

Racial Justice Team 2022 Annual Report

To lead POP from talking about racism to taking action to change it, 2022 included:

Surveyed the congregation regarding choice of beneficiaries for reparations donations

Clear majority choice was similar to Bishop's Challenge so combined efforts

Actively advertised/participated in most of **NJ Synod's Bishop's Challenge** activities including

- Bishop's Book Study on *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson
- Bus Trip to Philadelphia including African American Museum, Quaker Meeting and speaker from Lest We Forget Slavery Museum
- Quilt Square (thanks to Shari Rexroad) with chalice and hands of many skin colors submitted to represent POP welcoming and encouraging diversity
- Series of forums using "Troubling the Waters" curriculum available through Synod
- Sponsored POP movie night viewing "Just Mercy" re saving victims of America's systemic racism through the Bryan Stevenson's Equal Justice Initiative
- Members attended weekly advocacy updates with Rev. Sara Lilja
- Members took Transforming White Privilege (TWP) course offered by Synod
- **Raised \$5,155 for reparations**, far above Bishop's and POP's goals of \$3,750
- Forums, sermons, talks, handouts re Jehu Jones (1st Black Lutheran Pastor in America)

Related supplements planned independently by POP team and Pastor Peter Froehlke

- Forums re Ethiopian Christianity/ Civil Rights hymns (thanks to Dr. Paul Rohrem)
- Book Study on Thurman's *Jesus and the Disinherited* (thanks to Vicar Kayla Hopgood)
- Juneteenth Celebration at Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum
- Liturgy, prayer, books from African American ELCA resources included in POP worship
- CoSponsored community-wide viewing and discussion of "Long Shadow" re the producer's discovery of a family legacy of white privilege
- Ongoing Communication through monthly newsletter articles, holiday/celebrations chart (thanks to Con Sweeney), emails, Facebook & Racial Justice Calendar in narthex

Indigenous Emphasis included:

- Added Land Acknowledgement to POP bulletins and website
- Orange Banner purchased/hung for over 225 days honoring children killed in residential schools
- Forums on residential schools for Indigenous children
- Forum by indigenous guest speaker Clair Garland
- Trip to Nanticoke-Lenape Annual PowWow

The RJT invites you to borrow from the **Anti-Racism Lending Library in the narthex lounge**.

Please consider joining the team and participating in events and opportunities in the coming year as POP works to make our congregation and the ELCA more equitable, just and diverse.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Reyes, chair (nancyauerreyes@gmail.com or 609-273-1239)