



Giving Live the Shape of Justice

**Annual Report
2022-2023**

Dear Friends;

Oh my goodness; What a year we've had!! As I reflect on this past year and the Justice Center's efforts and growth, I can only sit here with my mouth open – partly aghast and what we've all been subject to, and mostly in awe at the ways we have responded to the calls to justice! I sit here in deep gratitude and appreciation to be able to serve you all in this capacity! Thank you for trusting and supporting me to be in this role.

In this annual report, I will dive into some detail to our growth and impact. We continue to do the work we're called to do in the context of building, developing and refining the infrastructure that will allow us to do this work. I have learned that there is very little precedent within our denomination for doing what we're doing. Creating and sustaining an initiative that *both* supports and coordinates the justice foci and efforts of our congregation, in ways that develop the confidence, skills and impact of these congregational efforts; *and* working to coordinate our efforts with other partner congregations and community based organizations. The organizational infrastructure to support this hybrid kind of initiative is complex (funding, governance, accountability, who are our constituents and what is our responsibilities to them...).

In addition, we've been challenging ourselves and our partners to move from "programs" and events to an impact model. Rather than focusing on what we do, focusing on the questions of what is the impact we seek to have and how do we do what we do in order to maximize our impact. This is a paradigm shift.

As you'll see from the following report, we've made significant progress in all areas this past year. In the context of one staff person who is working less than ½ time.

All that to say that the Justice Center is much bigger than this part time staffer. Many of you are a part of the Justice Center as you'll see below. **You** are who make us able to make the progress and have the impact we're having. I look forward to more years of building, growth and progress, and again, thank you for this opportunity to serve!

Rus Ervin Funk,
Director

The mission of the Justice Center at All Peoples is to work to develop the capacity of our congregation and the surrounding community to engage in meaningful justice activism and advocacy.

Table of Contents

The year in review
Financial Overview
Looking Forward (2022 and beyond)

The Year in Review – focusing on Impact!

2022-2023 proved to be a powerful year for the Justice Center. We continued to work internally and with All Peoples to develop the infrastructure that will ensure the viability of our initiative, while also engaging in efforts to build relationships with other congregations and organizations, and engage in strategies to maximize our collective impact.

The summer and fall of 2022 the Justice Center focused on three main efforts: continuing to develop relationships with congregational and organizational partners, supporting efforts to Get out the vote, and working to defeat Amendment 2.

Defeat Amendment 2

The efforts to defeat amendment 2 were led by a tremendously effective coalition of community-based and statewide organizations. The Justice Center played a central role in organizing and mobilizing congregational partners. The Justice Center provided resources, support, information and tools to 15 area congregations, and presented at 10 of these. According to the key organizing partners of this effort, the impact of the Justice Center's efforts were "significant" in mobilizing the community to help defeat Amendment 2.

GOTV

All Peoples congregation was very active in efforts to register voters. The Justice Center provided administrative and organizational support to the All Peoples volunteers who led this effort and sharing resources and coordination with our congregational partners to support them to also GOTV. All Peoples members registered nearly 250 new voters.

Offering Services

The Justice Center is a faith-based initiative. As such, the work of justice, for us, is a call from our faith. A part of our efforts includes speaking at All Peoples from the

pulpit, as well as other congregations. Over the past year, Justice Center has spoken twice at All Peoples, three times at First Unitarian Church, and at a couple of other churches and synagogues in metro Louisville.

Human Rights Day, 2022



On Dec 10, we held the 2nd annual Human Rights Day Celebration, featuring Kentucky Poet Laureate Crystal Wilkinson and Singer/songwriter Shadwick Wilde. We also had a fabulous panel including activist Carla Wallace, Former State Rep and activist Attica Scott, Council Member Paula McCraney, and Trent Findley from Metro United Way. This powerful program was *the* local celebration honoring the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We had a rigorous and engaged audience both on-line and in person.

(Pictured are Carla Wallace, Paula McCraney, Trent Findley, Crystal Wilkinson, and Rus Funk)

Advocating for Voting Rights

The Justice Center launched the Kentucky Unitarian Universalist Justice Action Network (KUUJAN), and continues to be a significant local partner to this network. In the spring of 2023, KUUJAN engaged in their first year of legislative advocacy – primarily focusing on securing voting rights for people with felonies in their past. As a result of the Justice Center’s efforts with this state-wide effort, the Justice Center launched the Metro Louisville Voting Rights Coalition with a focus on securing the support of the Jefferson County legislative delegation, and mobilizing the Jefferson County community more broadly to support the rights of people with felonies in their past to regain the right to vote.

Addressing Emerging Calls:

Supporting Bernheim

In Dec of 2022, a Coalition of organizations formed to support Bernheim Forest in their efforts to Stop LG&E from forcing in a large (and unneeded) gas pipeline through a particularly sensitive area of the forest. The Justice Center stepped up to provide the staff support for this coalition. With



the Justice Center's support, this coalition has gathered more than 80,000 signatures, helped to engage Metro Council to pass a resolution calling on LG&E to stop the pipeline, mobilized people to attend and testify at a hearing with the Public Service Commission, distributed more than 500 yard signs, and more.

Standing up for Trans Kids

After the State Legislature passed SB 150, widely considered the most draconian anti trans/GLTBQI bill in the country, attention shifted to the county school boards as they crated their own policies in response to this new state law. The Justice Center joined a large coalition that worked with the JCPS Board. The Justice Center organized an interfaith vigil to which more than 100 people attended on the day of the public hearing; and facilitated 20 clergy to contact the JCPS board calling on them to ensure that Trans kids and their families are *and feel* supported in Jefferson County schools.



(Rus Funk, Director of the Justice Center, and Rev Bruce Beisner, Minister at All Peoples)

Financial Overview

The Justice Center started as a result of the tremendous generosity of All Peoples who provided the seed funding to launch it. All Peoples continues to support the Center financially and in kind. The Justice Center has been working hard this year to develop its funding base to secure its sustainability and viability. A main focus is on donor development which will us with the most sustainable source of funding which *a/so* allows us the opportunities to pivot to address emergent calls to action. Below is a list of the donors who have helped to ensure the Justice Centers sustainability – and our growth.

Thank- you to our donors:

- James Aalon
- Tracy Adams

- Phil Adkins & Sheila Ward*
- Stephanie Barnett
- Rhonda Barnett & Hope Hopwell*
- Kyle Barnett
- Ellen Bishop*
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- Mark Steiner
- Daniel Sturtevant*
- Elwood & Roxanne Sturtevant*
- Malinda Schulen
- Tonya Tate
- Katherine and Frank Thackery
- Jennifer Turner
- Arlene Tuttle*
- Carla Wallace & Jane Osanka
- Rita Ward
- Ernes Weill*
- Mark Wourms
- Mary Yandell

(* donates All Peoples members)

Who gave a total of \$10,715.

The Justice Center also received support from the following organizations:

- All Peoples Endowment Fund
- Highland Baptist Church
- Grace and Glory Lutheran Church
- Kentucky Student Environmental Coalition
- Metro United Way
- Louisville Metro Government

The funds received from these sources totaled \$7500

In terms of expenses, the majority of our costs cover staff time. The 2023-2024 budget will increase to just over \$60,000. Due to the generosity of our donors so far, we have been able to increase Staff time to 20 hours per week as of September 1.

Looking Forward

2023-2024 will be a critical year for the Justice Center. We are working an ambitious growth plan , which includes an intention of moving our Director towards a full time position. While also, continuing to focus on organizing for impact! We're continue to look to make sure that we

Some of the specific effort we look to be a part of in the coming year include:

- **Voting Rights**

The Justice Center will continue to facilitate the Voting Rights Coalition to advocate with the Metro Louisville delegation to our state government to secure their support for a constitutional amendment to allow people with felonies in their past to automatically regain the right to vote. We will be working to engage the faith community more actively in these efforts!

- **Voter Registration & Mobilization Efforts**

The Justice Center will facilitate local Get out the Vote Efforts for the 2023 election in Kentucky. This will include supporting voter registration opportunities as well as sharing resources and facilitating efforts to support registered voters to actually vote in November.

- **Support the Save Bernheim Coalition**

The Justice Center will continue to provide administrative support for the Coalition, as well as lead efforts to reach out to, organize and mobilize area congregations to be a part of this coalition.

- **Congregational Organizing**

As the Justice Center has been developing relationships with area congregations, we have noted some capacity issues with these congregations in terms of their justice efforts. In the coming year, the Justice Center intends to start working with these congregations to help them develop these capacities, as well as will increase our efforts to create collective justice efforts in order to maximize our collective impact.

- **Classes and other supports to develop capacity**

The Justice Center intends to increase the offering of classes and workshops to help support the development of concrete skills, and develop confidence amongst people of faith to engage in meaningful justice advocacy and activism. The plan involves the Justice Center offering one such class or workshop per quarter.

- **Kentucky Interfaith Network**

Interfaith Paths to Peace and the Center for Interfaith Relations are launching

the “Kentucky Interfaith Network” to facilitate and strengthen collaboration between and amongst congregations in Louisville to work for social change. The Justice Center was invited to serve on the Steering Committee of this effort and will provide our energy and effort to help develop and grow this initiative.

Closing Words

“Step Up, Speak out, Show up, Be Loud” (Rising Appalachia)

The quote above from the band Rising Appalachia epitomizes our understanding of what it means to engaging in meaningful justice advocacy and activism. Our work continues to be to develop more opportunities, and more confidence and comfort, for people and groups, organizations and congregations to “step up, speak out, show up and be loud!” We look forward to continuing opportunities to engage in these efforts, to join with you, and to increase our impact.