

Church of Our Saviour Social Justice Committee Charter

Vision

Rooted in our baptismal vow to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being,” the Social Justice Committee (SJC) of Church of Our Saviour seeks to promote a more just and peaceful society for all. We hearken to the command in Micah to “do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with [our] God,” looking for opportunities to serve those most in need whether near or far. We bring to mind the Bible’s exhortations to “consider all people the same,” to “show love for those foreigners” who live among us, and to “see that justice is done” by helping “those who are oppressed.” Ultimately, we seek to remember that no person is a stranger to Christ, and we strive to bring the blessing hands of Christ to the aid of all those facing injustice of any kind, including racial, social, economic, or environmental.

Mission

As a congregation committed to live out our baptismal vows to strive for justice and peace, we are called to use the resources, talents, and time we are each given by God to mitigate unjust circumstances as we encounter them in the particular place in which we have been put. We commit to looking for situations in our immediate Lincoln Park, Chicagoland, and broader community in which justice has been unequally served. We commit to prayerfully, creatively, and collaboratively working to bring about a more socially just outcome for our neighbors.

Charter

By the authority of the Vestry of Church of Our Saviour Episcopal Church, the Social Justice Committee is charged with helping the church work towards justice in all its manifestations and with aiding in the creation of a more equitable society truly reflective of the Good News of Christ.

Membership in the Social Justice Committee should include individuals who meet the following guidelines: (1) one current member of the vestry who serves at the liaison between the full vestry and the SJC, (2) a minimum of two other individual parishioners, and (3) a maximum of ten individuals total, including the vestry liaison. Committee members should be chosen in view of their interest, calling, and abilities related to fulfilling the SJC’s mission.

Duties and responsibilities of the SJC include:

1. Identifying and responding to social justice concerns as they come to the attention of members of COS or the SJC. This may involve giving information to parishioners about individual ministry opportunities as well as determining when a collective ministry response might be necessary from either COS as a whole or from a smaller group within COS. It is expected that larger social justice ministry needs may require separate subcommittees formed under the SJC’s umbrella to respond more precisely to those challenges (the SJC will be involved in the formation of such, as described under section 2, below).
2. Liaising with, organizing, and supporting related subcommittees handling social justice ministry areas of need. This role involves attention to the following matters:
 - Working with and supporting the standing Antiracism Committee mandated by the Diocese of Chicago

- Organizing the formation of other subcommittees as they appear necessary to meet the demands of clear social justice ministry areas
 - Assisting in the drafting of subcommittee charters before submission of such charters to the full vestry for approval
 - Monitoring SJC subcommittees to determine not only when they are needed but also when their ministry might have reached a possible endpoint that might require dissolution of the subcommittee
 - Besides determining when a particular SJC subcommittee might have finished its current active ministry, the SJC shall also work to identify and dissolve subcommittees where there are no longer at least three active members working on the ministry area in question
 - Note that the provisions related to dissolution of subcommittees do not apply to the Antiracism Committee
3. Submitting reports and budgetary requests as appropriate for the ministry needs falling under the overall SJC purview. These will include not only the SJC's own reporting and budget but also those of all subcommittees under the overall SJC purview.