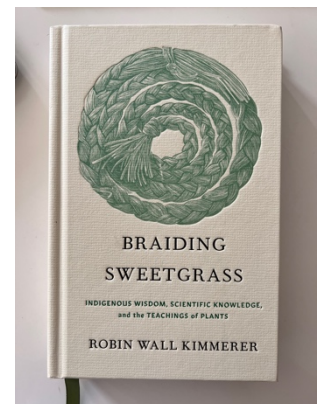
If you see one of these wonderful volunteers, ask them about C.A.R.E.!

- **More than 100 people participated in our Love Every Neighbor CARE Conversations on Sunday evenings in October, November and February this year**—learning about the perspectives of Indigenous people, our siblings with Latino/a/x backgrounds, as well as diving deeper into the work and words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. These carefully developed events blended fellowship with learning to practice the art of having difficult conversations about complex and important topics. Participants made **rich new connections and bonds with other Christians** seeking to uproot racism and grow beloved community.

- **Launched Beloved Community News, a bi-monthly racial justice and equity bulletin**, with research and writing by our dedicated Communication Team members Dan Brame, Kristin Marsden, Rob Heinrich, Juli Dunsing and Mike Kollasch. Four issues of the newsletter have been



Enjoy these
conchas,
a Mexican
sweetbread
from
La Luz Bakery
800 N. Lake St. Mundelein
847-837-0303



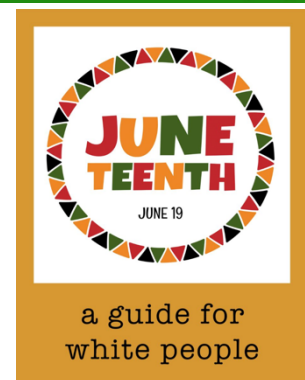
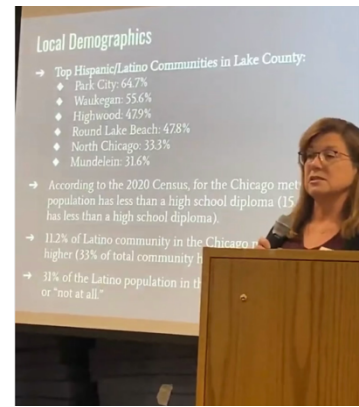
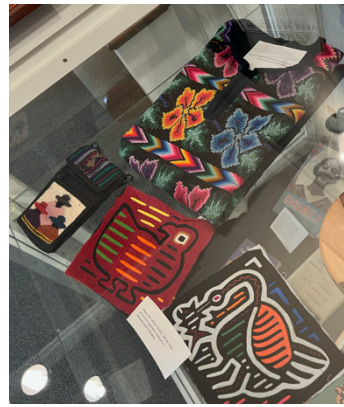
published so far, reaching 140 subscribers with news about C.A.R.E. programming, resources for educating ourselves on how to uproot racism and grow Beloved Community, and opportunities to act for justice. Features include **Consider This** (book, podcast and film reviews by First Pres members) **Finding the Words: Interrupting Racism in Daily Life**, and **Justice Giants**, a regular feature on civil rights leaders you should know. Anyone can subscribe here:

<https://gmail.us18.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=78afc5cb4855fab3f0fbcc4fd&id=9791ca80e7>

- Continued developing a Land Acknowledgement Practice for First Pres.** A plan for showing love to our Indigenous neighbors was officially approved by our Session in December 2022. C.A.R.E. members launched a communication plan to roll out more information about the “whys and hows” of a land acknowledgement practice, including many resources from the PC(USA). The outlines of a practice have been approved and ongoing conversations and research is happening with church leaders. The draft Land Acknowledgement Statement has been officially incorporated into Session, Deacon and C.A.R.E. meetings starting in early 2023, and the official statement is slated to be incorporated more fully into the life of the church as of this October.

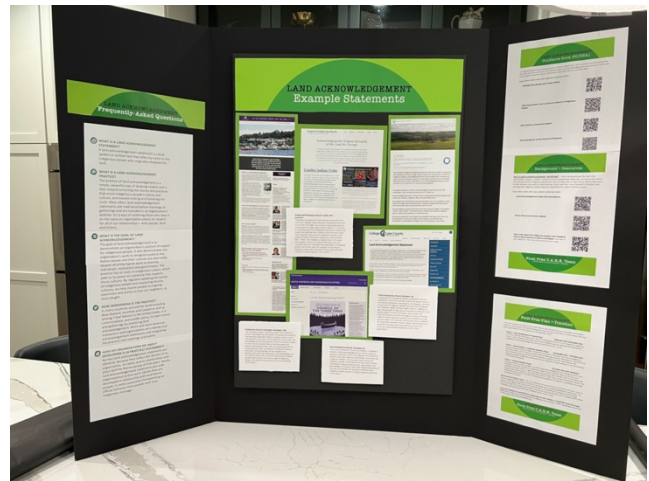
- Helped our church observe Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2023.** We hosted a Coffee with C.A.R.E. in honor of MLK Day 2023. As part of the acknowledgement of the holiday, our ACT working group curated and shared a five-page packet of updated Service Opportunities with members through our newsletter and at church. Three of our C.A.R.E. members also provided an update on the committee’s work during both worship services. Our GROW Working Group created a beautiful display exploring brief bios of the people who influenced MLK, as well as those for whom he was an important influence. We invited passersby to contribute the ways that they have been inspired to uproot racism and grow Beloved Community.

- Helped our church observe Juneteenth 2023.** We incorporated liturgical elements into our June 18 worship service, recognizing the joy of celebrating freedom and the lament over Black Americans’ long struggle for emancipation. We published a Juneteenth Guide for White People and a corresponding bulletin



insert offering education and resources for understanding and observing Juneteenth. Hosted a C.A.R.E. info table after June 18 worship service, and hosted a Book Swap to further the opportunities for members to participate in fellowship and learning. We also created **Juneteenth Family Activity Packets & Take-Home Worship Kits** to help families and kids actively learn about the Juneteenth federal holiday and what we can do to recognize it with respect and love for our neighbors.

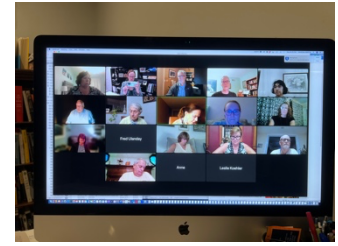
- **Held first-ever Book Swap** involving 18 members in conversation around the books that have moved our hearts to action for justice and mercy, and gave away copies of most recommended books to participants.
- **Continued to support Mosaic Hub in North Chicago as that organization celebrated one year of building community in a vibrant new faith-based community center.** Members of the CARE Team were in attendance to celebrate their one-year anniversary with that community. Our ACT working group organized a book drive with carefully chosen and diverse titles, enabling First Pres members to contribute 150+ books with diverse titles to the Mosaic Hub library for use by students who pass through their center.
- **Continued to strengthen our relationship with Lake County United** by cultivating strong ties to the organization through the work of our representatives Sue Kalman and Kristin Marsden as well as First Pres member Elyse Danckers, and by paying our annual dues through the C.A.R.E. budget. Cultivated and communicated multiple actions members can take to act for justice on essential housing for essential workers, as well as common-sense gun laws.
- **Created a display in the narthex and front hallway in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct.15) and established a presence on a bulletin board outside Social Hall** to facilitate more communication and sharing of informational resources with members of our congregation and visitors about C.A.R.E.'s work on the Matthew 25 goal of dismantling structural racism.



• Building Relationships
• Developing Leaders
• Acting for Justice



- **First Pres members serving on C.A.R.E. got together outside of church to experience various fellowship and learning opportunities** including a Dunn Museum exhibit and presentation on the Underground Railroad through the National Parks, as well as a visit to the Potawatomi Trails Pow Wow in Zion, IL, an event that has been hosted by local Indigenous people for the past 30 years. We also had one fun potluck dinner before our May in-person meeting and experienced some of the significant culinary skills of our members.

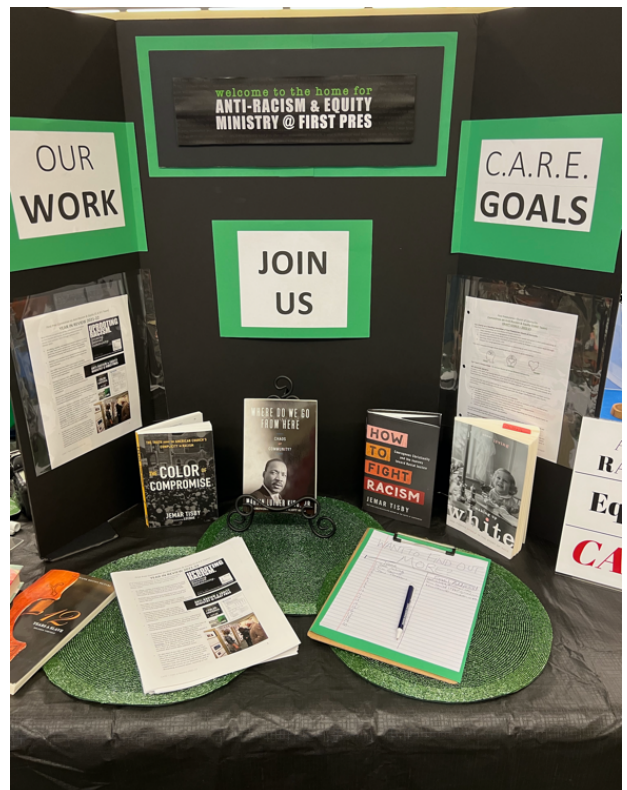


Are you intrigued by this work? Want to join us, or just learn more?

Open and willing hearts are invited to join C.A.R.E.! 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 (djba56@gmail.com, 847-975-0859) to find out more.



Year in Review 2022-23

First Pres Committee on Anti-Racism & Equity