

# Ministry Minute

## Recap of Renewal Works Initiatives and Introduction to Beatitudes Sessions

Two years ago we participated as a parish in the Renewal Works process! Remember? Through a series of exercises and a parish-wide survey, we shared what we were longing for in terms of connecting personally and collectively to deepen our faith through personal growth and our outreach to the larger community.

The Renewal Works results revealed that our top priorities as a congregation were:

1. To strive for justice and peace and to respect the dignity of every human being.
2. To bring values rooted in faith in God to our participation in public life.
3. To seek spiritual friendship and accountability through individual and group reflection on our spiritual journeys.

The RW team then envisioned several recommendations to implement as a congregation:

- Conducting a spiritual fair to familiarize people with spiritual practices that could be used on a daily basis to promote prayer/deepening faith
- Create more opportunities for people to connect personally and share our own spiritual journeys
- To encourage that all church gatherings begin and end with prayer as a way to “embed the Bible” in all activities.

AND THEN COVID HIT. Much of this momentum had to be put on hold. Now this fall, as we continue to gather for in-person/virtual worship, we are preparing to initiate two opportunities that directly address our RW recommendations. The first is the Granite State Organizing Project, which speaks to the congregation’s first two priorities – “to strive for justice and peace and to respect the dignity of every human being” and – “to bring values rooted in faith to our participation in public life.” When Chris Potter from GSOP was here last month, over 20 members of our congregation attended the Listening Session after the 10:00 service. Due to that initial interest, our plan is to focus part of our community service intentions on involvement with the Seacoast Chapter of GSOP. Details to follow.

The second initiative focuses on our congregation’s third priority – “to seek spiritual friendship through group reflection on our spiritual journeys”. We invite you to participate in a church-wide group experience that incorporates prayer, scripture, spiritual practices, and shared discussion through a six-week series, offering us more personal connection as a congregation.

Beginning on December 7th, we will offer a Tuesday evening Advent Series based on The Beatitudes. Extending through December and January, five sessions will be held on Tuesdays, via zoom from 6:30-7:45 pm. There will be one in-person session in the middle of the series where we will gather in Harris Hall following 10:00 worship. Our hope is to learn and grow together by sharing personal reflections on the Beatitudes, as we prepare for the birth of Christ and seek the wisdom of Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount. Several folks from the RW team will be speaking to you each week from the lectern during the month of November explaining more about this offering. Information can also be found in the E-Newsletter. Please plan to join us for any or all of these gatherings!