



July 2017

Upcoming Events

July 11

Last day to **register to vote** for Aug. 1 Primary

July 12

March Forward KC Potluck

SMUUCH – 6:00 – 7:30

Come meet primary candidates and join for fellowship and social justice conversations. All are welcome!

July 19

SURJ KC Book Study

Between the World and Me – Ta-Nehisi Coates

6:30-8:30 PM

Cherith Brook House
3308 E. 12th St KC MO

July 22

Family Hunger Experience

1 PM

Bishop Sullivan Center – 3936 Troost
www.Bishopsullivan.org/defend-against-hunger

White Fragility at UUA General Assembly

In June at the UUA General Assembly, Dr. Robin DiAngelo (<https://robindiangelo.com/>) spoke in several sessions about “White Fragility” and how white people avoid examining our own racism because that means risking giving up the privilege that we maintain by not examining it.

DiAngelo’s message is one that is sorely missing from today’s well-meaning and mostly ineffective cultural dialogue about race and racism. DiAngelo says that systemic racism persists because of the unwillingness of white people to recognize our own racism. Instead, we predicate racism on lies that distance racism from our own experience and obscure our complicity.

The main two beliefs that allow racism to persist are that:

1. Racists are bad people
2. Racism is a conscious dislike

Having stigmatized racism, we are less able to receive realistic feedback about our racist behaviors, beliefs, and systems. The inability for a black person to give real feedback to white people and have it received honestly and deferentially illuminates a tacit agreement among white people that we will protect our privilege instead of examine it and risk losing it.

Especially in a church like ours, white fragility plays an extraordinary role in keeping us barricaded behind socially liberal sentimentality and benevolent action. It helps us to stay in a safe, risk-free environment, to keep our property, our money, and our status. And, it keeps us from truly being welcoming or from allowing black people to cross the intersectional racial divide in this county, this metro, and this country.

Find out more at:

https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/diangelo-white_fragility_and_the_rules_of_engagement.pdf

Hogwarts Students Make Kits for Patients

During this year’s Hogwarts School of Magic and Fun summer camp, students participated in a service project to provide “Happy Kits” to patients and siblings of patients who are at Children’s Mercy Hospital.

Kits included coloring sheets, crayons, and a new book. Campers compiled nearly one-hundred kits which were picked up by a guest speaker from Children’s Mercy who spoke about how the kits helped kids who are in the hospital.

Shawnee Mission Unitarian Universalist Church

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2018 UUA General Assembly Planning Begins

The UUA is meeting in Kansas City in 2018, and our own Gaby Kusko is leading the effort to organize the conference for next summer.

Gaby attended the conference this summer and said that she had three big take-aways:

1. Racism and Social Justice are the leading themes going forward
2. SMUUCH can offer workshops at next year's conference to profile the things we want to show off. The application process for this happens this fall.
3. Our youth can participate in ways that they have not in the past. We have a real opportunity to engage our youth because the conference is here.

If you would like to help with next year's conference, please contact Gaby Kusko at gabkusko@gmail.com

SMUUCH Hosts Dialogue Institute for Ramadan Iftar

On June 21st, SMUUCH welcomed members of the Dialogue Institute to SMUUCH to celebrate their Ramadan fast-breaking Iftar. It was a time to share stories, food and hear more about the tradition of Ramadan. The Dialogue Institute's mission is to promote peace, dialogue and mutual understanding of people of all faiths, colors and ethnicities.

Ramadan typically falls between late May and late June and is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Ramadan culminates in the holiday Eid al-Fitr. During Ramadan, Muslims celebrate the date when the Quran was first revealed to the Prophet Mohammed.

Muslims are called to renew their spiritual commitment through daily fasting, prayer, and acts of charity during Ramadan. It is a time to purify the soul, refocus attention on God and practice self-discipline and self-sacrifice.

Fasting (sawm) during the month of Ramadan, is one of the five pillars of Islam. This fast is not only to refrain from food and water but also from evil actions, thoughts or words. The physical fast takes place daily from sunrise to sunset. Before dawn, those observing Ramadan gather for a pre-fast meal called the suhoor. At dusk, the fast is broken with a meal called the Iftar. Both meals may be communal, but the Iftar is an especially social affair when extended families gather to eat and mosques welcome the needy with food.

SMUUCH Environmental Watch

Each month Connections: the Social Justice newsletter will try to keep our congregation aware of environmental issues at SMUUCH and in the community.

Need a new website to keep abreast of environmental issues? I have found this free, informative, and interesting web page:

<https://yaleclimateconnections.com>

SMUUCH to Begin Environmental Awareness Group:

At SMUUCH we will be starting a group to meet quarterly to discuss environmental issues that affect us locally – at church and in our communities. This is just an effort to keep our members and friends in touch and aware of what is happening locally. What are we doing individually? Are there efforts we want to make as a group?

Look for an announcement about a get-together in the fall!

Cup Washers Needed!

Recently, we started using ceramic cups on Sundays! To continue that effort, we need a few more once-a-month volunteers to help. This involves staying after coffee hour for about 20 minutes to run the cups through our dishwasher. Contact Joan Langmack if you would like to help.

Social Justice Council members

Adam Wathen · Nancy Mays
Yvonne Gibbons · Joan Langmack
Marcia Rinehart