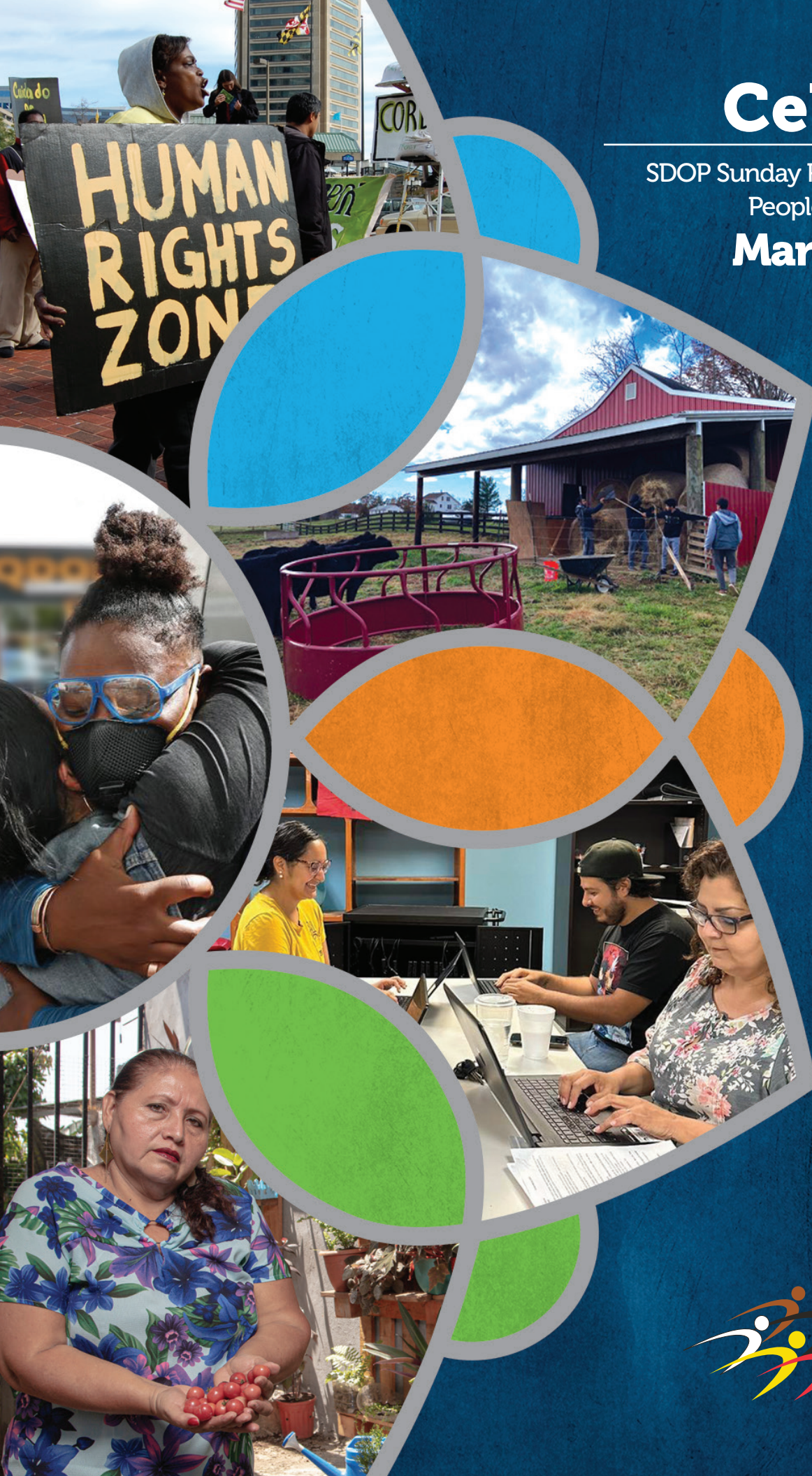


Celebrate

SDOP Sunday Resource & Yearbook
People Investing in People

March 12, 2023

and beyond!



Presbyterian Committee on the
**Self-Development
of People**

WELCOME

By Rev. Dr. Alonzo Johnson | SDOP Coordinator



In reflecting on the work of the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP), I think about the power communities hold. I also think about the way communities, both churches and our funded projects, are centers of invitation into the life and work of anti-poverty.

Here, the words of author Peter Block, in his book titled *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, are relevant: “Invitation is not only a step in bringing people together, it is also a fundamental way of being community. It manifests the willingness to live in a collaborative way.” SDOP’s engagement in being in relationship with communities illustrates the power of what it means to be invited into this great work of poverty eradication in holistic and collaborative ways. This work is also about relationship building, which invites all of us into learning more about the incredible work of our funded communities.

In the 25th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus invites us to recognize his face in those who are greatly impacted by poverty and social vulnerability. While we — as a church — lift up the message of Matthew 25 in our ministries, we also urge you to recognize the work of SDOP as a valuable resource to help you and your ministries to engage the work of poverty eradication and the ways it intersects with the other areas of focus in the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s Matthew 25 initiative: dismantling racism and building congregational vitality. We invite you into this work so that you may also

become students of hope as you learn more about the profound and sustained work our funded projects bring to their communities and to the church.

Through this resource, we invite you to recognize the ways that the Lord is inviting us to be proactive against all forms of poverty in living out the witness of Jesus Christ by continuing to support the communities who directly benefit because of your witness and from the work of SDOP.

Whether your worship experience is physical, virtual or both, this resource is designed for you to share in worship the news of SDOP’s dynamic work, witness and stories. Mid council SDOP leaders, we encourage you to use this resource to continue to interpret the way that SDOP has been powerful in the church and communities. Share this with your presbyteries and speak this from “the mountaintop.” Be intentional in inviting others into the powerful, dynamic and healing work of anti-poverty through SDOP.

We encourage you to use this resource in your worship services, Bible studies, Sunday school classes, youth group lessons and any other opportunity where you learn and grow together. We pray that this resource will inspire you and serve as a guide for you and your ministry to become more familiar with the ways that SDOP engages in its work through the church and in communities. We pray that this resource also inspires you to support this redemptive work through the One Great Hour of Sharing collected on Easter Sunday.

Please visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/poverty/ for more information.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

We want to hear what you think of this resource. Please take a moment to complete our survey.

<https://surveys.pcusa.org/s3/SDOP-Resource-Survey>

By Rev. Francis Miller | Chair, Western Reserve Presbytery SDOP Committee



Recently our presbytery invited leaders to engage in seminars that considered our own intercultural competency. We took an inventory to gauge our ability to function effectively across cultures, to think and act appropriately, and to communicate and work with people from different cultural backgrounds. The

results came back showing that my self-perception was higher than what the inventory revealed. Having believed that I had done sufficient work on this subject and with myself, it was a bit of a blow to my self-esteem. While trying to reconcile this, as will happen, a real-life example presented itself.

I was invited to participate with clergy from a variety of denominations in a week-long, training-retreat. Due to the pandemic, the event was moved from a retreat center to Zoom. Like most things over the past year plus, it wasn't quite the same as being able to meet in person. One of the most striking differences was the inability to get to know people in the "down times" between scheduled workshops; the deeper trust-building moments were lacking.

All of these factors contributed to an incident that happened around the closing celebration. The suggestion was for the participants to suggest a favorite song that others would enjoy hearing, and perhaps dancing to. One of our leaders chose a song that had a fun groove to it, but came with the disturbing allusion of being "tied to the whipping post." The next day, several folks in the group shared their discomfort with the song because of the haunting memory of the way whipping posts were used on African-Americans during and post-slavery.

With trust still tentative within this group, we had to work through the complexity of the situation. The one who moderated the conversation invited us to consider the concept of "Discovering a shared story." So much remains hidden about our collective understanding of how America is forming. We see products of overt racism around us, but many White folks are now being shown how much of white supremacy has been covered over by other things, and allowed to fester. So, a White man can love a song that speaks of "a whipping post" without thinking of the historical trauma it causes for African-Americans — that history was covered in his consciousness until it was dis-covered for him by others.

Those were true moments of the Church doing its necessary work. We were invited to discover just how insidiously race has been woven into the fabric of our national and personal identities. It shed light on the call to repentance required of white folks for us to embrace the Beloved Community into which Jesus calls us.

Rev. Francis Miller

Pastor, Lyndhurst Community Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Ohio

Chair, Committee on the Self Development of People (Presbytery of the Western Reserve)

Co-Founder, Dougbe River Presbyterian School of Liberia
The mission of Dougbe River School (DRS) is to provide an education to students in the Grand Gedeh County, Liberia, Africa. Our vision is to empower the school's students through educational and related activities, with the goal of reducing poverty, providing opportunities, promoting wellness, and improving the quality of life.

WHAT DOES SDOP DO?

SDOP is a ministry that affirms God's concern for humankind. We are Presbyterians and ecumenical partners, dissatisfied with poverty and oppression, united in faith and action through sharing, confronting and enabling. We participate in the empowerment of economically poor, oppressed and disadvantaged people by seeking to change the structures that perpetuate poverty, oppression and injustice.

SUGGESTED USES FOR THIS RESOURCE

- If your presbytery/synod has an SDOP Committee (call the national office to find out if a committee exists in your mid council), invite one of its members to speak during your worship service. Call the national office to learn if there are national committee members in your area who could be invited to speak to your congregation.
- SDOP committee members or others can promote the resource (i.e., Social Justice Committee, Mission Committee, etc.); you do not have to be a pastor to do so. We, however, always encourage you to bring the resource to your pastor's attention.
- SDOP committee members can share their own experiences as they promote the resource.

If you are a national or mid council SDOP committee member:

- Take pictures if you are meeting with local groups or if you are present at SDOP events. We encourage you to also take pictures, if possible, when a local group or a representative of SDOP speaks in a congregation, presbytery or other venue. Send us copies of pictures so that we, too, can lift up what you are doing for SDOP Sunday.

HOW YOUR CONGREGATION CAN HELP

- Invite participants of a nearby SDOP project to offer a "Minute for Mission" during your Sunday worship service. Contact the national SDOP office to learn of community partners in your area.
- We encourage you to include this resource in newsletters, articles, etc.
- You can call pastors and other church leaders to remind them of SDOP Sunday and the materials available.





Lack of Affordable Housing/Homelessness

Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee | Sacramento, California
www.sacshoc.org

The Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee's official mission is to amplify the voice of the homeless and low-income community to accomplish economic and social justice. It advocates for housing, shelter, food access and other survival services as a human right and promotes leadership development, believing that homeless people should have a prevailing role in shaping their future.

From opposing potentially harmful ordinances to distributing a street newspaper, the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC) keeps issues that affect its constituents in the forefront so that living conditions can be improved.

"A lot of our work focuses on those living outdoors in encampments and along the river parkway, but we also advocate for tenants' rights, housing, those being released from incarceration, those experiencing hunger, voters' rights and various other social justice issues our constituency and/or coalition partners experience," said Paula Lomazzi, SHOC executive director.

The organization formally incorporated in 2016 after merging with the Sacramento Housing Alliance, but it has been active in the community since the 1980s.

"We formed originally to address a new city camping ordinance, which we were successful in overturning," Lomazzi said. "The city created another anti-camping ordinance later, which we continued to work against. In 1997, we founded our street newspaper, 'Homeward Street Journal,' which has a vendor program where homeless and nearly homeless distributors can sell the paper in public places."

Today, SHOC's work includes challenging efforts to criminalize homelessness and maintaining relationships with supportive organizations, such as Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Over the years, the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People has been instrumental in strengthening SHOC by providing funding and helping it to establish a good fiscal control policy.

"SDOP has been so helpful in connecting us to local Presbyterian groups and leaders," Lomazzi said. "We have become more collaborative."

During the pandemic, SHOC played a key role in helping the unhoused to survive while many were relegated to living outdoors.

"We performed outreach to encampments, providing survival supplies and equipment, such as sleeping bags, tents, hygiene and PPE (personal protective equipment) supplies, emergency motel stays and food," Lomazzi said. "We also distributed water provided to us by the county. Outreach often included accompanying medical professionals giving vaccinations, performing other medical assessments and distributing information about Covid-19."

While providing outreach assistance, SHOC was able to educate people about its work and identify issues that needed to be addressed during a time when the organization's weekly in-person meetings were suspended and Zoom meetings were tough for unhoused people to attend.

"We formed the Sacramento Services Not Sweeps Coalition in response to the exclusion and neglect of those that remained living outdoors," Lomazzi said. "Through our work and advocacy, the city and county have stepped up their services and adopted new policies that recognize the needs of those living outdoors."

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP).



Women's Empowerment

Why Not Prosper Inc. | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
www.why-not-prosper.org

Why Not Prosper provides a wide spectrum of programming and support for currently and formerly incarcerated women, including pre-release mentoring, residential services, substance abuse counseling and family reunification. Funding supports initiatives that promote anti-violence, racial equity and vaccine equity in and around Philadelphia.

For over two decades, Why Not Prosper has been showing up in support of formerly incarcerated women in Philadelphia. Why Not Prosper is uniquely and intimately aware of the challenges facing these women. How? Because Why Not Prosper was founded and continues to be run by women who have, themselves, been incarcerated.

After being released from prison, the Rev. Dr. Michelle Simmons found that she was far from the only woman struggling to reenter society. She started Why Not Prosper in 2001 to support and empower other women like her. Today, the organization offers a variety of programming, such as pre-release mentoring at two prisons, residential services at three community houses, family reunification, substance abuse counseling and medication-assisted treatment.

Why Not Prosper, a partner of the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP), is seeing particular impact with three different initiatives. The first is the Anti-Violence Campaign, which addresses violence in the Germantown community in Philadelphia. The program consists of female-led peace patrollers who walk the community every second Monday to hand out “love bags” and listen to the concerns of neighbors. The second initiative addresses issues of racial equity through

a program called Breaking All Racial Barriers. This program examines and addresses the disproportionate numbers of Black and Brown people in prisons through research and action. Finally, a third initiative seeks to address vaccine equity through educational workshops.

While Why Not Prosper offers an extensive array of programming, they face ongoing challenges with digital capacity and limited funding. Also, Covid made it difficult for them to stay up and running while keeping everyone safe, but they were successful at doing so.

Simmons, the organization’s chief executive officer, is a former recipient of an SDOP grant and knew that a grant from the ministry could offer crucial support to Why Not Prosper. “The assistance has been invaluable, as it has helped us to hire a coordinator, which facilitates the carrying out of our day-to-day activities,” she said. “Since SDOP is a national organization, it has also helped us to gain credibility through national recognition.”

Because it is made up of formerly incarcerated women building up other formerly incarcerated women, Why Not Prosper perfectly aligns with SDOP’s mission to address injustice and bring about systemic change, Simmons said.

She also explained why she appreciates SDOP’s unique support: “It funds projects where the person who has suffered from the problem at hand is the same one leading the charge to correct the problem.”

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People.



Cattle Farming/Cooperative/Income Generating

Afghan Cattle Cooperative (ACC) | Bristow, Virginia

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTHJTxEKmMCh53gPwoh7sruQ>

The Afghan Cattle Cooperative will raise and sell cattle to improve the lives of families in the cooperative who live below the poverty level. Funding will be used to purchase and sell herds of cattle for breeding and to supplement income because women cannot work outside of the farm due to language barriers. Members of the cooperative will contribute their time and skills to the endeavor and teach their children animal husbandry and related life skills..

Afghan refugees in Prince William County, Virginia, had two major needs: job opportunities and Halal food. There was experience in farming and cattle raising among the Northern Virginia county's Afghan community. Some people pooled their resources to purchase cattle and secure some land.

In March 2021, the Afghan Cattle Cooperative (ACC) was formed, and in October the farm management group formed and registered as the Afghan Farm Associates LLC.

The goal is to help meet the growing demand for Halal food — meaning food that's permissible under, cultivated and prepared according to Islamic law — in the local Afghan Muslim community. But, while the group has been able to start, it needed funding to run the farm the way it wanted.

A member of the Refugee Resettlement Ministry at Greenwich Presbyterian Church in Nokesville, Virginia, recommended the group apply for funding from the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of

People (SDOP).

"Since we didn't have enough budget to run our farm the way we wanted on our own, we needed external support to boost our efforts toward achieving our goals," says Mohammad Shafiq Faqeerzai, general manager of the ACC. "Consequently, we submitted a grant application to SDOP, and luckily, it got approved."

"We have planned to expand our farm by purchasing up to 12 more calves and/or young cows and one bull, the required amount of hay for the winter and other necessities for the farm," he said. "We have a strong source of manpower; thus, we are working toward food production to supply to local Afghan markets."

The demand for food and jobs continues to grow as more Afghan families are coming to Virginia, as well as other communities across the United States, following the end of the U.S. war in Afghanistan.

Faqeerzai says the farm is more than just a business. It is a place where Afghan refugee families spend their spare time working on the farm and enjoying being close to the cattle while learning the modern U.S. farming system from fellow farmers in the community and Greenwich Presbyterian Church.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP).



Poverty

The Panamanian Women's Center / the Network of Afro-descendant Women of Panama |

Panama City, District of San Miguelito

<https://www.ponteenalga.com/ong/centro-de-la-mujer-panamena-cemp-34>

The Panamanian Women's Center and the Network of Afro-descendant Women of Panama have been working together to provide hope to women facing racism and other obstacles in the District of San Miguelito in Panama. As a result of an entrepreneurial project that is supported by the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, a dozen women entrepreneurs have started small businesses to provide for themselves and their families. .

A project funded by the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) has been helping Panamanian women of Afro descent to overcome obstacles that often keep women trapped in a cycle of poverty in the tropical nation.

Twelve women received funding to start small businesses as part of the 2019–2021 project, which was led by the Panamanian Women's Center (CEMP) in collaboration with the Network of Afro-descendant Women of Panama (REMAP).

"The main objective of microenterprises is to obtain economic benefits," project coordinators Cecilia Moreno of CEMP and Alicia Padmore of REMAP said in a written statement. "However, the project also strengthened their self-esteem and was an opportunity for their empowerment and personal growth."

Each entrepreneur was given \$500 in seed capital to launch a microbusiness. Their endeavors ranged from selling clothing, crafts and jewelry to offering beauty services at home or providing computer and internet services.

The project focused on women living in the impoverished areas of San Miguelito, a district of Panama

Province. In the region, educational attainment is low, unemployment is high and multiple families may live in a single residence. Women often are the head of their household, striving to earn money through informal channels.

"In Panama, it is very common for low-income women to carry out economic endeavors to solve their basic food needs," the coordinators said. "However, they are very temporary activities, with little remuneration and of short duration."

Women sometimes are abused and taken advantage of. Other obstacles include racism and racial discrimination against Afro descendants, who historically have been excluded from governmental policies and social programs.

The project with SDOP "has been very successful because we have all learned enormously from the experience," Moreno and Padmore said. "Women who had never managed capital now feel safer, and it has allowed us as an organization to learn from the good and difficult situations that we had to face during the project."

The coordinators are grateful for visits by the SDOP team and for their ongoing support and encouragement.

"With the team that visited us at the beginning, we felt very motivated, and we saw the opportunity to help low-income Panamanian women," the coordinators said. "We believe that the project carried out would not have been possible without SDOP's valuable help."

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP).



Women's Empowerment /Gender Justice

Black Women's Blueprint | Brooklyn, New York
www.blackwomensblueprint.org

Black Women's Blueprint was founded by survivors for survivors committed to healing and transformation. It classifies itself as a civil and human rights organization and is based in Brooklyn, New York. Since 2008, Black Women's Blueprint is specifically focused on the needs of Black women and girls.

"Mama O" is a survivor, a healer. Her moment of greatest need led her to Black Women's Blueprint (BWB), a civil and human rights organization. At 65 years of age, Mama O is among the eldest survivors of sexual violence in BWB. The nonprofit's stated mission is "to provide services and spaces for healing, reconciliation, and human connection with the natural world. Working with land, we bring people together to design and practice strategies for healing, health and reparative economics."

Despite living with the lifelong trauma that results from sexual violence, Mama O is a pillar of strength for other survivors, both young and old. One Great Hour of Sharing gifts and the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) are helping Black Women's Blueprint in its vital mission to take action on social justice issues and to deliver educational resources and support services to women like Mama O. Through their work, they seek to address the unique struggles of Black women and girls within the context of the larger racial justice concerns of Black communities.

"Through all of Mama O's ups and downs, she returns to community, holistically and ever-present," said Sevonna M. Brown, the organization's associate executive

director. "She has continued to contribute creative healing arts and spiritual intercessory prayer on behalf of our survivor communities, carrying us through transitions, challenges and triumphs."

The Rev. Alonzo Johnson, coordinator of SDOP, the organization's partner, said, "Despite the challenges of the ongoing pandemic, Black Women's Blueprint continues to be out in the community addressing issues of trauma and providing things like food and housing assistance that people need in order to be whole."

Mama O is just one example among the many women who now bless and lift up others, an ongoing benefit of the organization's partnership with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), for which Brown is especially grateful.

"We want to share our gratitude for the continued leadership that the One Great Hour of Sharing and Self-Development of People partnerships have shown over the years," Brown said. "We are hopeful that times will grow brighter, and that we will come out on the other side of this with more wisdom, care, compassion and strategies for healing our communities and walking hand in hand towards a future of greater possibilities and opportunities to center survivors as the key to community thriving and justice."

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP).



Wage & Wealth Gap

United Workers Association | Baltimore, Maryland
www.unitedworkers.org

The United Workers Association is a human rights organization led by low-wage workers who are fighting to secure human rights and freedom from poverty for all. The organization is based in Baltimore, Maryland, and is guided by a commitment to human rights, poverty eradication and leadership development.

The Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) continues to partner with low-income grassroots groups in seeking to alleviate poverty, oppression and injustice in and outside the United States. One such partnership has been with the Baltimore-based United Workers Association (UWA), a human rights organization led by low-wage workers fighting to secure human rights for all, including freedom from poverty.

Baltimore's Inner Harbor has an area of great economic wealth and prosperity due to tourism, but it is surrounded by severe poverty throughout the inner city. The businesses in and around the Harbor have systematically kept wages low and the working conditions poor. But things have improved thanks to the UWA.

With a \$20,000 grant from the SDOP, the UWA, which has more than 500 low-wage workers, initiated a project focused on raising the minimum wage of day laborers and improving the public perception of them. The Baltimore Presbytery SDOP Committee also provided \$14,000 to the UWA Human Rights Zone project, which aimed to improve working conditions through organizing and education.

Todd Cherkis, a UWA organizer since 2002, said the group started in a homeless shelter, with a focus on

economic justice and fair development. Its victories have included a successful campaign to increase wages at Camden Yards stadium, just before the workers were to go on a hunger strike. Workers took the lead in organizing with fellow workers to secure a union contract, and wages have increased to almost \$13 an hour. Todd also talked about the importance of changing stereotypes about poor people, noting, "Everyone is worthy of dignity and respect."

The group has been active in organizing for paid sick leave for workers wherever they would choose to work. Workers won a campaign at the Harbor around the ESPN Zone, where there was a restaurant that shut down without giving workers notice. The workers organized, filed a lawsuit and were compensated.

The Presbytery of Baltimore and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have been strong supporters of UWA's organizing and of a Fair Development overture that passed with strong support at the 200th General Assembly (2012) in Pittsburgh.

The Fair Development Campaign connects Presbyterians with UWA and holds developers that have benefited from public funds, subsidies and tax incentives accountable to the community, resulting in jobs at living wages and human rights protections.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP).



Education/Advocacy/Skills Development

Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach | El Paso, Texas
www.ciudadnueva.org

Ciudad Nueva embodies the gospel of Jesus Christ by advancing the renewal and development of downtown El Paso through the empowerment, transformation and mobilization of its residents. Their neighbors are first- and second-generation immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries. The organization works in four primary areas: empowering youth, supporting families, equipping leaders and strengthening community.

From youth empowerment programs to leadership and family support initiatives, Ciudad Nueva is working hard to enact long-term change in the Rio Grande neighborhood of downtown El Paso, Texas. Serving economically and socially vulnerable youth, families and seniors who are primarily first- and second-generation immigrants from Mexico and other parts of Latin America, their journey started in 2004 as Launch Pad, an after-school program with 10 third-grade students. It has evolved in the nearly two decades since to include summer camps, a food distribution network and outreach programs serving more than 150 youth from grades 3–12 and more than 500 people per year through their Family Resource Center.

Abigail Carl-Klassen, Ciudad Nueva's director of development, discussed some of the challenges the organization faces.

"Our mission is to partner resources alongside the assets, knowledge, skills and determination of our neighbors to create a healthy, vibrant, thriving community. The finances and support necessary to partner with the needs of our neighbors often exceeds our resources and capacity, and our neighbors are often stretched thin to the point where it can be difficult for

them to participate in opportunities that would improve material and social conditions for themselves and their families," she said.

When asked what made a Self-Development of People (SDOP) partner grant the right fit for their group, Carl-Klassen emphasized the mutual philosophy around project ownership.

"SDOP's model of beneficiary project ownership is in line with our asset-based community development philosophy and practice of resourcing and equipping community leaders. We value mutuality and reciprocal approaches to community work maintaining that 'everyone has something to give, everyone has something to receive.'"

Carl-Klassen said that SDOP's assistance has been invaluable, and without it, they would not have been able to open a 15-station mobile community computer lab that includes a community jobs, benefits and education center or to hire a computer lab assistant.

Funds from SDOP have enabled Ciudad Nueva to put up a job board that contains information for job seekers and promotes neighborhood small businesses. In September and October, Ciudad Nueva hosted a six-week small business class attended by 20 individuals from the neighborhood. Class graduates became eligible to apply for \$1,000 business microloans that will be awarded in the spring

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP).



Women's Empowerment

Women's Meeting Space | Panama City, Panama
www.espacioencuentrodemujeres.org

Women's Meeting Space is an organization in Panama that works to protect the rights of women and to prevent gender-based violence. It also develops training experiences for Indigenous women as well as women from poor communities who take part in projects, such as growing food at home.

Paola Tognarelli's connection to Mother Earth is sacred, just like the bond she now shares with the other women in her life through an organization based in Panama City, Panama, called Women's Meeting Space.

Women's Meeting Space is a nongovernmental organization that advocates for the rights of Panama's women, both Indigenous and from its poorest communities. It helps women, primarily heads of household who are unemployed, and their families grow food at home to help them overcome the challenges made worse by the pandemic, including high unemployment. This partner organization receives funding through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP), which is supported by Presbyterians' generous gifts to the One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering.

SDOP enters into partnerships with low-income communities, helping them change the structures around them that perpetuate poverty, oppression and injustice.

One Great Hour of Sharing helps neighbors in need around the world and gives Presbyterians a tangible way to share God's love — not only through the ministries of SDOP, but also the Presbyterian Hunger Program and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

"I'm not surprised that when we first started working in Panama, we were finding women's groups," said Teresa Bidart, bilingual mission specialist for SDOP. "We started in the Dominican Republic in 2007, Belize in 2010 and Panama in 2018. Everywhere we go, most of the organizations we reach out to are women's organizations because in all these poorer countries, children and families mostly depend on the women for everything they need to live."

This project — designed to foster knowledge of urban production and boost the capacity of the community to overcome crises — also includes starting an experimental nursery to produce seedlings and installing a community farmstand. Its goal is not only to feed the growers' families, but also to sell surplus food to cover the basic needs of workers.

As women everywhere struggle to put food on their families' tables, Paola and the many women whose lives are being transformed by this project are grateful that the people across the PC(USA) continue to think about them.

"I thank all the women, the managers of Women's Meeting Space and the Presbyterian Church for giving us this support," she said. "I'm always very grateful to all of you."

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/get-involved for ways to further engage with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP).

Update On SDOP's Work in Nicaragua, Guatemala and Nigeria

A few years ago, the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People received a bequest from a longtime Presbyterian, Matilda Cartledge, who wanted SDOP to fund economic development projects in Nicaragua and Guatemala. Years later, we established a partnership with two organizations: The Interchurch Center for Theological and Social Studies (CIEETS) in Nicaragua and The Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA) in Guatemala. In 2019, we started sending funds to them.



After almost four years, we can state that thousands of people's living conditions have improved. CEDEPCA's representatives expressed in one of their reports: "The working alliance with SDOP has been very positive for CEDEPCA and adds a comprehensive contribution of work with other organizations ... in the humanitarian crisis derived from the Covid-19 pandemic and the tropical storms Eta and Iota. The improvement of the quality of life of the most vulnerable groups has always been sought. This issue acquires special relevance in times of crisis in which resources must be optimized."

CIEETS has challenges that include making sure "the initiatives can be sustained in the future, the organization and planning of the groups during the implementation of their business initiatives and the needs of the people, churches and/or groups involved, with a community vision perspective (urban and rural communities), taking advantage of this opportunity and finding ways to provide or facilitate services to the community." CIEETS was able to support 16 small initiatives this year. These initiatives ranged from ice cream shops and grocery stores to poultry farms, among others.

In Nigeria, an SDOP partnership with the Civil Society Coalition for Poverty Eradication (CISCOPE) has been incredibly positive as well. The three beneficiaries of

the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering — SDOP, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) and the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) — have joined a collaborative effort to support CISCOPE for three years. One of the program objectives that this organization is working on is training community, women and youth leaders, as well as the leaders of other vulnerable groups, on community development planning and contingency/emergency preparedness. SDOP recently approved an additional \$6,000 because of recent flooding in the project area. Nigeria is witnessing its worst floods in a decade, with devastating consequences on the lives and livelihoods of the rural poor, especially small-scale farmers, women, children, people who are older, people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. The project seeks to support 120 households. PDA contributed additional funds to support disaster recovery.

Update on OGHS Ministries Work in Puerto Rico

Following the devastation wrought by Hurricane Maria in 2017, SDOP, PDA and PHP jointly funded a community land trust called "Fideicomiso" in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Sadly, after Hurricane Fiona struck in September 2022, Puerto Rico was again adversely impacted. At this time, ministries supported by OGHS are learning about the needs of community residents affected by Hurricane Fiona.

SDOP's Hyatt Hotel Meals Delivery Partnership

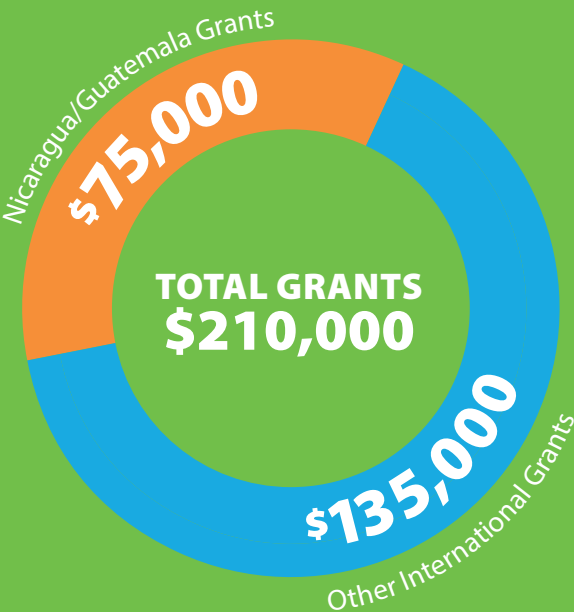
Looking for out-of-the-box, creative ways to do ministry? Read about an unlikely partnership SDOP initiated after its 50th anniversary celebration was cancelled due to Covid-19: : www.presbyterianmission.org/story/unlikely-partnership-between-the-presbyterian-committee-on-the-self-development-of-people-and-the-rochester-hyatt-regency-transforms-a-cancelled-celebration-into-a-new-opportunity-to-embodiment-mission/

INTERNATIONAL

Number of beneficiaries from
Funded Projects by Country



3,190
people benefited by
international grants



NATIONAL (DOMESTIC)

- 18** Number of Grants
- 1** Number of Technical Assistance

 **\$290,000**
total amount granted

 **5,374**
people benefited

MID-COUNCIL (LOCAL)

- 23** Number of Grants
- 3** Number of Administrative Funds

 **\$168,895**
total amount granted

 **4,960**
people benefited

Self-Development of People in the Midwest

By Rev. Les Sauer, HR | Past staff liaison to Presbytery of Scioto Valley SDOP Committee



My earliest recollection of the Self-Development of People program is from 1969. I was a student at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, and I became interested in community organizing among disenfranchised communities there. Naturally, my attention was drawn to the Black

Economic Development Conference in Detroit that year, and James Foreman's subsequent confrontation of members of the Riverside Presbyterian Church in New York City with his "Black Manifesto" during worship one Sunday morning.

A close friend of my family, a former missionary to India and later the Church World Service director in Vietnam, Rev. Dr. Ernest Campbell, happened to be in the pulpit that morning. Rather than shutting down the service, "Ernie" heard Mr. Foreman out, and later, working with the session and the presbytery, invited him to the General Assembly to make the same presentation to our whole denomination.

Rather than responding with an immediate, knee-jerk token reparations payment to the Black Economic Development Conference, the Assembly formed a committee to recommend how the whole Presbyterian Church could make an informed and longer lasting response. The committee reported back the next year, and the Self-Development of People program was launched.

Following graduation from seminary, I became directly involved with Self-Development in Northern California and Nevada where I served as the associate for "Justice and Social Concerns" for four presbyteries in the Synod of the Pacific from 1990 to 2000, staffing the joint SDOP Committee.

One of the earliest lessons I was taught by participants in our Self-Development programs in the Central Valley of California is that the emphasis is on "self-development!" Working with a group of Hispanic pastors, our committee was approached to fund a "trucking cooperative" so that members of their new church developments in San Joaquin Presbytery could benefit from hauling tomatoes during the annual harvest. When we looked at their proposal, our first reaction was that the group should further explore what it would cost, beyond just our grant funds, to buy, license, insure, maintain and operate several used semi-tractor-trailer trucks. To which, Pastor Francisco Duarte simply replied, "No, it is not our way." And shortly after we awarded them their grant, they were somehow trucking tomatoes!

Since retirement, I've been serving on the SDOP

Committee in the Presbytery of Scioto Valley, which has partnered with a variety of groups over the years. We contributed to the formation of the Highland Youth Garden, which "grows minds, grows food and grows community in partnership with ... Hilltop neighbors." Its "seeds" were planted in 2009 when a local recreation center closed, and a community group came together growing food and teaching children on the plot. Today, it has one of the largest high tunnels in the city, an outdoor education center and nearly a half-acre plot full of arbors, structures and crops. It's become a model for other community gardens replicated throughout the city. They also employ Westside teens in one of the most depressed areas of Columbus to learn gardening, community outreach and leadership skills.

Recently, we funded a group of new immigrant women, "The New Neighbors Bakers and Makers," comprised of refugees from Sudan, Iraq, Jordan and Afghanistan, who came together to sell baked goods at a local farmers market. Several of the women are now reaching out to "cater" to parties and local businesses, and their newest member from Afghanistan is able to send money home to help family members who are not able to migrate. They have all been learning English together and about one another's diverse cultures. Next year, they look forward to expanding their catering opportunities.

Books About Poverty and Related Issues

Always with Us? What Jesus Really Said About the Poor

Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis

The Third Reconstruction

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber

Jesus and the Disinherited

Rev. Howard Thurman

Decolonizing Wealth

Edgar Villanueva

The Problem with Wealth

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City

Dr. Matthew Desmond

The Rich and the Rest of Us

Tavis Smiley and Cornel West

Walking with the Poor: Principles & Practices of Transformational Development

Bryant L. Myers

Unbroken and Unbowed: A History of Black Protest in America

Rev. Jimmie Hawkins

Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America

James Forman Jr.

Ways We Can Engage in Poverty Eradication

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs determines that “poverty entails more than the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making. Various social groups bear a disproportionate burden of poverty.” We can engage in poverty eradication if we:

1. **Educate the American public on the immensity of poverty in America and worldwide, and how little we are doing to combat it.** Challenge the mentality that people are poor because they are lazy or don’t work hard enough to overcome poverty.
2. **Deracialize poverty:** Re-educate the American public on the conscious and unconscious false connections between poverty and race: how the face of poverty is often portrayed as being black or brown, while millions more whites are impoverished.
3. **Partner with agencies that are effective in strategy and delivery.** Study what works and apply successful strategies and programs in local communities.
4. **Identify ways to fight poverty on a multitude of levels: federal, state and local.** Do a study of the most effective programs that work, duplicate their paradigms and eliminate those that are ineffective.
5. **Address poverty as a regional issue.** Identify the most prevalent causes of poverty in your state and local community. Define whether you live in a high-, low- or medium-poverty region.
6. **Base the federal minimum wage on the cost of living.** States should adjust their state minimum wage based on the cost to live in that state.
7. **Determine state by state what basic income is necessary to be able to afford to live in that state rather than utilizing a national average.** According to the Economic Policy Institute’s Family Budget Calculator, the revenue needed for a family of two (adults only) “varies from just under \$43,000 in one state to over \$66,000 in another.”
8. **Men and women suffering from poverty in each region must have full political, economic and social participation** in the “design and implementation of

policies that affect the poorest and most vulnerable groups of society” (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs).

9. **Advocate that the federal government raise the national standard determining poverty,** established in 1963, that defines poverty being an annual income of \$24,858 for a family of four, \$12,488 for an individual. This is exceedingly low and completely unrealistic.
10. **Strengthen government safety net programs (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP], Earned Income Tax Credit, Social Security, Medicaid/Medicare), not weaken them.** A 2018 Urban Institute analysis estimated that SNAP lifted 8.4 million people out of poverty in 2015 and reduced child poverty by 28%.
11. **Address the intersectional root causes of poverty systematically:**
 - Food insecurity. Increase SNAP benefits.
 - Wage inequality.
 - Lack of opportunities for upward mobility in employment.
 - Inadequate public transportation.
12. **Address and remove the barriers placed upon those formerly incarcerated that keep them impoverished.** The stigma of a felony conviction prevents employment and any type of government assistance. Develop effective re-entry programs that provide support and mentoring for men and women who have suffered incarceration.
13. **Work to eliminate homelessness** by providing homes, not programs.

References

Economic Policy Institute, “Government Programs Kept Tens of Millions Out of Poverty in 2017,” (Sept. 12, 2018)

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Programs Targeted for Cuts Keep Millions from Poverty, New Census Data Show” (Sept. 10, 2019)

24/7 Wall St.

USA Today, “Progress in Fighting Poverty in America Has Slowed Despite Recent Economic Recovery” (Oct. 4, 2018)

USA Today, “Hawaii, Alaska Among the States that Require a Higher Family Income to Avoid Poverty” (Dec. 3, 2019)

Giving Opportunities

Consider giving directly to SDOP at presbyterianmission.org/donate/E051602.

SDOP is supported by generous gifts to the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). Contribute to the OGHS Self-Development of People

- online at presbyterianmission.org/donate/og200000/
- by phone at 800-872-3283
- or to send a check, please write “OG200000” on the memo line and mail to:
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
P.O. Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Call to Action: Get Involved With the Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development Of People!

- Consider giving to the One Great Hour of Sharing, a special offering taken up during Lent to support Self-Development of People, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Presbyterian Hunger Program. Visit www.specialofferings.pcusa.org to learn more about the OGHS offering and/or to give.
- Consider giving directly to SDOP. Your gift together with others makes it possible for thousands of communities all over the world to have an opportunity to take control of their own destinies and develop solutions to their own challenges. The power of your giving is in the fact that it gives hope, meaning and purpose to people who for one reason or another find themselves in hopeless situations.
- Invite SDOP committee members or staff to speak to your congregation, presbytery/synod meetings, mission fair, etc.
- Learn more about SDOP’s international projects in Belize and the latest on the West African Initiative.
- Serve on the SDOP committee within the bounds of your presbytery or synod. If there is not a committee, consider establishing one.
- Submit a form to the General Assembly nominating committee to serve on the National SDOP Committee. Email valerie.izumi@pcusa.org.
- Invite a SDOP group in your area to share about its project with your congregation.
- Share a “Minute for Mission” about SDOP with your congregation.

FREE SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE RESOURCES

On the Self-Development of People website, pcusa.org/sdop, you will find stories about SDOP community partners, and a variety of resources, including:

- Sermons and liturgy (which you can use to plan your Sunday worship service)
- PCUSA Policies on Poverty: presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/acswp/topics/

The following print resources can be ordered by calling the Presbyterian Distribution Center at 800-524-2612:

- SDOP Trifold Brochure, PDS #25422-17-001 (includes basic information needed to apply for a grant and stories about SDOP partners).
- Wallet card, PDS #25422-07-001 (includes basic information about SDOP in a wallet-size card).
- Poster: Celebrate Hope, PDS #74350-05-005 (colorful SDOP poster).

Call the national office for additional electronic or print resources: 800-728-7228, ext. 5781/5782/5790/5792.

Links to SDOP Video Resources

“The Struggle is Real” on Vimeo: www.vimeo.com/showcase/9083159

Questions?

English: 800-728-7228, ext. 5781/5782/5792/5790

Spanish: 800-728-7228, ext. 5781/5790

Email: sdop@pcusa.org

Fax: (502) 569-8001

“The Struggle Is Real!” A Webinar Series on the Intersection of Poverty and Social Justice Issues Save the Date!

Join SDOP’S 2023 Learning Opportunities/Webinars:

- Intersection of Poverty and Mass Incarceration (Part 2)

Date and Registration details to be announced Spring 2023.

Other webinars (dates to be determined) will be on the topics of:

- Poverty, Young Adults and Child Advocacy

Each webinar will feature:

- Poverty engagement and intentional action by churches stepping outside their walls to form relationships and live out loving their neighbors.
- Best practices about relationship building and developing partnerships with communities.
- Presence and activism: explore and learn ways to take concrete actions to eradicate poverty.

Further details will be available online (pcusa.org/sdop) in the spring. You may also email sdopevents@pcusa.org if you are interested in participating in any of the above webinars. www.facebook.com/SelfDevelopmentOfPeoplesdop

By Rev. Faye Fedlam, HR | Chairperson, Mid KY Presbytery SDOP Committee, Jeremiah 1:4–10; Luke 4:14–30

Today

That famous, well-known dog named Snoopy from the Peanuts cartoon is pictured shivering in the doorway of his doghouse. The weather outside is frightfully cold. Plus it is close to Christmas time. Charlie Brown and Lucy walk by the doghouse, all bundled up in their toasty warm winter coats, hats and mittens. Charlie and Lucy greet the shivering Snoopy with “Be of good cheer!” and continue walking. Meanwhile, Snoopy sits there in the doorway of his doghouse with chattering teeth, getting colder by the minute. No offer is made to bring Snoopy a blanket, take him into a warm house or — and because cartoons can be flights of fancy — offer to install a furnace in the doghouse.

Charlie and Lucy are good people; well, except for Lucy’s sarcastic tongue, and they generally treat each other and their other companions with some decency. But, in this case, Snoopy is not even accorded any decency, but is really just ignored. And so is the case with really seeing poverty in the USA or other countries. Now, we do see poverty to a certain extent when we give food baskets, provide hot meals, give out clothing or provide temporary housing. And all that is good. It is needful, but it is just a start.

Changes will really come when we address the systems and the causes that make poverty a reality for people. Some of those systems could be fair wages for people who, even with a job, may still have to live in their cars or in substandard housing. There is the system of providing groceries and fresh produce, but only in areas where incomes are higher and people live in one-family houses. And then there is the system of racism that still permeates the USA and the world and still judges people on the color of their skin.

Far too often, when the issues of fair wages, groceries in all areas of the city or countryside, and systematic racism are raised by people, particularly the people for whom these issues are personal, systems already in place get really nervous. It is OK to give out food baskets or provide hot meals, but when people start demonstrating or in other ways making their voices known, the systems do not react well.

Take, for example, affordable housing. When there is a push for affordable units in an area where new housing is to be built in areas of higher cost housing, there is pushback from some people who live in the area. They may list all sorts of reasons like possible crime or “undesirable” people moving into this new housing or

that their property values may go down. There must be much negotiation and discussion for affordable housing to become a reality in areas where it has not been before.

When change to “what has always been” is proposed, comfortable becomes uncomfortable. “The way things used to be in the good old days” may be voiced.

The scripture passages from Jeremiah and Luke make lots of people uncomfortable. In the passage from Jeremiah, even Jeremiah is uncomfortable with what God is calling Jeremiah to go and do and be. Jeremiah was really quite comfortable being a youth in his village, going quietly about his life. But then God breaks in, and Jeremiah’s world will never be the same. Jeremiah and God carry on this discussion about Jeremiah being called to carry out God’s work and respond to God’s calling. Jeremiah does not jump up and down and say, “Oh, goody! God has called me to be a prophet, to go out and tell people things they do not want to hear and possibly put my life in jeopardy.” Jeremiah has ready the excuses of youth and the inability to speak well. God overrides the youth bit, but instructs Jeremiah that he does not have to tell people his age. As for the speaking thing, God tells dear Jeremiah that he will be given the words to speak when the time comes.

Once the objections are dealt with, Jeremiah is sent out on his journey as a prophet. In this ordination, this setting forth of Jeremiah on his prophet journey, he is tasked with the difficulty of calling the people back to God and being truly faithful. A whole bunch of “shaking things up” was going to go on. This life would be a hard one for Jeremiah. He would, more than once, be given to despair. And because Jeremiah was not always making people comfortable, he was probably not given many “keys to the city.”

Luke has for us here, in this passage, the central focus of his Gospel. Luke focuses on Jesus as coming to minister to the poor, to be concerned for all people who need liberating. With Luke’s focus in mind, let us look at Jesus and his reading of the scripture in the Nazareth synagogue.

Jesus has come home to visit family, and, on this Sabbath day, he goes with his family to worship in the synagogue where he worshiped as a child. As he takes his place with his family in the synagogue, he is given the honor of reading the scripture passage of the day, which just happens to be this powerful passage from Isaiah about what will happen when the Messiah comes.

When Jesus stands to read, we hear the powerful words about how the world will be righted and things made

right. The scripture thunders with “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me” because God has sent Jesus “to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who have been oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Wow! Jesus rolls up the scroll, turns it over to the attendant and sits down. Then he says, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

The congregation has been feeling good that this hometown kid has come home, this kid who has been getting the reputation of being a good teacher. But wait minute, did Jesus just say something about today and fulfillment? No, this can’t be! This person we remember as the kid playing games with his friends, this kid can’t have just said he is the Messiah, the one we have been waiting for who is going to set us free. The congregation is astounded beyond words!

And then when these people are still absorbing this proclamation, Jesus has some more words for them — words that will turn their world topsy-turvy. Jesus gives two examples of the universality of God’s redemption and God’s message of freedom. He talks about the prophet Elijah’s ministry to the widow of Zarephath and the miracle of the oil. Then there is the story that Jesus relates of Elisha and the baptism of Naaman the Syrian. From Jesus: God is the God of all; God is not defined by boundaries of any kind; and God has come for everyone.

This message is more than the congregation can bear. The scripture that they thought was theirs alone is really for them and for people everywhere. The Spirit of God has burst in upon this content community, and they are not pleased with the “Today” message that the Spirit has brought. These people seek to do away with Jesus, but he slips from their midst. He still has work to do. The Spirit is on the move!

The Spirit is, indeed, on the move. We are called as Jeremiah was called, as the early Christians were called — to be on the move in a world that still needs the good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, the oppressed to be freed and the Lord’s favor to be proclaimed.

Too often, however, we find ourselves in the place of those good souls in that Nazareth synagogue. We come faithfully to church or perhaps a hybrid version via the internet, and, like that Nazareth congregation, hear familiar passages of scripture like this passage from Luke. And we hear this passage, but do we really HEAR it? We have not let the Spirit of the Lord permeate our very selves so that the scripture, like this Luke passage, will really mean something beyond just hearing it read.

When we really, really hear this Luke passage, we will hear these words of scripture calling us to really believe that good news can come to the poor: that those living

in towns where manufacturing jobs have long gone can have hope again of employment and a sense of worth; that those living in areas of the country where coal was once “king” can again find employment and a sense of well-being; that farmers who are barely getting by on small farms can continue to farm the land that they love.

Good news can mean healthful food for people in rural and urban areas — whether it is help with growing their own food or help with getting grocery stores in their areas where such stores are only memories. Good news can also mean hope being realized for people who have come to the United States from places where they were oppressed, in poverty and held captive — all by governments and people blinded to the wrongness of their deeds — all the things that the Lukan passage spoke to.

About several such groups of people, I have a story. The last pastorate I had prior to retirement was in a small town in southeastern Iowa. This community has, other than farming and town merchants, one major industry: Tyson Foods. Because of Tyson Foods, people from numerous ethnic and racial backgrounds came to work at this Tyson pork plant. This meant that the community, which had always been mostly white, continued to experience an increase in the variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Acceptance of the newcomers was generally cordial, but there were murmurings about their “strange habits” or that “they should learn to speak English.” The largest ethnic group coming to work at Tyson Foods is Latinx. But also coming are immigrants from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, formerly known as Burma.

The community “concerns” about culture and language differences of the Burmese led to a series of meetings at city hall to deal in a peaceful way with these differences. Concrete ways involved having short video messages in the various Burmese dialects for the Burmese who were coming to city hall to go through the process of establishing their lives in this small town.

There was also a tenants’ bill of rights established when it was discovered that the new tenants of various cultural and ethnic backgrounds, who were already struggling with languages and just learning to find their way around American culture, were being taken advantage of by local landlords. The tenants’ bill of rights was also prompted by a fire in a shoddy apartment building, a fire which resulted in the loss of life.

Most of the Burmese immigrants were Christians. They soon set up a couple of their own congregations that met in the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church. I am not sure that the city hall meetings and those who led them would have talked about the presence of God’s Spirit. But I know for sure that God’s

Spirit and the Gospel, knowing no boundaries, inspired a healthy discussion at the session meetings that led to the Presbyterians drawing up a contract with the particular Burmese congregation to hold worship services in the church. When I talked recently with the current pastor in this small town, he indicated that the Burmese have moved on, joined with another Burmese congregation and built their own church building.

The school system continues to have a majority of Latinx students. There is one Latino on the city council, and several businesses in town owned by Latinx continue to thrive. The current pastor wasn't sure if the tenants' rights were continuing to be carried through. But this small community is continuing to experience, in my estimation, the presence of God's Spirit and to give, to some degree, good news to the poor and freedom to the captives and those who were oppressed. As for sight to the blind (not related to physical sight), that is a work in progress. And the journey to Jubilee, it still has a way to go.

In our journey towards fully embracing the proclamations from Luke and living them — we are still, today, on the way, led by the Spirit.

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, we give you great thanks and praise for your continuing presence with us, even amid our doubts and our strivings. We thank you for the Spirit who guides us today. Amen.

Faye Fedlam, Chair

Committee on the Self Development of People
Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky

JUSTICE IS A JOURNEY ONWARD

Jane Parker Huber, 1994

AUSTRIAN HYMN 8.7.8.7 D

Franz Joseph Haydn, 1797

1. Jus - tice is a jour - ney on - ward, up - ward e - ven
 2. When we hear a cry for jus - tice from the depths of
 3. Em - pa - thy with - out firm ac - tion turns to emp - ty
 4. Jus - tice is a jour - ney on - ward, up - ward, out - ward,

through the pain. Jour - neys have their hills and val - leys;
 hu - man need, Our re - sponse puts love in ac - tion,
 sen - ti - ment, But the call to free God's peo - ple
 spread - ing still. Christ has set us on this jour - ney,

still the dreams and goals re - main. We are peo - ple
 fol - low - ing our Sav - ior's lead. Where we see op -
 leads self - de - vel - op - ment. When the struc - tures
 claim - ing us for God's own will. Let us share our

freed from bond - age by our Mak - er's will and power.
 pres - sive sys - tems, peo - ple hun - gry, crushed by fear,
 need re - shap - ing, or our neigh - bor - cast, down - cast,
 neigh - bor's bur - dens far a - way or face to face.

We must now re - spond with ac - tion, in this place and for this hour.
 We must be the voice of jus - tice, and the hand to help and cheer.
 Let us seek a bright - er fu - ture, fair - er than the days gone past.
 So may we, by tak - ing ac - tion, be a part - ner through God's grace.

John A. Dalles

DUKE STREET

Cel - e - brate hope! Come, — ga - ther near!
 With Christ our friend, whom — we a - dore,
 The work at hand, is — hea - ven — sent;
 By the re - turn of — dig - ni - ty,

The spi - rit of the Lord is near! For Christ has
 We shall be - friend and bless the poor! Bind up the
 Our mis - sion is em - pow - er ment! In one great
 May we build up com - mu - ni ty, With a con -

come — good — news to — preach: Good news for
 wou - nds of — bro — ken — ness! Bring li - ber
 ho - ur, — may — we — share, An off - er -
 cern — for — hu - man - kind, Till we are

all! Good news for each!
 ty to the o - pressed!
 ing of las - ting care!
 one, as God de - signed.

© 2008 John A. Dalles