

Defining a Social Justice Mandate at St. Jude's

A Social Justice Definition

Social Justice is about right relationships. It is "a concept of fair and just relations between the individual and society." The goal of social justice is "the creation of a fair and equal society in which each individual matters, their rights are recognized and protected, and decisions are made in ways that are fair and honest."

Social justice work can look different across contexts: a group of Anglicans meeting with their Member of Parliament to express concern about poverty in their community; a community vigil, such as Earth Hour, to raise awareness about a particular justice issue; a petition that calls for an institution to change its unjust ways; community conversations about Truth and Reconciliation following a film screening.

Current Mandate for Justice & Servant Ministries

Since 2010, St. Jude's Justice & Servant Ministries (J&SM) mandate has been:

"To mobilize the resources and engage the members of the Parish, focusing these on the problem of hunger/malnutrition amongst families and individuals in Oakville and in Itabo, Cuba, (where we have a partner church, St. Mary the Virgin) and in working in partnership with a few selected community agencies."

J&SM Programs

Since 2010, St. Jude's has started a number of programs, including KSM Dinners, Food For Life Outreach, Summer BBQ's, Neighbour Care Network, garden plot and the newest, a Pantry Program. Although our name implies a mandate with two components, Justice AND Servant Ministries, all our programs fall into the second category.

Recently, J&SM decided to explore a range of social justice issues, as a starting point for defining a mandate for Social Justice, to go alongside our Servant Ministries mandate. We invited Deirdre Pike, the Social Justice & Outreach Program Consultant for the Diocese of Niagara, to help us explore this with us. She suggested we begin by engaging the congregation of St. Jude's. Perhaps there is a social justice issue that resonates particularly strongly with parishioners. If so, this might be an indication of an issue the J&SM should address.

Hence, we have developed the following survey. We thank you in advance for taking a few minutes to answer our questions. Once we gather this information from as many parishioners as possible, we will be hosting a parish workshop where we can review the data and make some choices about our next steps in justice making.

SOCIAL JUSTICE SURVEY – ST. JUDE’S, OAKVILLE

1. Do you think it would be helpful for St. Jude’s to choose a social justice issue to work on? Yes or No (circle one)

2. Which of the following issues spark your attention? (circle your top 3)

Democracy and corporate power

Income inequality - Poverty

Racial inequality

Gender inequality

Social Determinants of Health

Truth and Reconciliation - Indigenous

Peace

Climate crisis/Environment

Other: _____

3. Would you participate in an educational session with the congregation to help set our social justice priorities?

Yes _____ No _____

4. Please share any ideas you have on our congregational efforts to work on justice issues.

5. If you would like to be involved in our Justice and Servant Ministries, please share your contact information with us.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

We appreciate your time and insight. If you have any questions about this work, please contact Blair Richardson at blair.richardson@sympatico.ca.