



Presbytery of the Western Reserve

SEASON OF JUSTICE RETREAT March 24 through March 27

"We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." ~ 2 Corinthians 5:20

Dear Faith Leaders and humble servants,

We greet you all as fellow ambassadors for Christ! We are writing to commend and celebrate your continued efforts to bear witness to the perfect love God has shown for us in the midst of a hateful and imperfect world. As many of you may remember, last spring we had the honor of hosting Reverend Alonzo Johnson in his role as a mission Associate for the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program of the PCUSA. Since then, Reverend Johnson has accepted a new mandate: he is now the National Coordinator of Self-Development of the People program for the PCUSA.

Reverend Johnson was impressed by the welcoming and willing spirit we exhibited in May. He found the work we are doing in the Presbytery of the Western Reserve to be so inspiring that he has reached out to us, asking us to model a new format of partnering between mission advocates that he hopes will expand the capacity of Presbyteries to 'bring good news to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim deliverance to the captives, and liberate the oppressed.'

Towards that end, the Race Action Network, Hunger Action Network and Self-Development of the People are working together to host a Season of Justice four day retreat which will provide valuable resources to assist clergy and lay leaders in the difficult work of continuing to bend the moral arc of the universe towards justice.

This four day event will be hosted by the four churches of the Presbytery of the Western Reserve within the city of Cleveland proper. In addition to be centrally located, it seemed consistent to bear witness to church and community in the very congregations that serve our city's most vulnerable. We encourage you and your congregants to be in community with us on March 24, 25, 26, and 27 at Bethany, North, Covenant, and Old Stone respectively.

We know that your schedules are very busy and respect your need to balance church and family concerns. We also want to encourage you to attend all four days if your schedule permits. Each session will expound upon our common themes of Justice, Agency and Empowerment for the most vulnerable in our communities. Our retreat will conclude on Monday at Old Stone with the installation of our new General Presbyter, Rev. Sharon Core and an address from the PCUSA's co-moderator, Rev. T. Denise Anderson.

Monday evening, prizes will be awarded to the congregations that have the best attendance over the four days of the retreat. To qualify for a prize, congregations must have an average of at least ten attendees present each day of the retreat.

Attached please find a complete schedule and visit <http://www.preswesres.org/index.php/events/pwr-events> for more information. If you'd prefer to talk to a person, please feel free to call Laura VanDale, Rev. Mary Susan Pisano or Ajah Hales.

In Christ's service and yours; Race Action Network, Hunger Action Network and Self Development of the People.



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SEASON OF JUSTICE RETREAT SCHEDULE March 24 through March 27

For directions, go to: <http://www.preswesres.org/index.php/events/pwr-events>

Friday March 24 @Bethany

- 12:30 Opening Convocation – Rev. Mary Susan Pisano
- 1:30–4:00 Understanding Poverty workshop
- 4:00–7:00 Community Meal with Bethany Presbyterian Church
- 7:30–10:00 Movie – “Zootopia” with moderated discussion to follow

Saturday March 25 @North

- 9:00–12:00 Opening Prayer, Beloved Community: Working Toward Racial Justice and Reconciliation
- 12:00–1:30 Lunch in the neighborhood
- 1:45 – 4:30 Breakout Sessions

First grouping (1:45-3:00):

- Advocacy 101—Nicole Schmidt from Bread for the World
- SDOP Community Workshop – SDOP Committee members
- Book Discussion on *Slow Kingdom Coming* – Eric Dillenbeck
- Welcoming refugees – PWR churches, Rafaat Zaki?

Second grouping (3:15-4:30)

- From “Walking By” to “Walking Beside” – panel on homeless ministry
- Micro-lending workshop – Ajah Hales
- Becoming a Hunger Action Congregation – Mark Juengel and members of the HAN
- SDOP Showcase – PWR and Eastminster SDOP folks

4:45-6:00 Closing Worship

Sunday March 26 @Covenant

- 2:00 – 3:45 Screening of the movie “13th”
- 4:00 – 6:00 Panel Discussion on “13th”

Monday March 27 @Old Stone

- 10:00 Book Discussion on *Waking Up White* facilitated by Rev. T. Denise Anderson
- 12:00 Lunch at Old Stone (visiting with PCUSA national folks)
- 1:30–3:30 Discussion about Freedom Rising
- 3:30–4:45 Book Discussion on *Slow Kingdom Coming*
- 5:00 Presbytery Meeting, with Rev. T. Denise Anderson preaching