

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

Matthew 25 Ministry for Social Justice Charter May 26, 2022

Purpose

Matthew 25:31–46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. Energized by this passage, we seek to act boldly and compassionately to fulfill God's will for justice for all God's children but especially justice for the needy and marginalized.

We claim the power of God's Word as found in the Bible to go beyond intellectualizing and discussing problems to taking action in order to make a difference. While celebrating the Matthew 25-based emergency assistance provided by other ministries of Trinity, we work to bring to life the full potential of all human beings.

We commit to the Matthew 25 initiatives to build congregational vitality, dismantle structural racism, and eradicate systemic poverty, and pursue social justice. We seek to fulfill Jesus's call to serve the least of His brothers and sisters as we would serve Him by pursuing and advocating for social justice. We recognize Jesus's calling to His followers, then and now include action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious. And we rejoice how our re-energized faith can unite our congregation for a common and holy purpose: our common identity to pursue and advocate for social justice.

We will help the congregation and others to become more aware of and better understand the social justice problems of our world. We will provide leadership to encourage and enable Trinity's members and friends to act individually and collectively based on God's word and prayer. We will foster a community that can openly and respectfully share the variety of perspectives; embracing discomfort and controversy as part of this work while encouraging the love of our neighbors that is so needed in this divided world.

Membership

Membership is open to any member or friend of the congregation. The other Ministries are encouraged to provide a representative. The Ministry Chair shall be appointed by the Session Moderator. The Ministry may be co-chaired; at least one of the co-chairs shall be a serving member of the Session. Should the chair not be a serving member of Session, Session will appoint a member of the Session who will serve as a liaison.

Ministry Tasks

The Ministry will focus its actions and activities on the following areas

- Building Congregational Vitality
- Dismantling Structural Racism
- Eradicating Systemic Poverty

with additional focuses on social justice concerns including but not limited to:

- Homelessness and Affordable Housing
- Welcoming Immigrants
- LGBTQIA+ Equality
- Voting Rights
- Gun Violence
- Womens' Rights

The Ministry will work toward those goals by doing the following:

1. Educating and Communicating about Matthew 25 Topics/Social Justice Issues
2. Advocating for and Reacting to Social Justice Issues in our community and our world, and encouraging our members to become active and engaged in social justice in advocating for "the least of these."
3. Developing, Coordinating, and Fostering Community Partnerships
4. Initiating and Administering Projects in one or More Focus Areas
5. Facilitating communication and actions with other Christian organizations.
6. Providing Resources, Coordination, and Support for Members and Groups within the Congregation, including other Ministries.

The Ministry shall look to the resources and guidance of the PC(USA)'s Presbyterian Mission Agency and its Office of Public Witness and other statements by the PC(USA), its organizations or its officials. The Ministry will fulfill our members commitments:

1. G-3.0300 Christ's Faithful Evangelist C.(3) of the PC(USA) Book of Order requires:
"participating in God's activity in the world through its life for others by: a.) healing and reconciling and binding up wounds; b.) ministering to the needs of the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the powerless; c.) engaging in the struggle of free people from sin, fear, oppression, hunger and injustice; and d.) giving itself and its substance to the service of those who suffer.
2. G-1.0200 2. The Great Ends of the Church of the PC(USA) Book of Order: "The great ends of the church are the ... preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven in the world."

Session Approval

1. Approval by Session should be sought for public statements of advocacy and these statements must be carefully worded:
 - a. To assure compliance with U.S. Internal Revenue requirements for nonprofits, no direct or indirect participation in, or intervening with, contribution to, public statements about any particular political campaign or candidate. However, voter education is allowed.
 - b. To make representation that a position is supported by “Trinity Presbyterian Church of Hendersonville, North Carolina” in any public declaration, session approval is required.
 - c. Public policy advocacy statements published by the PC(USA)’s Presbyterian Mission Agency and Office of Public Witness can be cited, without Session approval.
 - d. Individuals can and should cite their “personal Christian beliefs as a member of Trinity Presbyterian Church” as the reason for a public statement.
 - e. These restricted public “statements” include letters, news editorials, speeches, signs, and interviews.
 - f. In cases where timely approval is needed, email vote by Session will be binding.
2. Ministry Charter, with any updates, presented for approval annually
3. Annual Ministry budget
4. Annual Report

Approved by Session 6/13/2022