



## Center for Sustainable Justice at Lyndale UCC Annual Report for the work of 2025

This report highlights the work of The Center for Sustainable Justice in 2025. It represents the time and energy of the staff at Lyndale, those working on Sacred Reckonings, and members of the CSJ Advisory Council, and it represents many hours of faithful, strategic work by the membership and colleagues of Lyndale UCC and our ecumenical and multifaith partners.

### Mission, Vision, Focus and Work of the Center for Sustainable Justice

#### Lyndale United Church of Christ's Mission Statement:

Lyndale United Church of Christ is a growing faith community:  
Deepening our questions and spirituality,  
Embodying God's healing and love,  
Building a more just world here and now.

#### Center for Sustainable Justice History, Focus, Mission and Commitments

The Center for Sustainable Justice helps build the movement of religious leaders and communities working together on LGBTQ, racial, food and climate justice in the Twin Cities and across the Midwest. We do so rooted in an understanding that movements for justice are strongest and most successful when there is simultaneous work in four areas: 1. setting and sharing the vision of how the world ought be, 2. helping individual organizations work better and creating and tending the "connective tissue" between organizations, 3. mobilizing people for ethical spectacle, direct action and/or campaigns, and 4. cultivating healthy people (bodies, relationships, communities). This is illustrated below.



The Center for Sustainable Justice does work in all four areas with an emphasis on connecting and building coalitions among religious and spiritual people and organizations. Most of our work brings pro-LGBTQ people together to work on questions of racial, food and climate justice through deepening the web of relationships and the infrastructures of justice-making.

Additionally, the Center for Sustainable Justice works out of a "healing justice" framework. We are seeking a world in which there is no distinction between that which is healing and that which is justice. The Center for Sustainable Justice seeks to act and live in ways that practice the cycle of Healing Justice with three intertwined and inextricable moves. As seen in the graphic to the right, we are called to prevent immediate violence (perpetrated by systems, by individuals, by communities); we must care for the people who are being harmed, including ourselves; and we must transform the systems that create violence in the first place.



Finally, the work of the Center for Sustainable Justice is multi-focal. It is directed inward to educate, nurture, and support the people of Lyndale United Church of Christ. It is directed outward to build, facilitate, and nurture the religiously-rooted justice ecosystem in the Twin Cities and beyond. And it is a combination of inward and outward designed to support the collaboration of Lyndale folk with wider justice movements. The hope is that this multi-focal work helps us stay concrete and practical enough to serve the real-life experiences of a congregation while

radical and creative enough to keep being pushed beyond what we think might be possible.

Within Lyndale, we supported and organized with the various justice teams. In particular, following the inauguration of the second Trump administration, about 25 people gathered for a community-wide Social Justice Forum to discuss how we could support each other in acting faithfully and strategically. We made the decision to create a weekly Lyndale Activation eblast that Cali Jirsa faithfully compiles to list advocacy and activism opportunities. Additionally, we created an encoded messaging space for planning and action which directs folks into the organizing eco-systems and coalitional spaces that CSJ helps to support. We now meet as a joint Social Justice Forum every month for kinship, food, and shared strategizing. We also continue with our reparations line-item in the Lyndale UCC budget with the Racial Justice Team leading the yearly decision process to determine who our reparatory partners will be.

Outside of Lyndale, CSJ directed much of its work in two areas: the continuing development of the Sacred Reckonings program and democracy protection. The Sacred Reckonings work is based on the congregational organizing guide, *Sacred Reckonings: White Settler-Colonizer Churches Doing the Work of Reparations*. Sacred Reckonings is a program of the Center for Sustainable Justice at Lyndale UCC and organizes predominantly White churches around the country to train their racial justice teams in the Sacred Reckonings process as outlined in the guide. A full report on the work of Sacred Reckonings is included below.

Our democracy protection work has been evolving throughout the year as conditions in our Cities, our state, and the country have evolved. All of this work has been done in deep collaboration with many trusted partners including MARCH (Multifaith Anti-Racism, Change & Healing) for whom CSJ acts as a member of the Steering Committee, MNIPL (Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light), ISAIHA, Jewish Community Action, Minnesota Multifaith Network, ICOM (Interfaith Coalition on Immigration), MIRAc (Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Coalition), and many others. Particularly in December when the Administration launched Operation Metro Surge, these coalitions have come together to respond with mutual aid, nightly prayer services to support first responders, regular presence at protests, and seeking to offer spiritual care for those kidnapped by ICE. This coalition has offered dozens of trainings including on non-cooperation and non-violent direct action. Additionally, CSJ has worked with its coalitional partners to create a giving portal to support five key churches and organizations who directly serve immigrant communities. We have raised \$5000 for this mutual aid thus far with plans for a big fundraising push in early 2026.

We remain deeply grateful for the multifocal work the Center for Sustainable Justice at Lyndale UCC is honored to engage and for the years of relationship building that brings us to this moment ready to work religiously for justice. What follows is more detail about our work in 2025.

### **CSJ actions, vigils, liturgical work**

Throughout the course of 2025, CSJ worked in deep collaboration with many partners to engage in protest, advocacy, vigil, and various other ways of “praying with our feet.” In this first year of the second Trump administration when many of our values and communities have been under attack, CSJ has worked closely with many partners to engage in protest,

non-violent direct action, advocacy, and vigils. For several of these actions and events, CSJ staff have been asked to testify and we have been honored to do so, including during MIRAc-led protests and before the Metropolitan Airports Commission regarding ICE activity at the MSP Airport.

### No Kings Rallies

Throughout the year, CSJ has supported Democracy Protection actions. Here are some shots from the June and October No Kings Rallies.



A group of about 30 members of the United Church of Christ from the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the UCC went to the No Kings Protest in St Cloud on June 14, 2025. This rally was held just hours after the assassination of Rep. Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark and was an emotional and healing space to be in to grieve collectively as well as to honor their legacy. This photo was shared during Annual Meeting worship as evidence of our witness. Rev. Jeanine Dorfman, Rev. Claire Klein, Rev. Dr. Rebecca Voelkel, and Rev. T Michael Rock, and Paul Thuras were part of the 30 UCC folks.

In October, CSJ and Lyndale UCC returned to the streets to join the second No Kings rally. This time, there were Lyndalians across the country. We were all praying with our feet!

Here's who we know were there:

- Downtown Minneapolis: Rebecca Miller, Mary and Michael Vanderford, Fred Smith and Mary Martin, Melia Derrick, and Sarah Heimel.
- St. Louis Park: Rev. Rebecca, Kathy Hayden, April Conlee and Kathryn Lee, Nancy Homdrom.
- Golden Valley: Allan Henden and Alan Scott.
- Park Rapids: Jeanine Dorfman, Teresa Herman, Josh and Lynx Homan-Dorfman.
- Robbinsdale: Rev. T Michael and Morgan, Ron Rooney.
- Richfield: Ann Barten
- St. Paul: Sam Goodrich and Eila Savela, Anita VanderPloeg, Sam and Cindy Orbovich
- Grand Rapids: Pam Sabey
- Penn State, PA: Paul Thuras
- Benzoia, MI: Paula Bidle

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With **MIRAc (Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee)** and **ICOM (Interfaith Coalition on Immigration)** on July 29, 2025 protesting deportations of our immigrant kindred.

Also in July, we supported the screening of the film *Zurawski v. Texas* that Lori Miske helped organize and participated in the Teach-In on Gaza which was lead by CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations). In each of these places, we have sought to pray with our feet, to witness to love and justice amidst far too much crucifixion. Thanks be to God!

### **Seven Days of Prayer and Action Against Gun Violence**

The Center for Sustainable Justice at Lyndale UCC co-sponsored (with Creekside UCC) the Prayer Vigil calling for a Special Session on Gun Legislation following the Annunciation shooting in South Minneapolis. We shared a powerful time together, including hearing from a Creekside member who is the dad of a daughter who was shot during the Annunciation attack. We also took two minutes of silence to mark the amount of time the shooter at Annunciation was shooting. These vigils followed the delivery of a faith letter signed by over a thousand clergy from every county in the state, calling for sensible gun legislation.

The first picture below is the whole group, the second is our Lyndale UCC crew.

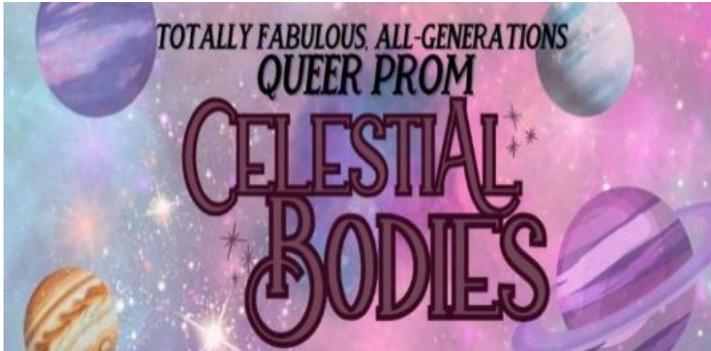


### **CSJ Sponsored and Co-sponsored Events**

CSJ sponsored and co-sponsored several events in 2025. Among them, for a third year, CSJ organized about a dozen church and organizational partners to host the Totally Fabulous, All Generations Queer Prom and Justice and Joy: Empowering Religious Support for Trans Lives.

### **Totally Fabulous, All Generations Queer Prom 3.0**

Here is the report shared with CSJ supporters following the Third Queer Prom:



We are so deeply grateful for the joy, resistance, fabulousness, and love that we all shared at the Third Annual Totally Fabulous, All Generations Queer Prom on May 30, 2025. We write to share big thank yous to everyone who made it happen, a few fun pictures, and to invite you to put the weekend of May 29 & 30, 2026 in your calendar for the Fourth Annual Totally Fabulous, All Generations Queer Prom!

This year we celebrate that:

We had over 175 people in attendance...

Were led on the dance floor by our incredible DJ, Insomniac...

Shared a two-act Drag Show with performers: Kiki Joy (instagram: @lovekikijoy), February Starlight, Esteé Rhettie (instagram: @esteerhettie - also with The Aliveness Project), Fuwarin, Çicada L'Amour (instagram: @house\_of\_larva)...

Took amazing selfies and usies at the Photobooth...

Had access to free HIV testing...

Got balloon animals from the Rainbow Lady...

Got to write messages of support for the 12 Queer weddings that were happening the next day in the building...

Got free Mom hugs if we needed or wanted them...

We would not have been able to do any of this were it not for the incredible team of co-sponsors who offered monetary support, volunteers, and displays at the event:

The Center for Sustainable Justice, SpringHouse Youth Ministry, First Universalist Church, The Minnesota Conference of the UCC, The ONA Coalition of the UCC, First Christian Church, Salem Lutheran Church, First Congregational of Minnesota UCC, The Sisters of St. Joseph, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Diamond Lake Lutheran Church, Creekside UCC, Thrivent Financial through Lori Miske, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Annex Teen Clinic, The Aliveness Project, Free Mom Hugs

We are deeply grateful to our vendors: Sequeerity, Little Weddings, The Insomniac (DJ), The Rainbow Lady



We are living in deeply perilous times. So many Brown, Black, and Indigenous lives are under attack; queer and trans people of all races, abilities, immigration statuses, and classes are targeted; reproductive health care and health care of all kinds are being stripped away; ICE raids with military deployments have begun. Most of it is being done in the name of a deeply distorted, white nationalist Christianity. In the face of all of this, Queer Prom is a place of joy, of resistance, of claiming that All Trans and Queer Lives Are Sacred!



This year's Queer Prom WAS such a space of justice and joy! During the Drag Show, one of the performers shared that she had never had anyone sing a love song to her growing up. And she had always ached for the lack of that feeling of belovedness. She then said if anyone else shared a similar ache and wanted to be sung to tonight, they should come to the front row. She said she would take them by the hand, pull them onto the stage, and sing a love song to them. When someone did and she sang to her, there were few dry eyes in the house. The love between strangers who were now connected by an act of vulnerability and tenderness was a balm to all.

We were also approached by a young lesbian couple who had been separated for the first two years of their relationship, with one of them living in a deep red state filled with homo-, bi-, and transphobia. She had just moved to Minnesota and they were reunited and came to prom for one of their birthdays. She kept saying, "I've never gone to Prom. I didn't know a space like this existed. Thank you, thank you, thank you. You are bringing me life!"

Totally Fabulous, All Generations Queer Prom Planning Team

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Voelkel (she/her), Chelsea Boyden (she/they), Allison Connelly-Vetter (she/her)



**Justice and Joy: Empowering Religious Support for Trans Lives**

On May 30, 2025 CSJ co-sponsored the Justice and Joy conference at United Theological Seminary. With sixty people in attendance, we spent a powerful day together exploring the Christian, Jewish and UU support for Trans Lives. In attendance were Jae Lowagie, Rev. T Michael Rock, Rev. Jeanine Dorfman, Allison Connelly-Vetter, Chelsea Boyden, Seth Anderson-Matz, Rev. Rebecca Voelkel, and Rev. Dan Adolphson were all present and helped lead the day's work.

**Educational Opportunities**

Following Rev. Voelkel's participation in the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma, AL in March of 2025, she partnered with Rev. Martha Schwen-Bardwell, Rev. Esther Sianipar and Our Saviour's Lutheran Church to screen Bending the Arc Project's film, Vote! Additionally, Lyndale members and SpringHouse colleagues joined Our Saviour's members

for a Non-Violence training using the materials used by the organizers in Selma based on the Kingian Non-Violence model.

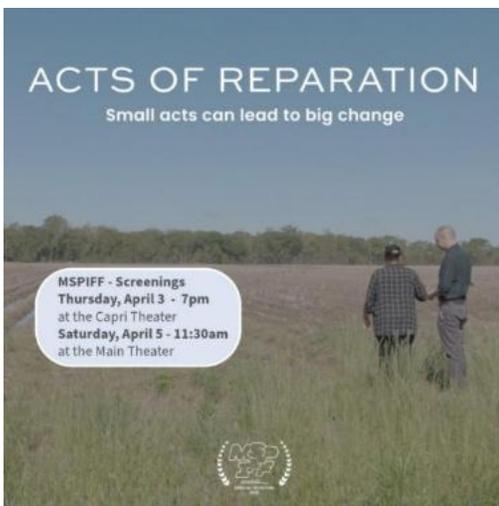
For the screening of the film, we had about a dozen people present and we had a powerful conversation afterwards about how we might be using the model of Voting Rights activists and “foot soldiers” in this moment of resistance. If people want to view the film, they can do so here:

[https://youtu.be/vrjJM8TqN\\_I](https://youtu.be/vrjJM8TqN_I)

**BENDING  
THE ARC  
PROJECT**



**The Racial Justice Task Force, CSJ and Sacred Reckonings** organized a group to attend the screening of the film Acts of Reparation at the Minneapolis- St. Paul International Film Festival on April 3, 2025.



“Two filmmaking friends, Selina, a Black woman, and Macky, a white man, head south together to explore their roots and the insidious legacy of slavery. Visiting with family in Louisiana, Selina discusses the secret histories of her family, while Macky, in Georgia, confronts his family’s inherited privilege. What emerges is an eye-opening story of hope and redemption.”

Acts of Reparation and their impact campaigns have been an important partner in the work of Sacred Reckonings and this was a great time of overlap between CSJ’s outward facing work and its inward facing work as folks at Lyndale got to meet and hear from this important partner in the work of racial justice and reparations.

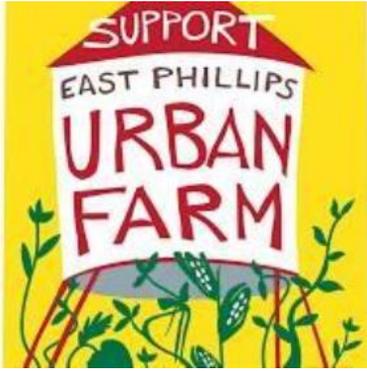
### **Lyndale UCC Reparatory Partners**

For 2025-2026, Lyndale UCC chose All Square and EPNI as its reparatory partners. Over the course of 2025-2026, we have budgeted \$6000 in support for these two partner organizations as well as committing to advocate in followership of these initiatives.



**All Square's mission** is to heal the harms caused by the criminal legal system and its impact on individuals by changing the way criminal records are viewed and used. They achieve this through a multifaceted approach, including investing in people impacted by mass incarceration, providing civil legal services, and offering professional development opportunities.

**EAST PHILLIPS NEIGHBORHOOD INSTITUTE**



The East Phillips community has spent a decade dreaming up ways to use the vacant Roof Depot warehouse to bring year-round fresh food, good jobs, and long overdue environmental justice to the neighborhood. After a long and complex campaign to stop the planned demolition of the Roof Depot warehouse - **EPNI is now stewarding the transformation of this vacant warehouse into a multi-use community hub and indoor urban farm** with community care at the core.

Ever since EPNI - and a broad coalition of supporters - successfully stopped the demolition in 2023, EPNI has been working to turn the community's **dynamic vision into a tangible reality** through fundraising, intensive community outreach, fostering community partnerships, and developing a novel community ownership structure that puts power in the hands of the people in East Phillips.

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*Sacred* **RECKONINGS**

**2025  
YEAR-END  
REPORT**

# PROGRESS REPORT

The work of reparations done within White Settler-Colonizer churches is necessarily that of deep followership, solidarity, and relationship with Black and Indigenous communities. So we begin with a word of gratitude to all of those who have acted as accountability partners in this critical work. In particular, we want to thank Rev. Dr. Pamela Ngunjiri and Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs (Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican) for their groundbreaking work on reparative work shared between Black and Indigenous communities. Their ongoing collaboration with Sacred Reckonings and our regular check-ins make our work better, more faithful, and more strategic. Thank you.

## **OUR WORK**

This year has been a very full year. With the new administration in

Washington, we wondered if we might experience a drop in engagement with the work of reparations. While some folks did need to focus on more emergent response work, many have expressed deep appreciation for Sacred Reckonings. The fact that Sacred Reckonings does its work from the perspective of dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery and in relationship to both Black and Indigenous communities has been very helpful to folks. In particular, our analysis that Project 2025/The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)/Seven Mountain Mandate which lay out the worldview and agenda for the white Christian nationalism we are experiencing right now are nothing more than “the modern re-articulation of the Doctrine of Discovery” has been extremely helpful to people.

One example of this happened



when, on June 12, 2025, we led a daylong training on Sacred Reckonings for clergy in the Minnesota Conference of the UCC in which we made the connection between the New Apostolic Reformation as white Christian nationalism and the Doctrine of Discovery redux. Not thirty-six hours later, Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, were assassinated by an acolyte of the New Apostolic Reformation. We heard from

several of those trained that it was extremely helpful to have learned of the ways in which this political moment bears striking resemblance to other upsurges of the Doctrine of Discovery and the worldview of white Christian supremacy. Further, the model of the Reparatory Eco-Map as a guide to how we might be acting and responding to this moment in wholistic ways has resonated deeply with folks.

**REPARATORY ECO MAP**



Credit: MARCH (multifaith anti-racism, change, and healing) working group. Rev. Terri Burnor, Rev. Ashley Horan, Jessica Intermill, Esq., Liz Loeb, Esq., Rev. Dana Neuhauser, Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs (Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation), Rev. Dr. Rebecca Voelkel



# BY THE NUMBERS

## *2025 Deliverables*

- 4 full five-session Sacred Reckonings Trainings reached
  - 16 congregational/institutional teams
  - 54 participants across 8 states
- 75 people trained at a daylong institute at the National LGBTQ Task Force's Creating Change conference
- 24 people trained at a daylong clergy training at the Minnesota Conference of the UCC Annual Meeting
- 47 people (including 2 bishops) trained at a workshop at The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries Holy Convocation
- 200+ people attended a plenary workshop and panel at the Freedom Rising Conference
- 45 live viewers of a webinar with the United Church of Christ's Nurture the Soul on the history and present impact of the Doctrine of Discovery
- 83 online views of the [webinar recording](#) since it aired on November 20
- 55 people trained online with the Massachusetts Interfaith Coalition and the Episcopal City Mission

# TRAININGS

## WASHINGTON, D.C.



In March of 2025, Sacred Reckonings held a full congregational training at Foundry United Methodist Church. Reparations teams from All Souls

Unitarian Church, Episcopal Divinity School, Healing the Roots Collective, and several individuals participated.



**NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**



In May of 2025, Sacred Reckonings held a full congregational training in New Orleans. Participants included racial justice teams from Trinity

Episcopal Church, First Unitarian Universalist Church, St. Peter Claver Catholic Church, and Rayne United Methodist Church.



**HYBRID FROM ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA**



United Theological Seminary hosted a hybrid session in May 2025. Two congregational teams from Grand Rapids, MI, and a

congregational team from Columbia, MO attended. A United Theological Seminary student also joined the training.



**PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA**



In October of 2025, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Christian Associations of Southwest Pennsylvania co-hosted a Sacred Reckonings training. There were three congregational teams from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, United Churches

of Olympia, and First United Methodist Church as well as representatives of several other communities. We also enjoyed a powerful presentation by Rev. Dr. Snyder about the Bethel AME reparations project.

# CIRCLES OF PRACTICE

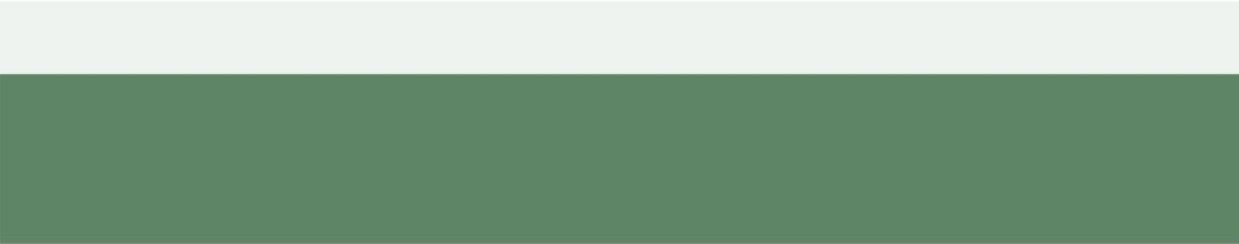
Since 2020, groups of white people seeking to learn about, make commitments, and take action towards repair and reparations have been meeting in circles of practice around a documentary film project, *Acts of Reparation*. Participants come with a range of experience in repair and reparations work: from the newly curious to those who have made life-long commitments. They are recruited from a variety of places including anti-racist communities of practice and organizing efforts, donor communities, spiritual communities, and more. For seven weeks, small groups gather to explore their history related to repair and reparations. This includes storytelling about their race and class, ancestors and family, and our country's history of slavery and colonization. All of this is grounded in honest inquiry, self-focus, courage and grace. Guided by a counsel of advisors, this initiative is intended to grow

the numbers of white people committed to the work of healing historic injury and to provide companionship and accountability for individuals who want to deepen their commitment to action towards reparations.

## *What participants say*

Sharing my own story about class/money with a small group of people was extraordinarily powerful for me and has moved me to want to think more about its particular value to the work of dismantling wealth concentration. Equally moving to hear others' stories in my small group and have the opportunity to know them in a unique and important way.

*A.S. Spring '23 Cohort*



Small groups helped me focus on the meaning of reparations from the micro to the macro. I also gained a much stronger sense of community around the work, but it promises to continue to be supportive and expansive as we plan to continue meeting and acting as a sounding board for ideas and dialogue within a (developing) shared language and goals around reparations.

*E.H. Fall '22 Cohort*

This experience has made a big impact on my thinking about reparations. I like that it has encouraged not just exploration, careful thought and discussion, but it has asked us to identify concrete actions that we can take to repair or participate in reparations.

*C.W. Spring '23 Cohort*

I'm so pleasantly surprised at how deep and honest we can get with total strangers, in a virtual space. It's deeply inspiring and healing to be able to connect with white folks on these issues we're conditioned to NEVER talk about. Thanks for the practice, the learning and the accountability in an area I've wanted to do more in for a while.

*N.P. Fall '23 Cohort*

In the spectrum of organizing strategies, Circles of Practice are an invitation into inquiry, engagement, and committed action rather than a didactic course about reparations or a debate over their value. Circles of Practice provide participants with dedicated time and support to consider repair and reparations, as well as connection, accompaniment, and accountability.

In the Fall of 2025, Circles of Practice hosted a seven-week experience for Sacred Reckonings training graduates or members of churches that had gone through the Sacred Reckonings process. While much of the Circles of Practice process is included in the Sacred Reckonings: White Settler-Colonizer Churches Doing the Work of Reparations, the opportunity for Sacred Reckonings alumni to be led by Julia Rhodes Davis was a special opportunity.



## ACTS OF REPARATION

Learn about the documentary at [actsofrepairation.com](http://actsofrepairation.com)



# COMING SOON

We have a robust plan for 2026. We have full congregational trainings planned for:

- Rochester, MN
- New Orleans, LA
- Online
- New York, NY
- Boston, MA

Additionally, we have contracted with the Damascus Project to offer a virtual six-week training on the Reparatory Eco-Map for

congregational racial justice teams or interested clergy leaders. We are also working closely with the Unitarian Universalist Ministerial Alliance to host a series of trainings for UU clergy, and with the Southern New England Conference of the UCC to hold a training for lay people around reparations, and are in ongoing conversation with several seminary colleagues about an offering for seminarians around reparatory processes.

## GRATITUDE TO OUR FUNDERS

We want to express our gratitude for the individual donors that support the work of Sacred Reckonings, including an anonymous major donor. Additionally, the Neighbors in Need grant from the United Church of Christ and a generous grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation allow us to do this critical work of reparations.

E. Rhodes and Leona B.  
CARPENTER FOUNDATION



## OUR TEAM



**REV. DANA NEUHAUSER**  
*Organizing, training & logistical coordination*

Rev. Dana Neuhauser (she/her) is an ordained deacon in the United Methodist Church. She likes to think of deacon as shorthand for justice-seeking, peace-making, disciple-equipping follower of Jesus. She has a heart for racial, LGBTQIA+, and environmental justice and seeks to invite and equip others to work for justice in the world as part of faithful living.

Dana is the Minister of Public Witness for New City Church in Minneapolis. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Council of Churches and on the Steering Team of MARCH (Multifaith Anti-Racism, Change & Healing).

Rev. Sara Green (she/her) is an organizer, artist and Unitarian Universalist minister driven by a lifelong commitment to resource stewardship that upholds revolutionary values and builds beloved community. Hailing from New Orleans, Sara finds her spiritual practice grounded in embodiment, valuing the connection between the physical and the spiritual in ways that have practical implications for being in right relationships. Sara is particularly interested in working with the stories we have around money and climate that excite our political imagination. She consults as part of the Stewardship For Us team and is the organizer for the Greater New Orleans Interfaith Climate Coalition and serves on the executive committee of Alternate ROOTS.



**REV. SARA GREEN**  
*Organizing & training*



REV. DR. REBECCA VOELKEL  
*Organizing, training & fundraising*

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Voelkel (she/her) is a pastor in the United Church of Christ who has worked for thirty-five years as an activist, trainer, and theologian. She currently is the Pastor for Justice Ministries and Director of the Center for Sustainable Justice at Lyndale UCC in Minneapolis, adjunct faculty at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, and a member of the MARCH (Multifaith Anti-Racism, Change & Healing) Steering Team. Her passion is supporting religiously rooted people to find expressions of their spirit in actions for justice.

Jessica (she/her) is an attorney who has fought for tribal nations' treaty rights in court and advised tribes in governance work for over 15 years. As a land-history consultant, she helps people and organizations learn the history of the land they stand on and locate themselves in our shared story. She created the Mni Sota Makoce Honor Tax to help recognize and remedy U.S. occupation of Dakota land, and is also a member of the MARCH (Multifaith Anti-Racism, Change & Healing) Steering Team.



JESSICA INTERMILL, ESQ.  
*Organizing, training & communications*



LIZ LOEB, JD AND PHD  
*Communications*

Liz (she/her) is a civil rights attorney and community organizer with twenty years of experience working in political and social movements for justice. Liz holds a law degree from NYU School of Law and a Ph.D in critical social theory from the NYU Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Liz was part of the litigation team that won the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *Safford v. Redding*, prohibiting forced strip searches in public schools, and led the successful statewide campaign to defeat the Minnesota 2012 Voter Restriction amendment. She now organizes with Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light.

## **The Center for Sustainable Justice marks 10th Anniversary**

The Center for Sustainable Justice was started in September of 2015. We are planning to spend much of 2026 celebrating the 10th anniversary of doing the work of healing justice in a religiously rooted way. We are SO grateful for ALL the support that has made our first ten years a celebration of the power of love and justice in the world!

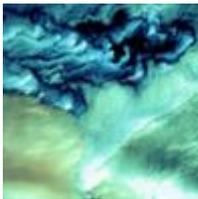
## **Fiscal Agency partners**

One of CSJ's ministries is supporting innovative work that doesn't have official non-profit status. This work has shifted and changed through the years. Currently, CSJ serves as the fiscal agent for David Weiss's work as a public theologian in his blog: Full Frontal Faith (<https://davidrweiss.com/davids-blog/>) in which he covers a wide variety of theological work, including climate justice.

We are also supporting the work of Out in the Backyard, a queer yoga initiative.

Additionally, we support the work queer people internationally.

## **A HUGE Thank-You to our Funders**



E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation



Neighbors in Need Grant

Without the support of these two funds, and the large grant from an anonymous foundation, our work as the Center for Sustainable Justice would be greatly diminished. And, so, we return thanks to God for their support!

## **Our Staff**



**Rev. Dr. Rebecca Voelkel (she/her)**, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, is the Pastor for Justice Ministries and Director of the Center for Sustainable Justice at Lyndale UCC. She is the co-author with Jessica Intermill, Esq. of *Sacred Reckonings: White Settler-Colonizer Churches Doing the Work of Reparations* and author of *Carnal Knowledge of God: Embodied Love and the Movement for Justice* (Fortress Press, 2017) and of *To Do Justice: A Study of Welcoming Congregations, A Time to Build Up: Analysis of the No on Proposition 8 Campaign and Its Implications for Future Pro-LGBTQIA Religious Organizing*, *Preventing Sexual Abuse: A Course of Study for Teenagers* (Pilgrim Press: 1996). She is the co-editor of *The New Queer*

*Desire: An Anthology of Intersectional Writing by LGBTQ+ Faith Leaders* (Center for Sustainable Justice: 2022) and has also contributed to several recent books including: *Unsettling the Word: Biblical Experiments in Decolonization* (Orbis: 2019), *Unlocking Orthodoxies for Inclusive Theologies: Queer Alternatives* (Routledge: 2020) and *Claiming God: Essays in honor Marilyn McCord Adams* (Pickwick Publications: 2022). Voelkel is a theologian, pastor, trainer, and movement-builder who specializes in coalition and collaborative partnerships across movements for justice. She can be found at [www.RevDrRebeccaMMVoelkel.com](http://www.RevDrRebeccaMMVoelkel.com).

**Rev. T. Michael Rock- Pastor for Congregational Life**

Before Rev. T. Michael came to Lyndale UCC, he was a pastor for 29 years in Sudbury, MA , Providence, RI and Robbinsdale, MN. Each congregation nurtured him and helped him to grow in his spiritual leadership. Over the past two years Rev. T. Michael Rock has served as the Director of Contextual Education and Spiritual Direction at United Seminary of the Twin Cities and as a professor in those programs and in Spiritual Formation. He is thrilled to be in a place that nourishes this bi-vocational journey of being a scholar, activist, pastor and spiritual companion. He brings to this ministry a passion for spiritual formation and social justice. He thinks we need to both pray and protest and that we need to ground ourselves in our spiritual lives and stand in solidarity with the earth and oppressed peoples. As a queer identified Christian Pastor, a follower of Jesus and a student of indigenous cosmology, he has been seeking the interconnectedness of all beings and creation. He wants to hear your story and invite you into the big story of Lyndale UCC and how we can transform each other and the world.



**Cali Jirsa** Church Administrator  
 Cali Jirsa started work as an administrator at her church, then at a bank. The 20 years following, Cali has been in the bicycling industry. She is the first solo woman to run a bike shop in Minneapolis and has always focused on accessibility for those who are underserved in cycling such as LGBTQIA, women, two-spirit, non-binary, and people of color. She has volunteered at Cycles for Change (transportation justice), Bolder Options (youth mentorship), and The Bond Between (animal fostering). She has two cats and a Belgian Malinois mix puppy, and when not training animals or riding a bike you can find her utilizing her art history background in crafting with stained glass.

**CSJ Advisory Council:** Allan Henden, Paul Thuras, Mary Vanderford, Liz Loeb, and Rev. Ashley Horan

**Budget At a Glance for The Center for Sustainable Justice**

	2025	Notes
<b>SOURCES OF SUPPORT</b>		
Grant sources	\$90,700	Carpenter Foundation, UCC Neighbors in Need, Half of the Anonymous Major Foundation
Individual contributions	\$54,500	Monthly donors and two major donors
Registration Fees and Co-Sponsorships	\$12,500	Sacred Reckonings trainings, Queer Prom
<b>TOTAL SOURCES</b>	<b>\$157,700</b>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Queer Prom	\$2,740	DJ, Drag Performances, Food, Security
Sacred Reckonings	\$129,096	Contracts for Organizers, Trainers, Website development, travel expenses
Other CSJ Projects	\$23,500	Partial Director salary, Organizing costs, educational events, sponsorships
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$155,336</b>	