

# SJAM NEWSLETTER

Social and Environmental Justice Advocacy  
of Federated Church



**Issue 1**

**January—March 2021**

**“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”**

- Martin Luther King Jr.

Social and Environmental Justice at Federated (commonly called SJAM) is a group of dedicated individuals from varying backgrounds who are called to explore, learn and act for social and environmental justice both locally and globally. We meet regularly and invite all who are interested. Your commitment may be as small as attending a movie or discussion group, or as large as your imagination can expand and your time allows to help. We created this newsletter to provide insight into available activities that may be of interest to you in the first quarter of 2021.



## January Movie Night

*This month is actually a  
Speaker Night*

**Monday, January 25**

**7:00—8:30 pm**

**Racial Justice  
Activism: How to  
Get Involved**

## January 2021

### Focus on Racial Justice and Activism

We host a Movie Night each month, which includes speakers when available. For January, we hope you will join us virtually for two speakers from *Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)*

**Monday, January 25th, 7:00-8:30pm.**

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83595558354?pwd=U1VxZU5SZ0NjcEVkbEcxeXpsbVIWdz09>

### **Racial Justice Activism: How to Get Involved**

Rev. Anne Dunlap — UCC Minister, Leader; [Showing Up for Racial Justice \(SURJ\) Faith Coordinator](#)

Avery Martens — Organizer, strategist; [Showing Up for Racial Justice Ohio \(SURJ Ohio\)](#)



## Resources

The Word is  
Resistance  
podcast.

UCC podcast coordinated by Rev. Anne Dunlap following the Lectionary. Each episode has activist tips at the end.

Movement for Black  
Lives, Week of  
Action. Click on the

links to find recommended actions to take.

HOLA Ohio. Go [here](#) to see how to get involved.

SURJ NEO (Showing Up for Racial Justice — Northeast Ohio)





## Celebrate MLK Day with Mt. Zion Congregational Church

### Topic: "Privilege"

Monday, January 18th,  
1:00-3:30 over Zoom -  
MLK Day with Mt. Zion  
Congregational  
Church

If interested, email Barry  
([steesbassoon@gmail.com](mailto:steesbassoon@gmail.com))

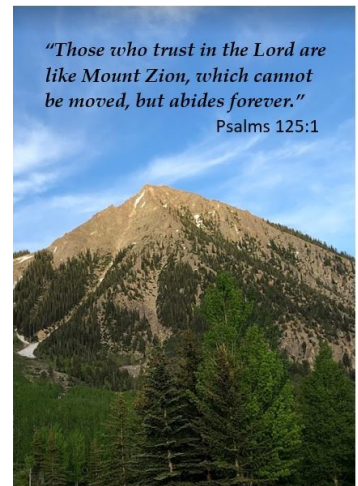
Zoom link available soon.

## Other Racial Justice Activities:

- We welcome your ideas for activism and ways to get involved. Send your ideas to Barry ([steesbassoon@gmail.com](mailto:steesbassoon@gmail.com))

## White Privilege Course — All are welcome.

- A 7-part course on understanding White Privilege and how to be an ally will be offered beginning in January. Contact Bill Shaul at [theshauls@msn.com](mailto:theshauls@msn.com) for information.



## Racial Equity Institute Resources

[www.racialequityinstitute.com/resources-links](http://www.racialequityinstitute.com/resources-links)

## Greater Cleveland YWCA 21-Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge

[www.ywcaofcleveland.org/2020-21-day-racial-equity-and-social-justice-challenge/](http://www.ywcaofcleveland.org/2020-21-day-racial-equity-and-social-justice-challenge/)

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**  
Greater Cleveland

# February Movie Night

## Movie: 13th

We invite you to join in!

**February 15, 2021**

**7:00 PM**

on Zoom for our movie discussion.

We will be joined by Karen Prasser, Executive Director of Chagrin Arts, a non-profit in Chagrin Falls that is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all forms of their organization.

They have partnered with The Ohio Innocence Project, Healing Justice, and Case Western Reserve University.

The movie we will discuss is titled 13<sup>th</sup>—watch it on YouTube and Netflix before you join the discussion. The movie discusses the origin of policing in the United States and many of the problems with the criminal justice system.

We look forward to seeing you!

**Join on Zoom at 7:00, Feb. 15:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83595558354?pwd=U1VxZU5SZ0NjcEVkbEcxeXpsbVIWdz09>



**February 2021**

## Focus on Criminal Justice

For February, we are delving into criminal justice and how it relates to our Black and Brown brothers and sisters. Since the early days of slavery, Black people were looked upon as less than human and not entitled to justice. Many of these early ideas carried over during the Jim Crow era after the Civil War, and laws and policies were enacted to keep the former enslaved people from integrating into society. To this day, many of our laws and policing methods in the criminal justice system still discriminate against them. Many are assumed guilty just because of the color of their skin. There are issues with bail, lack of good legal representation, and innocent people being convicted of crimes and serving time.

Our committee has reviewed many resources so that you, too, can begin to educate yourself on issues which are in the news today. This is only a fraction of the information out there. Learn more about the Black Lives Matter Movement and why so many in the Black community are frustrated and angry with our current system. Find out about different organizations focused on rehabilitation from fathering programs to healing pain through artwork. Listen to an inspiring podcast with inmates in San Quentin—it just may surprise you! There is so much for us to learn as we listen to the stories of our brothers and sisters, and as we try to imagine what our lives would be like if we had to walk in their shoes.

### Resources of Interest:

#### Movies:

13<sup>th</sup>

Just Mercy Death Row Inmates Prison Documentary [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uA0orwGk00Y&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uA0orwGk00Y&feature=emb_title)

The Central Park Five— [www.pbs.org-kenburns](http://www.pbs.org-kenburns)

#### Books:

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander

Picking Cotton, Our Memoir of Injustice and Redemption by Jennifer Thompson-Cannino and Ronald Cotton

The Nickel Boys by Colton Whitehead

Dharma in Hell, The Prison Writings of Fleet Maull by Fleet Maull

#### Podcasts:

Ear Hustle-Podcast PRX

# Get Involved!

## Organizations of Interest:

[themarshallproject.org](http://themarshallproject.org) — nonpartisan, nonprofit org that reports on the urgency of US criminal justice

[thebailproject.org](http://thebailproject.org) — nonprofit which pays bail for people in need and reunites families

[innocenceproject.org](http://innocenceproject.org) — nonprofit that exonerates the wrongly convicted and reforms the criminal justice system

[chagrinarts.org](http://chagrinarts.org) — nonprofit which strives to enrich life with inspiring arts and stimulating conversations

[thefatheringproject.org](http://thefatheringproject.org) — nonprofit to inspire and equip dads to be the best the parents they can be

[blacklivesmatter.com](http://blacklivesmatter.com) — a global organization whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy



**Do you want to get involved with SJAM?**

**Email:**

**Kathy Franz—  
[kfranz17114@gmail.com](mailto:kfranz17114@gmail.com)**

**For more information on this important church initiative, visit:**

<https://fedchurch.org/sjam/>

**Participate in the monthly meetings!**

**MARCH 2021**

## Focus on Women's and Children's Issues

Judy Majcen and Darlene Nichols are co-chairs for this committee.

They are looking for those interested in joining them as they plan for future events.

They are responsible for planning events for March—National Women's History Month, October—Domestic Violence Month and December when the focus will be on Children's issues including health, poverty and mortality.

Please let Judy ([jomajcen@gmail.com](mailto:jomajcen@gmail.com)) or Darlene ([darnichols10@gmail.com](mailto:darnichols10@gmail.com)) know if you would like to be a part of the planning or if you have suggestions.

We look forward to hearing from you.

[https://www.ucc.org/justice\\_womens-issues](https://www.ucc.org/justice_womens-issues)

## Justice for Women

The United Church of Christ has been a leader among churches on issues of justice related to women. It's in our DNA, you might say.

[Yes, we were the first Christian denomination](#) to ordain a woman when Antoinette Brown was ordained in 1853. But even before then, women who were members of our congregations lived their faith through advocacy to end the practice of slavery in the United States, to establish homes for poor women, and support educational opportunities for women. Later, they were active in securing women's right to vote and to work for fair wages.

From the mid-1900's to the present day, the UCC has continued this legacy through its advocacy for reproductive justice for all women, its call to end violence against women, its critical work on gender inclusive language as an issue of justice for all humankind, and its insistence on connecting the realities of sexism and racism. And more.

This work is local and global, personal and community-wide. It comes from a faith which affirms the full personhood of women as created in the image of God and included in the ministry of Jesus as partners, disciples and bearers of the Good News.