

EPISCOPAL NETWORK FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE



NUMBER 4

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2003

Urban Caucus and ENEJ Meet in Chicago

The annual meeting of the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice met earlier this year in Chicago coinciding with the 23rd Annual Assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus. Participants from across the United States spent three days in workshops, plenary sessions and site visits around the theme of Church Growth or Discipleship: Whither the Episcopal Church?

Highlights included a keynote address by Dr. Ian Douglas of Episcopal Divinity School, the Assembly Eucharist with the Honorable Byron Rushing as preacher and the Assembly Banquet with The Right Rev. Paul Moore as the speaker.

The gathering also featured the Episcopal Peace Fellowship Luncheon with Jeff Guntzel of Voices in the Wilderness reporting on conditions in Iraq before the military intervention.

The conference participants also visited Bethel New Life Cultural Arts Center and the facilities of the St. Edmund's



ENEJ President Geoff Curtiss watches Dick Gillette blow the "trumpet of justice" after receiving the Hugh White Award for Worker Justice.

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Message From the President

The work of the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice has deepened during the course of this year. At the Episcopal Urban Caucus we recognized through the annual Gloria Brown Award the work of economic justice and we also gave a new award called the Hugh White Trumpeter for Justice to an individual in whom we see a prophetic witness for economic justice. We held our annual meeting which reviewed the work of the Network over past years as well as the plans for the coming one. We will have a presence at the General Convention and be a part of The Consultation Exhibit Area. If you plan to be at the General Convention I hope you will stop by and say hello. In the fall the leadership plans to gather for a weekend conference, our first, to explore how we can bring the work and resources of The Network for Economic Justice into the life of the Church.

The network must continue to build a constituency

membership base. In the years to come we will have to rely on a dues base to support this work in the larger Church. This past year we sought out individuals, parishes, organizations and Dioceses to contribute financially to this effort. Our hope is to build upon this and grow our membership. We need people to pass on the newsletter within their communities and to help us build our membership base. Anything that you can consider undertaking in this effort will be greatly appreciated.

It is clear that our society is increasingly fractured and that the haves have a growing divide between them and the have-nots. Living in Northern New Jersey, it is striking the disparities seen in the availability of affordable housing, access to employment, the status of public education, environmental degradation, and a host of other signs that point to the growing gap between the wealthy and the people

FROM THE PRESIDENT Continued on page 2

ENEJ Committees & Chairpersons

Executive Committee

Geoff Curtiss, President
Telephone: 201-792-3564
email: gcurtiss@allsaintshoboken.com

Education Committee

John Hooper
Telephone: 313-964-7305
email: mcfundjh@winstarmail.com

Resources Committee

Sue Lloyd
Telephone: 608-256-7250
email: aslloyd@mailbag.com

Advocacy Committee

The Rev. Dick Gillett
Telephone: 626-398-4146
email: dgillpas@aol.com

Fundraising Committee

Art Lloyd
Telephone: 608-256-7250
email: aslloyd@mailbag.com

Communications Committee

Michael Bryant
Telephone: 904-355-0000
email: freshmin4@aol.com
Urla Gomes-Price
Telephone: 213-482-2040
email: efcu@earthlink.net

ECONOMIC JUSTICE RESOURCES
Resources available through
ENEJ include training
modules on various aspects
of economic justice, a video,
and a booklet entitled
Community Investing:
An Alternative for Religious
Congregations Seeking a
Social as well as a Financial
Return.

The ENEJ web site
(episcopalchurch.org/peace-justice/enej/) includes sources of
technical assistance available
through members of its steering
committee.

EUC Assembly

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Redevelopment Corporation and heard about the impressive housing and economic development accomplishments of these two mature community redevelopment organizations in the Chicago area.

Workshop topics included preparation for General Convention, From Violence to Wholeness, Radical Discipleship and the New Majority. ENEJ also presented 3 well attended workshops which are detailed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Perhaps the highlight for most conference attendees was the sometimes humorous, often poignant talk by retired Bishop Paul Moore who spoke of more than 50 years of his journey in

civil rights and the church exercising radical discipleship. Litte did most of the crowd know this would be one of the last public appearances by Bishop Moore who passed away in May.

Among the resolutions passed by the Caucus was one that speaks directly to the working poor by urging national legislation to raise the minimum wage to at least \$8.70 per hour, supports living wage campaigns in cities and counties and affirms the rights of all workers to organize unions.

Plans were also announced for the 24th annual assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus which will be held in Baltimore, Maryland in February, 2004.

From the President

Continued from page 1

of limited means. Meanwhile we are pouring millions upon millions of dollars into our military industrial complex to fight a war. We are watching the federal budget tax both state and local budgets by withdrawing their support of important and necessary programs for those in our margins. How can the Episcopal Church address this reality when most of the people who sit in our pews live among the haves in our society? If we have access to the people who make decisions about our resources how do we bring about change and transformation in our communities? Do we have the ability to respond to these critical needs? The challenge for the Episcopal Church from the perspective of economic justice is to find ways to become a mediating institution in our society. How do we build bridges to connect those who have with those who have little?

It is imperative that we learn about how our economy has changed. And as a result of these changes how faith based organizations are under a threat of extinction. We have created modules for educating our Church to help us understand the implications of our economy on the vast majority of the world's population and to identify and support ways of responding in mission and ministry.

This is the work of our Network and I hope you will join in. Together we can witness to an alternative world that God presumes to initiate through the coming of the Kingdom.

For those of us who gather on Sunday mornings in our local parish communities the economic question is how does our worship of Jesus connect us to our economic life. Do we live a simpler life style so that we might share our resources with others? Do we move our feet and our bodies from communities of wealth to communities of poverty because if we have no contact with the poor we cannot fulfill the Gospel mandate that the poor should always be with us? How do we live out our economic life?

As you recall the blessings of the Easter season, may you find the Risen Lord as you engage in the work of Economic Justice.

Rev. Geoff Curtiss, Rector
All Saints Episcopal Parish
707 Washington Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030

Phone: (201) 792 - 3564
Fax: (201) 792 - 3994
E-mail: gcurtiss@allsaintshoboken.com

Justice Issues and the 2003 General Convention in Minneapolis

Two important worker justice items to come before the Episcopal General Convention in July, 2003 include the need to support and become involved in justice for immigrant workers, especially through the planned "Immigrant Workers' Freedom Ride" scheduled for this fall; and support to raise the federal minimum wage to \$8.70 an hour, so that the working poor of this nation get a small boost upwards. Both of these issues are in resolutions passed recently by the Diocese of Los Angeles.

With regard to the Immigrant Workers' Freedom Ride, the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church passed its own resolution in support at its March meeting. The strategy is to push for immigration law reform to include at a minimum, legalizing the right of immigrant workers in this country to live and work here. The Freedom Ride will originate this September from eight cities in the U.S. and converge by bus on Washington

D.C. to lobby Congress.

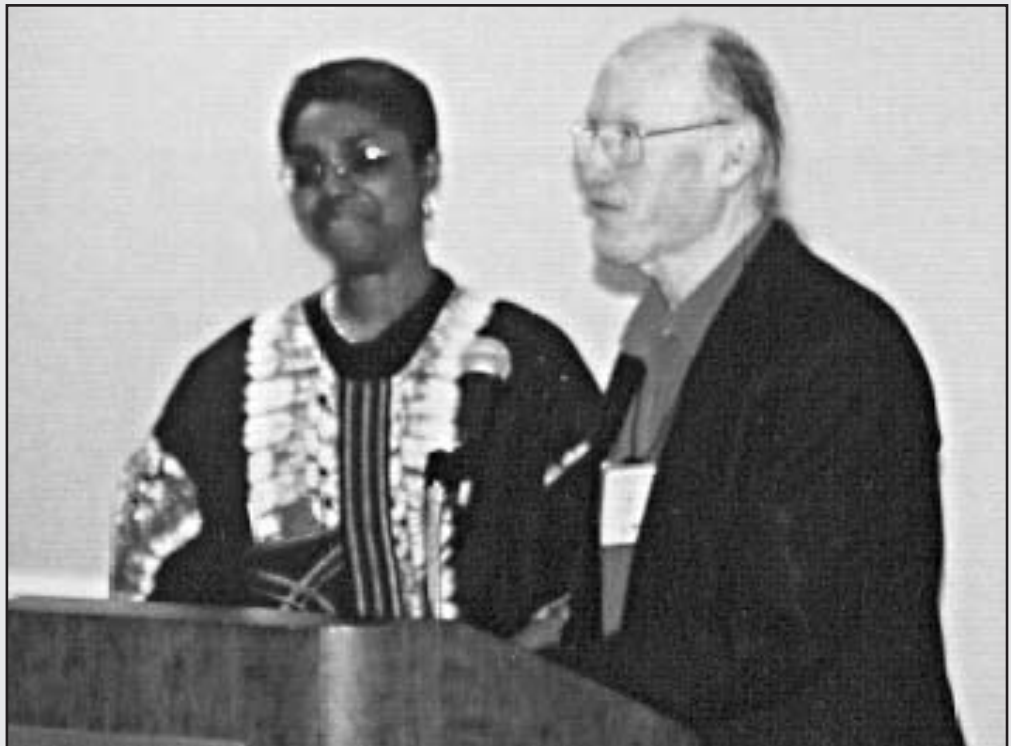
En route, religious groups across the country will welcome the buses and provide visible encouragement and support to the immigrant workers at their scheduled stops. ENEJ will be working at convention with specific information regarding the route of the Freedom Ride, to line up support from the Episcopal churches along the way, and to lobby Congress for immigrant reform legislation. This is an effort which has been jointly coordinated by the unions and the interfaith community, especially through the National Interfaith Committee on Worker Justice.

General Convention will also be presented with the platform from the Consultation, a coalition of progressive groups including ENEJ within the Episcopal Church, which addresses a variety of justice issues. Check at the ENEJ display at the convention for updated information on these issues.

St. Edmund's CDC Awarded 2003 Gloria Brown Award

At its 2003 annual meeting in Chicago, the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice presented the 2003 Gloria Brown Award for Economic Justice to the St. Edmund's Community Development Corporation of Chicago. Under the leadership of the Reverend Richard Tolliver, St. Edmund's has been a leading force in community revitalization efforts in the southside neighborhood surrounding the church. They have been engaged in job training, affordable housing and numerous other initiatives to help bring back the neighborhood. A recently formed partnership with the University of Chicago is expected to yield further benefits to the St. Edmund's CDC and the neighborhood.

Participants at the Annual Assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus were given a tour of the neighborhood and given the opportunity to hear from Rev. Tolliver and several of his partners describe their work over the last 9 years. The Gloria Brown Award is given annually to an organization which has made exceptional contributions to economic justice work. Presenting



Art Lloyd of ENEJ presents the 2003 Gloria Brown award to Pat Simpson Turner.

the award on behalf of ENEJ was longtime ENEJ Steering Committee member and chair of the selection committee, Art Lloyd. St. Edmund's succeeds the Chattahoochee Valley Community Credit Union of Columbus, Georgia which was selected for the award in 2002.

ENEJ Workshops Provide Tools for Change

At the 2003 annual assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus, ENEJ presented three workshops to help equip attendees for the work of economic justice. The three well attended workshops were Worker Justice, Wealth Creation and Economic Justice Education.

The Worker Justice workshop is detailed in a separate article. The Wealth Creation: A Start to Breaking the Cycle of Poverty workshop was led by ENEJ Steering Committee member, Michael Bryant of Jacksonville, Florida and representatives of ShoreBank of Chicago, a leader in community revitalization lending.

Topics of the workshop included community redevelopment, microenterprise development, individual development accounts (IDAs) and financial literacy training. The recent growth in microenterprise organizations was described as an encouraging sign of wealth creation in many communities. Similarly, the com-

bination of financial literacy training and matched savings in IDA programs is stimulating persons within 200% of poverty income to begin creating wealth for the first time. For more information about the workshop topics, email Michael Bryant at freshmin4@aol.com. For more information about the activities of ShoreBank, email Verna Barton at verna_barton@sbk.com.

ENEJ President Emeritus, John Hooper, led the workshop on Economic Justice Education and detailed the education modules that have been developed for ENEJ by United for a Fair Economy of Boston. These materials are designed to be used in congregations and other group settings and training is available for leaders interesting in making their community more aware of economic justice issues. Email John Hooper at mcfundjh@winstarmail.com for more details.

Loss of a Leader in the Struggle for Justice

Within two months of speaking to the Urban Caucus in Chicago, The Rt. Rev. Paul Moore died in New York City after a long illness. During his life, Bishop Moore was an active force for social justice within the church and the larger world. As Bishop Suffragan of Washington during the mid sixties, he directed Operation



Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, 1919-2003

Connection, an interfaith coalition for urban economic development which brought black and white leadership together.

He led a peace mission to South Vietnam in 1970 and participated as a member of the delegation which traveled to Moscow to discuss nuclear disarmament in 1982. Even toward the end of his life, he was chairman of the Timor Project, a group focused on human rights issues in East Timor and spoke out against the war in Iraq from the pulpit of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

Bishop of New York for seventeen years, Paul Moore was also the father of nine and had 19 grandchildren. Memorial contributions can be made to Humanitarian Project, P.O. Box 32307, Washington, DC 20007. The struggle for justice in our time has lost one of its most enduring and effective leaders.

ENEJ Fall Retreat to Map Strategy

ENEJ will conduct a weekend retreat this fall to plan long and short term strategies. The weekend of November 6-8 has been selected. The location is to be in the Newark, New Jersey area. All ENEJ members are encouraged to attend. The retreat will provide an opportunity to discuss how best to advance our concerns for economic justice in the United States and within a global context. If you would like further information contact Michael Maloney at 513-531-8799/513-531-3899(fax) or meamon@aol.com.

Community Investing... Will Congregations Respond?

Key to economic justice initiatives is access to capital. Revitalization of our depressed communities requires significant investment by people and organizations who see the potential of these communities and are willing to commit some portion of their resources. In many instances, such an investment may offer a comparable financial return to traditional options. Examples of such investment vehicles are Community Development Banks, Community Development Credit Unions and Microenterprise Funds.

Five or ten per cent of a church or foundation endowment invested in such a community development vehicle could have a tremendous impact on community efforts while any change in income from the endowment funds would be negligible. The important first step is understanding these alternative investment options and beginning the conversation with the financial advisors to such funds.



In 1999, members of ENEJ created a very useful manual entitled *Community Investing: An Alternative for Religious Congregations Seeking A Social as well as a Financial Return*. This manual details alternative investment opportunities that will assist community redevelopment activities. Copies of the manual continue to be available from ENEJ if you are interested in talking with your parish leadership about modifying their investment strategy to be consistent with the mission of the Church.

Economic Justice At Home and Abroad

Many opportunities exist in the United States and around the world for people of faith to work toward economic justice. If you and/or your congregation are ready to live out the gospel by working in this area, we invite you to review the connections offered in our resources column on page 6.

If you are interested in helping the lowest paid government workers in your city, look more closely at Living Wage Campaigns - by checking www.livingwagecampaign.org. If you want to explore other worker justice issues, check the site for the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice at www.igc.org/nicwj.

If you are inclined toward eliminating substandard housing, contact Habitat for Humanity International at www.habitat.org. Habitat has built more than 100,000 homes worldwide and is likely to have an affiliate group in your community.

If you are interested in asset building initiatives for low income persons, look at www.cfed.org/main/indivassets which talks about individual development accounts. These matched savings programs with financial literacy help poor families achieve goals of homeownership, post secondary education or owning a business.

In the international area, examine the variety of programs of Episcopal Relief and Development at www.er-d.org. Everywhere from war torn Iraq to Aids plagued Africa to the impoverished of Chile, this ministry provides not only emergency relief but lasting solutions to the poor of this world.

Five Talents provides another opportunity to work for economic justice as they help initiate micro-enterprise programs in developing nations. Loans as small as \$50 can help a family begin a business in Africa, the Phillipines or South America and begin to escape poverty. Their website is www.fivetalents.org for more information.

Most important is that people of faith become intentional about sharing the resources of the planet with those who are left out or marginalized in the world economy or in our own communities. We invite you to share with us news of economic justice initiatives in your area.

ENEJ Support Grows

Financial support for the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice increased substantially in 2002-2003 with a record number of dioceses stepping forward to become ENEJ members. The ENEJ Fundraising Committee continues to recruit individual and parish members to the network to support the growing work of the network. If you have not paid your 2003 membership dues, please use the enclosed envelope to send your tax deductible payment today.

Member Dioceses of the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice - 2003

Arkansas
California
Connecticut
Delaware
East Tennessee
Eastern Michigan
Florida
Indianapolis
Los Angeles
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Milwaukee
Mississippi
New Hampshire
New York
Newark
Ohio
Oklahoma
Olympia
Pennsylvania
Southern Ohio
Texas
Virginia
Washington

RESOURCES

- Community Investing: An Alternative for Religious Congregations Seeking a Social as well as a Financial Return © The Episcopal Network for Economic Justice, September 1999. Order from John Hooper, Economic Justice Commission/McGehee Fund, 2727 Second Avenue Ste 121, Detroit, MI 48201. 313-964-7305 Fax: 313-964-7313 email: mcfundjh@aol.com
- Resources Committee, Episcopal Network for Economic Justice, Sue Lloyd, Chair, 1104A Mound Street, Madison, WI 53715. 608-256-7250. Fax: 608-256-9991 email: aslloyd@mailbag.com.
- Various resources available through our president, The Rev. Geoffrey Curtiss, and other ENEJ Steering Committee Members listed on our website under Steering Committee.
- Jubilee Ministry : Has your parish ministry been designated a Jubilee Center by the National Church?
Jubilee Centers are eligible for grants through the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund and other valuable support through participation in a national network.
For more information, contact your diocesan Jubilee Ministry Officer or The Rev. Canon Carmen Guerrero, Office of Jubilee Ministries, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017. Telephone 800-334-7626, email: cguerrero@episcopalchurch.org.
- Economic Justice Loan Committee: The committee is given stewardship of \$7 million to make loans to projects to benefit poor and marginalized people, for such purposes as low cost housing or establishing credit unions. Contact: Harry Van Buren, 504 Orchard Drive, Cedar Falls, IA 50613, Telephone 319-266-4088, email: HarryVB@aol.com.
- Episcopal Relief and Development Fund: Episcopal Church Center, Mary Becchi, Deputy Director of Program and Program Planning, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017, 800-334-7626 #6121 e-mail: erdid5@er-d.org www.er-d.org Grant deadlines are March 15 and August 15
- Related Web Sites: National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice www.igc.org/nicwj
- The Witness www.thewitness.org
Wage Campaigns: www.livingwagecampaign.org
- Education Committee: now have available five alternative economic justice training modules. John Hooper, Economic Justice Commission/ McGehee Fund, 2727 Second Avenue Ste 121, Detroit, MI 48201. 313-964-7305 Fax: 313-964-7313 email: mcfundjh@aol.com

Worker Justice Update at Chicago Workshop

As the issue of worker justice and the role of trade unions becomes more crucial in our country, it was especially timely that Kim Bobo, executive director of the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, lead a well-attended workshop at the E.U.C. Assembly. It is a bad time for working people in our country, said Kim, and it is especially bad for low wage workers, whose income levels have been slipping even in a time of overall economic prosperity. Especially vulnerable are workers in sweatshops, particularly in the garment industry.

Furthermore, said Kim, we have an Administration that is hostile to organized labor. One measure now being pushed is a proposal by Labor Secretary Elaine Chau which would eliminate the 40 hour work week; a bedrock of the worker rights movement and replace it with a law which would allow a two week period of 80 hours total work. Among other provisions adverse to the working person, the current time-and-a-half provision for workers working over 40 hours a week would be scrapped under this proposal, which is clearly employer-oriented.

There is a bill in Congress to raise the Federal minimum wage, Kim noted: The Minimum Wage Act of 2003. The bill would raise the current minimum wage from \$5.15/hr to \$6.65/hr in two stages. Although this increase is far from adequate, she added, it needs our support. Currently the poverty level is \$17,000/yr for a family of four. For a realistic poverty level, it should be around \$33,000.

Another opportunity to support low wage workers will come next fall with the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, to be sponsored by two national unions and a host of churches across the country. (The executive council of the Episcopal Church has already endorsed this plan.) Immigrant workers will cross the country in buses originating from 8 cities, and converge on Washington to push for an immigration reform law that legitimizes and recognizes the rights of immigrant workers. NICWJ will be taking a leading role in this effort, and ENEJ will be publishing specific information nearer the time for the Freedom Rides.

At the workshop, Kim covered other important topics such as support for home health care workers, the campaign of UNITE! (needle trades union), and the need to identify and expose union buster firms working as consultants for employers to defeat the union. The national interfaith committee has a terrific website which details these and other issues, and also enables an instant message to be sent to the appropriate entity: www.nicwj.org, or call 773-728-8400

ENEJ

1131 North Laura Street
Jacksonville, Florida
32206

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July 7, 2003

Dear Michael,

Your new proofs.

Sincerely,

Sherrie

PCI