



March 2017

Upcoming Events

March 4

March for a Free Press 1:00-3:30 p.m.
4720 Oak - KCMO

March 15

Potluck and Justice
6:00 p.m. @ SMUUCH

March 26

KC for Refugees panel conversation
12:00 p.m. @ SMUUCH

March 26

Meet a Muslim 5-7 p.m.
Congregation Beth Torah
Crescent Peace Society

Accidental activist: SMUUCH member organizes group on heels of KC Women's March

When SMUUCH member Angela Schweller left the Kansas City Women's March in January, she knew she wanted to keep the momentum going. Her solution: Bring together a group of like-minded people to support progressive action and resist current political policies. What started as a "huddle" has expanded



to an organized group called March Forward KC. Now the group is building sub-committees dedicated to specific causes, including immigration, LGBTQ rights, women's issues, the environment and more. Those groups will organize action, conduct research on bills and policies and share the facts so people can make informed decisions about their stances. Ultimately, she would like to help build a stronger bridge between party lines.

This is Angela's first foray into activism. In fact, she's always been a political moderate but felt compelled to not just hope for change – but act on it. Members of the group don't agree on every agenda item, but they all feel committed to working toward an agenda that accepts and protects everyone's individual humanity.

If you are interested in joining March Forward KC, reach out to Angela at: angela@angelaschweller.com. To connect to them on Facebook, first friend Angela and she'll admit you.

Contact Your Legislator!!!

Find your Kansas reps:

<http://www.ksleglookup.org>

Find your Missouri Senator:

<http://www.senate.mo.gov>

Find your Missouri Representative:

<http://www.house.mo.gov>

(click legislator lookup)

Social Justice Council members

Adam Wathen – Chair
Darnell Hunt – Member At Large
Nancy Mays – Anti-Oppression
Marcia Rinehart – Advocacy and Witness
Yvonne Gibbons – Caring for Our Neighbors
Joan Langmack – Caring for Our Planet

SMUUCH Members Attend Kansas People's Agenda

On January 11, more than 30 people from SMUUCH traveled to Topeka to join hundreds of people from across Kansas for the Kansas People's Agenda legislative day rally. The rally, organized by Rev. Sarah Oglesby-Dunegan from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Topeka, included 46 grassroots organizations focusing on 15 issues. The issues include economic justice, gender equity, racial justice, immigrant rights, and more. More information can be found here: <http://www.kansaspeoplesagenda.org/our-issues>

The day's speakers included Rev. Tobias Schlingensiepen of First Congregational Church in Topeka, Rabbi Moti Rieber, Overland Park, Director of Kansas Interfaith Action, and Darnell Hunt (SMUUCH member) of the Johnson County NAACP.

SMUUCH members took advantage of opportunities to talk with Kansas legislators and attend committee meetings. Members had a specific meeting with Senator Dinah Sykes who represents SMUUCH's district.

The Kansas People's Agenda plans to continue to lobby the Kansas legislature and continue to press for fair and equitable treatment of people in Kansas.

Gun Sense and community safety are SMUUCH member's burning passion

If you've listened to news coverage of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, odds are you've heard SMUUCH member JoElla Hoye's voice. Hoye, who is currently a SMUUCH board member, had followed the group for a few years but felt compelled to get involved after a 2015 shooting of three people in Colorado. A bystander called 911 to report a man with a gun, but because of open carry laws, law enforcement could not respond. Minutes later, the same person called to report the shooting. "I joined after hearing those 911 calls," JoElla said.

Now JoElla is the Legislative Team Lead for the group's Kansas Chapter. JoElla makes a compelling spokesperson for the push toward common sense gun laws. She supports the second amendment and has a gun in her home. But, the Moms Demand Action group pushes for limits on where people can carry guns in public. The group hopes to curb the country's acceptance of "gun culture."

For JoElla, success would mean no guns in schools, hospitals, or mental health facilities. And background checks on all gun sales with domestic abusers losing access to firearms. "It's unbearable to read stories about tragedies that could have been prevented by storing guns locked, unloaded, and separately from ammunition. It's hard to face the violence in our country and see the disproportionate impact that gun violence has on communities of color," she says.

Interested in joining the cause? Go to www.momsdemandaction.org or text JOIN to 64433. There are KCMO and JOCO groups. Also, follow Moms for Gun Safety on both Facebook and Everytown.



Kansans attend a rally at the state capitol

Activities Fair Profiles Social Justice Teams

SMUUCH held its first Activities Fair in February. Dozens of groups and teams hung out their shingles and made connections with church members.

If you would like to connect with a team or would like to begin one, contact the social justice council at SMUUCHSJC@GMAIL.COM or log in to Realm <http://onrealm.org/smuuchurch> to connect to groups!

Avoid Activist Burnout!

Outrage is draining. And a weary activist is not always the most effective activist. With that in mind, follow these tips to avoid activist burnout:

- Recognize what burnout feels like for you, then take a break
- Take care of yourself. Give your mind, heart and body time to rest,
- It's a marathon, not a sprint. Cliché, but true. Pacing yourself is key to sustaining action.
- If you just can't, just don't. It's OK to say no or turn off social media. It's OK to take a break.

Remember, changing the world is hard work!