

ANNUAL REPORT SOCIAL WITNESS TEAM

ABCORI's Social Witness team met consistently over 2016.

The first order of business for the year was to discuss and choose 2-3 issues for the team to focus on for the next 3-5 years. The three issues that were discussed and adopted were

1. Racism
2. Poverty/Hunger
3. Violence

The purpose of the three issue focus is not to set up the expectation that all three be addressed in a calendar year, but so that the team remain centered from meeting to meeting on specific goals.

The second order of business for the year was to try to bolster team membership as participation at the beginning of the year was limited to Rev. Darin Collins, Rev. Michael Mercier, Rev. Bob Auld and Rev. Dr. Tom Wiles. Rev. Collins invited Rev. Ebony Grison to participate in the work of the Social Witness Team and would like to on behalf of the team, thank Rev. Grison for her faithful attendance to meeting, participation in discussion, and insightful suggestions. She has added much to the planning and the work of the Social Witness Team which deserves ABCORI's recognition and thanks.

Unfortunately, this was the full extent of the work done to build up the Social Witness Team which could still use a great deal more participation in order to be more effective.

The third order of business for the year was to explore and create partnerships with other groups dedicated to the work of Social Justice, whether those were ecclesial or secular.

Over 2016 The Social Witness Team worked in close conjunction with

The Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty

The Religious Coalition for a Violence Free RI &

The Center for Reconciliation at the Cathedral at St. John.

Because of all this I am proud to report this work accomplished by the team and/or its individual members including:

Hunger in RI Spring Conference for ABCORI churches -

This included viewing the documentary, 'A Place at the Table,' a presentation by Emily Jones and discussion.

monthly participation in The Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty mtg's

wide participation in the Coalition's yearly Conference &

Annual January State House March and Vigil

Support of the work Rev. Ebony Grison regarding PayDay Lending

Support of the work of Rev. Gene Dyslewski, pastor of Limerock Baptist seeking legislation which would limit purchase and possession of firearms by domestic abusers

Training in the Center for Reconciliation's 'The Cross and the Lynching Tree' Discussion Curriculum

Respectfully Submitted

Rev. Darin R. Collins, Chair