

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Social Justice & Action (SJA)**  
**Sunday, April 8, 2018**

**Attendees:** Gloria Betts, Sarah Engle, Jerry Hartman, Melissa Herman, Paul Leistra, Nancy Lohman, Cindy Saunders, Dick Staufenberger, Rebecca Unruh. Tim Tutt joined us for the first portion of the meeting.

1. **Opening Prayer:** Nancy led an opening prayer.
2. **Approval of the January Minutes:** The March minutes were previously approved by email.
3. **Anti-Gun Violence Task Force:** Tim joined the meeting to share a handout and his thoughts about the history and possible future efforts of a Westmoreland Anti-Gun Violence Task Force. We discussed past efforts as well as points to consider going forward, including identifying the goals and purpose of the group, potential leadership, ideas for partnership with other faith organizations, sensitivity to the racial implications of the issue, and the need to focus on the theological or spiritual dimension of the issue. Nancy and Dick volunteered to contact congregants who have expressed interest in the issue and meet to discuss next steps.
4. **Treasurer's update:** Dick confirmed that we collected approximately \$6,000 during the Easter offering, which was lower than previous years. Combined with the \$32,131 collected at Christmas, we have approximately \$38,131 to distribute, plus any distributions from the McDowell Fund and any remaining funds from previous years. Factors we discussed that may have affected giving this year included increased giving at Christmas, increased requests for pledges and Capital Campaign contributions, and not having a final announcement during the Easter service about the purpose of the collection that day. Dick agreed to ask Tim about making an announcement during the next service to let the congregation know that collections were down this Easter and that donations can still be made by check or online.
5. **Website:** Sarah and Rebecca reported on edits to the SJA grant guidelines and agreed to recirculate the proposed changes for Board approval. They are also working on updating the general SJA information on Westmoreland's website, including coordinating the SJA information with the Outreach Opportunities page, and updating the SJA Mission Statement.
6. **Update on Shaw Scholarship and Westmoreland/Shaw/Dunbar Scholarship and Mentorship Programs:** Dick provided an update on the latter, noting that three current participants in the program will be attending college in the fall and that he and Caryn McTighe Musil had recently met with Dunbar officials regarding the next cohort of students. He asked SJA Board members to consider acting as mentors. Melissa reported that on the former, noting that they are in the fundraising stage and have raised approximately \$15,000 and hope to be able to fund 20 \$1,000 scholarships in the next cycle.
7. **SJA Mission Statement:** Nancy circulated the current page on SJA's Mission and Activities and noted that we might consider a retreat and/or an annual social gathering as set forth in the document. We discussed that it might benefit the Board to consider whether to have a general theme for the year around which to focus our efforts. There was discussion of focusing on racial justice and/or gun

violence. Nancy asked members to send her the dates on which they are not available in the coming months.

- 8. Project Transformation:** Cindy reported that the Children's Collection for May will benefit Project Transformation, and agreed to contact Rachel at PT to let her know.
- 9. Possible Speaker for Sep. 9:** Melissa reported that SJA can sponsor a speaker for our September 9 Welcome Back service, and use a \$300 honorarium for speaking fees. She has contacted Michael Eric Dyson and will report back to the Board about his availability. Board members with other speaker ideas agreed to send ideas to Melissa.
- 10. Environmental Justice and Climate Change Workshop:** Nancy raised the possibility of having SJA host a 2-part workshop after church on environmental justice and climate change. She has materials from a potential speaker and will circulate them to the Board for review. Possible dates include June and September.
- 11. Site Visits:** Nancy reminded the Board to visit their assigned grantees by May 1 using the form Nancy circulated, which is also available on Google Drive. We should also remind grantees of their mid-year report obligation.

**NEXT MEETING: Sunday, May 13 at 8:30am (Library).**