

RJI Steering Committee
Room 201
November 11 Meeting Minutes

Attending: Mary, Denny, Sallie, Dan

Denny update on small support/reflection group. Teaming up with Barbara Jensen, who has developed a draft of an overview of what this group would look like. They are continuing to add to this draft, but think it will be about discussing current events related to race/ethnicity as well as sharing personal stories and struggles. Seems that it would work better outside of an ARE course offering — to allow people to ‘drop-in’ rather than having a fixed group. Are considering a monthly offering on both Tuesday morning and Tuesday evening. This group makes most sense as an RJI/Pastoral Care joint group (came from RJI praxis, is focused on race issues), but Barbara was couching it as a FAM/Pastoral Care group, which could add to confusion about the distinctions between these groups. A FAM/RJI/Pastoral Care offering, perhaps?

Sallie suggested continuing a periodic RJI Newsletter to advertise events and FAM work etc. Take cross current article as part of newsletter. Double-sided in past. At the very least we should get print copies of the cross-currents articles with event listings available to people in the congregation that may not read the cross-currents articles regularly. Dan also suggested posting a copy of the monthly article on the RJI bulletin board.

We discussed CFA/RJI/FAM distinctions: how we can help with clarifying the roles of these groups. CFA’s role in handling donations, also action or more? CFA should remain as an umbrella group. FAM rapid response, action, protests. CFA is working on org chart to try to clarify this more. This needs conversation involving members of all three groups — maybe at next CFA meeting?

We discussed Robin’s suggested of a book group as an ARE offering. This seems to have potential — maybe a deep-dive into one book over the meetings would bring in more interested folks for a more structured book group offering.

Mary updated on the Beloved Conversations reunion on Nov 2. Heather Edwards helped put together a poster that all participants who attended signed for themselves and any group members not present so we can display the two years of participants in the BC groups. Also, she sent RJI website revisions to Lynne, which will hopefully be up soon, and mentioned the Katie Mulligan event that Barbara coordinated, and the nice turnout for the CFA/RJI Faith Forward meeting during the middle hour last week that Mike Wilson and Mary participated in.

We discussed following up after Thursday’s virtual meeting with the committee which Rev. Kim attended to discuss training church leadership in using a racial justice lens in the work we do. One idea that Nathalie suggested during the class was to make an internal “training” video — of us discussing some of the topics we identified as important for committee leaders and members to understand and our personal reflections on racial justice work and how we approach it.

Important to show that we aren't experts but are constantly reflecting and growing ourselves (i.e. it's a marathon not a sprint). Also, we need to solidify plans for the November 27 Quarterly Council meeting and also have next steps following the meeting in mind so we can keep things moving.

We discussed the plans for the endowment funds that Barbara secured for RJI events this year. Having an outside speaker come preach and give a talk after is high on the list — Kenny Wiley or other BLUU leader, Sallie suggested possibly Brittany Cooper would be another great speaker if she were available. Also of interest would be a half-day racial justice training of some type for church leadership.

The next RJI steering committee meeting on December 9 will be open to all interested in learning what the steering committee is up to and sharing thoughts with us. Would also potentially offer an educational piece to this meeting as well. Dan and Mary will do the planning; Sallie and Mary will lead the meeting (Dan can't be there). Dan suggested some targeted invites: those attending faith forward meetings, the praxis group.

Sallie found Ware lecture extremely upsetting and hard to listen to. Felt she was being yelled at. Thinks this should be down the line rather than at next leadership meeting. Want people to feel called in not called out.

Action Items:

Denny: Following up with Barbara to make further plans for small reflection group offering. Working with Chris Piatek to draft an 8th principle press release.

Sallie: Updating the out-of-date RJI bulletin board. Will include most recent cross-currents RJI article, and Beloved Conversations poster.

Mike & Sallie: Set date of first film night offering and decide on first film.

Regina: Send around notes from the leadership training conversation on Thursday.

Help needed: find a videographer in the congregation (maybe one of the youth) who could help us create an internal "training" video. We then need to set a date on this.

Schedule a time to discuss the Council meeting on November 27. **Dan** and **Mary** are interested in planning this, **Nathalie** will be leading the council meeting, so her participation is needed for this. Update: We have decided to discuss RJI work more informally during the Nov 27 meeting, with a few questions to get the conversation started. Will follow up with a more developed presentation/conversation in the February council meeting.

Next Meeting: December 9 Room 201, Open to congregation (looking into availability of the sanctuary in case we need more space).