

FAITH COALITION FOR THE COMMON GOOD NEWSLETTER



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GROWING THROUGH COVID

COVID 19 has altered the way in which the Faith Coalition for the Common Good (FCCG) Staff and volunteers operate, but it has not altered their spirit and determination to bring about a more just society. In person meetings and events were initially cancelled. But as the pandemic dragged on, the task forces resumed their activities, in person meetings and events transformed into ZOOM meetings. And, events began to be streamed live on Facebook. The FCCG task forces remain actively engaged in Census, Integrated Voter Engagement, the Police Community Review Commission, Fair Tax, Education, Broadband as a Public Utility, Transformative Justice and Ntosake. We will miss seeing everyone at the Fall Banquet, which has been cancelled. This year, instead of a Banquet we will connect with you, while observing social distancing, through the *Faith Coalition for the Common Good's 2020 YearBook*. In the meantime, here is a brief newsletter update on the FCCG task forces' recent activities.

FCCG is growing! Shelly Heideman is now splitting her time between the Faith Coalition and serving as the new State Director of Gamaliel of Illinois and Iowa (GOII). In August, FCCG welcomed Tyshianna Bankhead as a full-time Organizer. Tyshianna has a Master's Degree in Public Administration from University of Illinois, Springfield (UIS). August also saw the arrival of three new interns from UIS: Maria Sorto will be completing her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration this Fall 2020; R'Lee Jones is completing her Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration and Business Administration. Elijah Jones will be completing his Bachelor's Degree in Communications this Fall 2020.

Mission Statement

We are a coalition of faith communities, community organizations and individuals working collaboratively for racial equality, civic engagement, a fair economy and participatory decision-making.

Faith Coalition for the Common Good

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EVERYONE COUNTS

2020 Census

SHAPING FUTURES THROUGH CENSUS

FCCG received a state grant from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to help educate the hard to count communities, in Morgan County (Jacksonville), Sangamon County (Springfield), and Macon County (Decatur), on the importance of the Census and how to fill it out. Making sure that everyone is counted is extremely important because census numbers determine the amount of funding which comes into a community for after school programs, hot lunch programs, senior services, SNAP benefits and much more. In addition, census numbers determine the number of congressional representatives for each state.

FCCG partnered with local officials, faith communities, social service providers, and businesses to distribute Census information. We provided jobs for 35 people throughout the 3 counties. Many of those who worked for us did peer to peer phone-banking and door to door distribution of materials in their neighborhoods.

A total of 10,000 door hangers were distributed and over 22,000 people were called by phone.

COVID-19 made it challenging to reach citizens but because of our efforts, we were successful in increasing the number of residents in the hard to county communities who filled out the 2020 Census.

35
PEOPLE HIRED

10,000 DOOR HANGERS
DISTRIBUTED

22,000 PEOPLE CALLED



(CENSUS PARTNERS IN JACKSONVILLE, IL)
WEST CENTRAL MASS TRANSIT

NEXT
VOTER ENGAGEMENT



ACTION

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

ENGAGED TO VOTE

Intergrated Voter Engagement

The IVE task force continues to focus on encouraging people to engage in our democracy by voting. At the task force meetings, volunteers share ideas about how to reach out to people about voting. It can be as simple as mentioning early voting to a store clerk or asking a congregation to commit to 100% turnout. Volunteers wrote and mailed 2,000 postcards encouraging residents in areas that have traditionally had low voter turnout to vote. Organizer Tyshianna and Intern Maria, coordinated with 2 Springfield apartment complexes to have Volunteers are in the process of distributing 3,000 door hangers, which encourage citizens to vote and provide hours, dates and methods for early voting.

FCCG and Juneteenth, Inc. are co-hosting *Unity in Community: Baby Boomers to Gen Z Take the Polls* to encourage everyone young and old to vote, on October 24, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the County Building, 200 S. 9th Street, Springfield.

FCCG is recruiting phone bankers to encourage voting and drivers to take people to the polls. If you would like to volunteer or participate in IVE activities contact Tyshianna at Bankhead.Tyshianna@gmail.com or Jan Von Qualen at janvonq@gmail.com.

Post Cards in Spanish was included this year!

VOTE YES! FOR FAIR TAX

FCCG is promoting the Fair Tax Amendment, which changes the Illinois Constitution by removing the requirement that income be taxed at a flat rate and allows for income to be taxed at different rates. With a progressive tax, people who earn more money have higher tax rates. A flat rate structure results in those with lower incomes paying a higher portion of their income in taxes. The Fair Tax task force has hosted virtual presentations explaining the Fair Tax and explaining the voting process on the Proposed Amendment. If you would like to participate at future events or would like a sign for your yard contact [Jim Dixon at jdixon@gmail.com](mailto:jdixon@gmail.com).

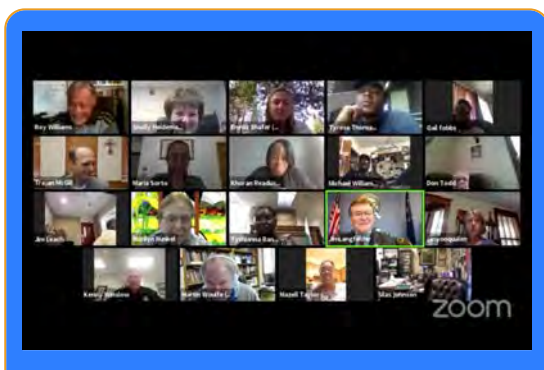
THE FAIR TAX AMENDMENT: IT'S AS SIMPLE AS 1-2-3

1. A tax cut for anyone who makes less than \$250,000 a year
2. The wealthiest finally pay their fair share
3. Fair funding and investment for our communities

JUSTICE & EQUITY

POLICE COMMUNITY REVIEW BOARD

Faith Coalition, Black Lives Matter (BLM), and Education & Action Together (EAT) are working together to strengthen the effectiveness of the Police Community Review Commission. They hosted a Zoom forum with Mayor Langfelder and Chief Winslow and had a subsequent meeting with them. One of the asks was to name people from the community, who are not affiliated with law enforcement, to be appointed to the Commission. The Mayor said there are two openings on the Commission right now. He has requested and received a suggested nominee from BLM. He would be receptive if FCCG would suggest an individual. If you would like to participate in the Police Review Commission action contact Roy Williams at roytheboss1@yahoo.com.



TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

No Money Bail Bonds



(FCCG Interns: Maria Sorto, Elijah Jones, and R'Lee Jones in front of the) County Courthouse

One of the task force's issues is pretrial justice. Pretrial justice deals with many subjects, FCCG is focusing on ending money bonds in particular, due to the number of people incarcerated because they are unable to pay expensive money bail bonds. Individuals who cannot make bail may be imprisoned for months or years until their trial. The inability to post bail can result in defendants accepting a plea bargain, not because they are guilty, but because they are needed at home or will lose their job. These injustices have no place in our society today and the FCCG stands for the fight to End Money Bond.

On Friday, September 25, FCCG, the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice, and the Coalition to End Money Bond took to the streets of Springfield with signs and banners to demand State representatives and senators pass the Pretrial Fairness Act. The Act would end money bond and make Illinois pretrial justice system fairer. FCCG volunteers made connections with citizens who found the topic interesting and even a restaurant owner who wanted to be educated on a scarcely known injustice.

FCCG is hosting a Zoom forum for the candidates, Dan Wright and Mike Drake, for Sangamon County State's Attorney. The candidates will have the opportunity to introduce themselves. Then they will be given prepared questions on the topics of 1) Pretrial Justice; 2) Community Service; 3) Diversifying the Office; and 4) the Rights of Those Involved in the System. The Zoom audience will be given the opportunity to propose additional questions through chat. Bernie Schoenberg will be the Master of Ceremonies. The forum will take place at 6 p.m. on October 28, 2020. It will be live streamed on Facebook. If you would like Zoom event, please contact Shelly Heideman at fccg2208@gmail.com.

If you would like to join the Transformative Justice task force, contact Tyshianna Bankhead at Bankhead.Tyshianna@gmail.com.

EDUCATION TO EMPOWER

FCCG is coordinating with Advance Illinois to maintain evidence-based funding for Illinois schools and improving remote learning experiences for students and families. They met with District 186 Superintendent Jennifer Gill and are collaborating with the District to create a diversity and inclusion curriculum for students and teachers. If you would like to work with the Education task force, contact Amber Alexander at aamber.alexander.aa@gmail.com.



NTOSAKE

"Ntosake" is a South African word is loosely translated to mean "she who walks with lions; she who comes with her own things." Ntosake is a women empowerment leadership and training taskforce created by the women of the National Gamaliel Network. Each local group of women is known as a "Pride". Within the Pride, the women are challenged to accept the responsibility of becoming active change agents and servant leaders within their local communities, and at the state and national levels. One focus of the FCCG Pride is training to recognize the various power matrices and relationships found within our community, State, nation, and organizations on all levels. Another training has been "how to organize people and organize money" for the benefit of their community on their local, state and national levels. If you would like to participate in Ntosake task force, contact Linda Byrd at (217) 220-6396 or Shelly Heideman at fccg2208@gmail.com.



BROADBAND! BROADBAND!

FCCG is lobbying for broadband to be a public utility because of the important and positive impact broadband has in our communities in e-learning, tele- medicine and jobs. Broadband has become increasingly essential during the Covid 19 pandemic. Broadband is necessary to connect our communities to opportunities. Making it a public utility would help to close the digital divide.

Senator Antonio Muñoz (1st District) introduced Shell bill #3998 to amend the Broadband Advisory Council Act to provide that, in addition to its other duties, the Council shall explore the feasibility of universal or public broadband.

Illinois State Senator Andy Manar has indicated that he will officially support it once he has access to the capitol. The task force has also spoken to Illinois State Senator Neil Anderson is undecided; and US Representative IL 17th District, Congresswoman Cheri Bustos, who are undecided. They have met with and received support from: Scott McKissick of Rock Island County; Terri Vandewiele, Assistant Superintendent at United Township, District #30; Jennifer Gill, Superintendent of District 186. The task force meets every two weeks on Wednesdays.

If you would like to participate in the Connect Me campaign, contact Juana Medina at juana@gamalielmetrochi.org or Shelly Heideman at fccg2208@gmail.com.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Abraham Lincoln Unitarian
Universalist Church
AFSCME IL Council 31
Retirement Subchapter 86
Ambassadors for Christ
Ministries
Boys and Girls Club
Calvary Missionary Baptist
Church
Central Baptist Church
Church Women United
Dominican Sisters of
Springfield
Douglas Avenue Methodist Church
First Presbyterian Church
Garvey-Tubman Center
Hospital Sisters of
St. Francis
IL Association of
Community Action Agencies
IL Federation of Public Employees
Local 4408/IFT/AFT/AFL-CIO
Islamic Society of Greater
Springfield
Memorial Health Systems
Ministerial Alliance of Springfield
and Vicinity
Monroe Street Christian Church
Operating Engineers Local 965
Operative Platers and Cement
Masons Local 18
Options Outreach Ministries
Painters Local 90
Pax Christi Springfield
Pure Haven Ministries
SEIU Healthcare
Springfield and Central IL Trades
and Labor Council
St. John's Hospital
St. Patrick's School
United Media Guild
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Word and Spirit Community



Unity in the Community: Baby Boomer to Gen Z Take the Polls

October 24, 2020 | 12 -4pm
Sangamon County Courthouse (Outside)

Rent Control Issue Town Hall

October 26, 2020 | 2pm via Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/84411111111>

Sangamon County State's Attorney Virtual Forum

October 28, 2020 | 6:00pm
Zoom Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/84411111111>

Gamaliel National Leadership Training

November 8-14, 2020 and March 21-26, 2021

Faith Coalition's 2020 Year book: Coming Soon

Thank you

Thank you to all who have supported FCCG with their time and money throughout this challenging year. We look forward to the future, when FCCG can resume in person events. In the meantime, we look forward to your continuing support and invite you to join us in our Zoom meetings.