

Social Justice & Racial Healing 2022

Becoming Beloved Community is The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society. On a diocesan level, the Episcopal Church in Connecticut has a Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation Ministry Network that meets quarterly as well as hosting diocesan workshops. St. Matthew's is an active member of that network and we meet monthly as the Social Justice and Racial Healing group. We dream and work to live out our baptismal promises individually and corporately where all people may experience dignity and abundant life and see themselves and others as beloved children of God. Individually and corporately we attempt to live out these gospel imperatives in a variety of ways. In 2022 we:

- continued to offer a different prayer following the *Prayers of the People* each Sunday that is also shared over St. Matt's social media platform
- read numerous articles and books individually and as a group including *The Sum of Us* by Heather McGee, *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* by Nikole Hannah-Jones, and *Passionate for Justice: Ida B. Wells as Prophet for Our Time* by Catherine Meeks and Nibs Stroupe
- created a "lending library" book table in the Narthex for parishioners to see and borrow titles of interest on social justice topics
- host a bulletin board with our activities in the hallway between the church and offices
- attended webinars and online courses regarding Indigenous Peoples and the Doctrine of Discovery
- hosted a Juneteenth service at St. Matthew's cemetery where it is known enslaved persons are buried, most in unmarked graves in a section labeled "colored" in parish records
- established a coalition of four area congregations (Wilton, Westport, and Norwalk) to bring [The Witness Stones Project, Inc.](#) to Wilton. Young people in grades 5-9 will use local primary and secondary documents to learn about local slavery, investigate individual enslaved persons, and restore the history of the enslaved by writing their stories leading to a public ceremony with the laying of a memorial stone; and
- discussed resolutions put forth from General Convention and ECCT's annual convention on topics related to social justice and how St. Matthew's is living into those imperatives
- hosted a letter and post-card campaign to "get out the vote" for Election 2022 (50 letters to Fairfield County registered voters who had not voted in recent years and 200 postcards to newly registered voters in the State of Georgia)
- partnered with St. Matthew's Mission Team in welcoming and walking with children and youth from Open Doors at the Wilton Halloween Parade

Via Zoom, we meet the 1st Wednesday of every month from 7:30-9:00pm. We welcome anyone to join us at any time.

Respectfully submitted,

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Sharon Pearson, convenor
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