

Mission & Social Justice Commission



Mission Statement

As agents of God's justice, healing and love, the Mission and Social Justice Commission of The Riverside Church in the City of New York seeks to transform individuals, communities and systems of racial, social, economic and environmental oppression.

Meetings

6:30 to 8 p.m. ET on the second Monday of each month. Contact Sumati Devadutt, devadutt.s@gmail.com

2021-22 Members with MSJ Offices and Liaison Assignments

Sumati Devadutt (MSJ Chair)

Victoria Anderson (Church Council)

Michael Barnes (Stewardship)

Derrick Biney-Amisshah (Building and Grounds)

Frances Connell (MSJ Vice Chair)

Pamela Davis

Lissa Dodington (Secretary)

Rainer Engelken

Linda Fentiman (Budget & Planning)

Carol Fouke-Mpoyo (Nominating)

Susan Wersan

What We Do

The MSJ Commission partners with staff in the shaping of Riverside's social justice agenda. We seek ways to support the ministries under MSJ's umbrella to pursue excellence in carrying out their missions, collaborating whenever possible with other ministries in the work of justice.

We identify opportunities for Riversiders to take action individually and collectively. For example, on June 5 we invited congregants to meet online to learn about voter suppression, environmental racism, mass incarceration and immigrant detention. While still gathered, the 50+ participants phoned legislators, signed petitions and sent letters to demand change.

E.G. PUSH SENATORS TO ENACT VOTING RIGHTS AND CHANGE THE FILIBUSTER SO VOTING RIGHTS BILLS CAN PASS. CAPITOL SWITCHBOARD: (202) 224-3121

Ministries Under MSJ Commission's Umbrella

AFRICAN FELLOWSHIP – Spiritual and social solidarity, education and activism with Africans and allies. Second Sundays 1 p.m. Contact Yemi Abioye, yemi.abioye@gmail.com

ANTIRACISM TASKFORCE – Working to strengthen antiracism and interrupt and eradicate racism in our church, community and nation. Third Saturdays at 1 p.m. Contact Pamela Davis, drpamdavis@gmail.com

BELOVED EARTH COMMUNITY – Calls Riversiders to protest the climate crisis and care for the Earth through educational programs, greening the church, changing our lifestyles, and courageous political action. For meeting times, contact Alan Bentz-Letts, alanbentzletts@gmail.com or Regina Tate, mariposa21355@yahoo.com

BLACK LIVES MATTER @ Riverside – Addressing systems that continue to relegate Black people to miseducation, low-paid jobs, homelessness and disproportionate arrest and imprisonment. Contact Ruby Sprott, rubysprott@gmail.com

ECCLESIA MINISTRY – Monthly services in Marcus Garvey Park, offering an alternative for people who might not be comfortable in traditional church settings. Fourth Sundays at 12:30 p.m. Contact Douglas Miller, mil429440@aol.com

LATINX MINISTRY – Celebrates Latinx culture in all its diversity and lifts up spiritual, sociopolitical & economic issues of Latinx communities in the United States and abroad. Its Border Mission supports health and advocacy for Haitians and Dominicans. Contact Arelis Figueroa, aremfigue@gmail.com

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND VOTE – Informs Riversiders about elections and public issues before all levels of government. It also provides simple, ongoing opportunities to engage voters in underrepresented communities. Contact Sumati Devadutt, devadutt.s@gmail.com, or Rueben Martinez, ruebenmartinez2@gmail.com

MARANATHA – Seeks to foster greater understanding and equity for LGBTQI people and their allies. Components include service, advocacy, scholarships and special events: Second Sunday after worship, September-June. Contact Lisa Cooke, cookie.lc34@gmail.com

MEN'S CLASS – Faith and fellowship building and educational programs that help build the church and a more just society. Open to all genders. Third Sundays 1 p.m. Contact Tunde Aboyade-Cole, mensclass.trc@gmail.com

MOVIES@RIVERSIDE – Sponsoring periodic film screenings as an entrée into social justice topics. Contact Don Bickford, dabickford@aol.com

POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN @ TRC – Confronting systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. Contact Arelis Figueroa, aremfigue@gmail.com

PRISON MINISTRY – Advocacy and outreach on behalf of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, their families and their communities. Fourth Sundays 1 p.m. Contact Jacqueline McLeod, jacqueline1943@aol.com or Sheila Rule, resiliencemultimedia@verizon.net

SOJOURNERS – Friendship, practical support and advocacy for asylum seekers and other vulnerable immigrants held in immigration detention and post-release. Contact Frances Connell, frances.connell@gmail.com or Craig Lemley, craigll@yahoo.com

SOUTH AFRICA/CUBA SUPPORT GROUP – Support for healing in post-apartheid South Africa and partnership with IFCO/Pastors for Peace work in Cuba. Contact Ruby Sprott, rubysprott@gmail.com

THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED – “Forum Theatre” with people who face pressing social, economic, health and human rights issues, to activate and challenge. Sundays at 1 p.m. Contact Jeremiah Drake, theatreoftheoppressedtrc@gmail.com

WELLBOTICS – Robotics and mindfulness tutoring for resiliency of children and youth in challenging life situations. Contact Dr. Pamela Davis, drpamdavis@gmail.com