

e-News / Methodist Federation for Social Action Rio Texas Conference

*Mobilizing people within the United Methodist Church to act
on issues of justice, peace, and reconciliation in the church, nation, and world.*

MFSA Meeting on Thursday, October 12

Texas Impact: (Rebounding from) the 85th Texas Legislature

Continuing our year-long theme of **PERSIST!**, the October meeting of Rio Texas MFSA will be Thursday, October 12 at Saint John's United Methodist Church – Austin, beginning at 7:00p. Our guest speaker will be **Scott Atnip**, the Congregational Outreach Director of **Texas Impact**. Scott will talk about the 85th Texas legislative session: what happened, what didn't happen, and next steps. Now that the dust has settled somewhat, Scott's presentation will be informative and forward-looking.

We invite you to join us at Saint John's UMC, 2140 Allandale Rd. for this special discussion. Contact Rowland Curry rcurry@austin.rr.com with questions.

Join us at 6:30p for snacks. The program begins at 7p. All are welcome.

For San Antonio Justice-Seekers

Salt & Light:

Upcoming meeting: Sunday, October 15th at 12:15, in the Travis Park UMC Conference Room (third Sunday)

Upcoming actions:

Black Lives Matter, Austin, General Meeting
Oct 9, 6pm. RSVP with Susan Aguilar for van ride from church.

Counter protest against white supremacy in action; 900 Guadalupe St, Austin, TX 78701
Saturday, Feb 23rd. 7am - 5pm (time negotiable) RSVP with Susan Aguilar for van ride from church.

United Methodist Church Constitution:

Article V. Racial Justice—The United Methodist Church proclaims the value of each person as a unique child of God and commits itself to the healing and wholeness of all persons. The United Methodist Church recognizes that the sin of racism has been destructive to its unity throughout its history. Racism continues to cause painful division and marginalization. The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate racism, whether in

organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large. The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of racial justice at all times and in all places.

Susan Aguilar – Text or leave a message at [210-717-8604](tel:210-717-8604). Please feel free to let me know of upcoming social justice or social action events.

Statement from Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe, GBCS



Praying for comfort and demanding action

(10/2/2017)

The violence we have seen in Las Vegas is abhorrent and heartbreaking. We lift up our prayers for the loved ones of those who have been killed and those who have been injured. May they find comfort in the promise of the Prince of Peace.

Christ calls us to be peacemakers, which is why – along with our prayers – we must work to end gun violence. To do nothing is to be complicit in this seemingly endless terror gripping our communities.

Our United Methodist Church [calls us to advocate](#) at all levels for laws that prevent or reduce gun violence. Our leaders, and those with the ability to reduce gun violence, *must* act.

As we cry out, “How long, O Lord,” we know that there is another way. We must demand action and pursue it together. Every person has an opportunity and a responsibility to reduce gun violence. May we all commit to turning swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks.

[Link to GBCS](#)

From Texas Gun Sense

Texas Gun Sense Statement on Las Vegas Mass Shooting

Texas Gun Sense is saddened and outraged by the overnight shooting in Las Vegas, NV that left more than 50 dead and more than 400 injured. “Our hearts go out to all those whose family and friends are affected by this tragedy,” per Gyl Switzer, Texas Gun Sense Executive Director. Gun violence is a public health crisis in the US. Texas

Gun Sense advocates for common sense, evidence-based policies to reduce gun injuries and deaths. Every incident like that in Las Vegas over night is indication that action is needed now in communities, states, and nationwide.

Texas Gun Sense will issue another press release as more facts are known. Texas Gun Sense is a statewide nonprofit and nonpartisan organization advocating for common sense, evidence-based policies to reduce gun injuries and deaths. For more information, visit www.txgunsense.org

Gun Violence Facts from Texas Gun Sense

Over [3,200 gun-related deaths](#) occur in Texas each year. By better understanding the scope of the problem we can build strong solutions that save lives.

Texas Statistics

[Texas Crime Analysis](#)

[Number of Firearm Hospitalizations 2015](#) (Archives: [2013](#), [2014](#))

[Domestic Violence and Guns](#)

[Guns #2 Cause of Accidental Child Death in Harris County](#)

[Children Living with Unlocked, Loaded Firearms](#)

[Firearm Suicide Rates TX Compared to U.S. 2014](#) (Archives: [2013](#))

[Number of Active Texas Concealed Carry Handgun License Holders](#)

[Guns Should Not Be Stored in Cars. 1 in 6 Auto Thefts Were From Unlocked Vehicles](#)

News from First UMC – Austin

FUMC MEMBERS ADOPT MARRIAGE RESOLUTION

On September 24, members of First United Methodist Church of Austin adopted a resolution to discontinue marriage ceremonies at its facilities in order to align its wedding policies with its strongly-held principle of full inclusion of all persons. This resolution creates a policy that treats weddings of opposite-sex and same-sex couples equally but does not violate The Book of Discipline. The measure was approved by 93% of the nearly 300 members present and voting. As a result of this policy change, FUMC clergy will not officiate at opposite-sex or same-sex weddings, but can offer a blessing, prayer, or homily. No marriage ceremonies will be allowed in FUMC-Austin facilities after December 31, 2017.

Following the vote, the Board of Trustees will draft an official wedding policy to reflect this change. FUMC will continue to work with other UMC congregations in Texas and beyond to advocate for change in United Methodist Church policies that discriminate against LGBTQ persons.

OCTOBER 8, SUNDAY Bishop Robert Schnase Preaches . 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary. Elected to the Episcopacy in 2004, Bishop Schnase began serving the Rio Texas Conference September 1, 2016. Before his election as bishop, Schnase served for 15 years as senior pastor of First UMC in McAllen, Texas. Schnase is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and Perkins School of Theology. His message, entitled “Nibbling Our Way Lost,” focuses on Luke 15:1-7.

Montopolis Friendship Community Center

MFCC 60th Birthday Celebration

Saturday, October 14, 2017 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Celebrate 60 years of United Methodist Women's vital community ministry to the Montopolis neighborhood by enjoying light refreshments, kid-friendly fun, and a tour of the Montopolis Friendship Community Center's early childhood education program and facility. Located at 403 Vargas Road, MFCC and the Capital Area United Methodist Women invite all Methodists to and enjoy this time of learning and celebration.

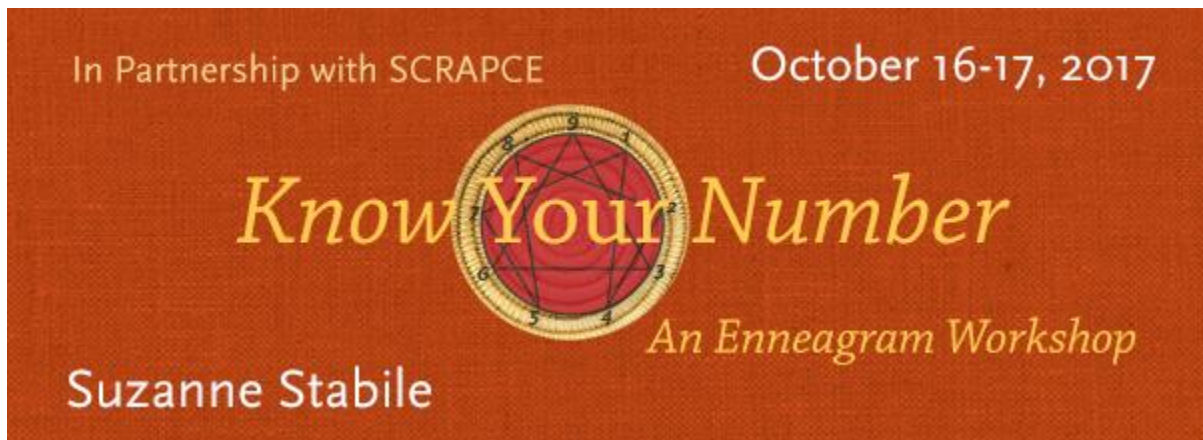
Know Your Number?

Know Your Number: An Enneagram Workshop

with Suzanne Stabile

October 16-17, 2017

Austin Theological Seminary



Undoing Racism Workshop

**Undoing Racism® Workshop #2
for the Capital District UMC
Oct 19-21
[Register](#)**

The Capital District UMC will convene its second **Undoing Racism** workshop October 19-21, 2017, at St. Peter's United Methodist Church in Austin, Texas. The goal of this event is to help build a strong community of UM leaders across the district who are familiar with the evil of racism and are equipped to resist it in whatever form it presents itself in our personal lives, our churches, and our world. If you sense a call to a deeper understanding of racism and how to undo it, please [read on](#) or [register your support](#).

St Peter's United Methodist Church
[4509 Springdale Rd, Austin, TX 78723](#)
Thursday, October 19th, 6 pm - 9 pm
Friday, October 20th, 8 am - 6 pm
Saturday, October 21st, 8 am - 4 pm

[Click here](#) for more information.



iACT Red Bench

The Red Bench: Inclusion

Join us on Tuesday, October 24 for a courageous conversation on the topic of Inclusion at [Temple Beth Shalom](#).

If you plan to attend, please [RSVP](#)

Event Details

October 24, 2017

6:30 pm -8:30 pm

Email iact@interfaithtexas.org

Phone 512-386-9145

Website interfaithtexas.org

Journey of Hope

Sunday, October 29
Friends Meeting of Austin
3701 East MLK Blvd
10-10:50 am and 1-3pm

Simple vegetarian lunch served at 12:30
Speakers: Terry Steinberg, Bill Pelke, Bill Babbitt, David Kaczynski, Delia Perez

Journey of Hope...from Violence to Healing is an organization that is led by murder victim family members that conducts public education speaking tours and addresses alternatives to the death penalty.

Come and hear Journey "storytellers" relate their struggle to heal from tragedy. Meet and talk with real folks who are choosing not to seek revenge but taking the path of forgiveness, love and compassion for all of humanity. <https://www.journeyofhope.org>

Texas Freedom Network

TEXAS FREEDOM NETWORK'S *Annual Luncheon*

Friday, November 3, 2017

MAKE YOUR LUNCHEON RESERVATION TODAY!

Friday, November 3, 2017 | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
Zilker Ballroom | [Hyatt Regency Downtown](#)
208 Barton Springs Road | Austin, TX 78704

Luncheon Co-Chairs

Elma Cantú Aldrete, Marilí Cantú Burbes and Maria Cantú Hexsel
[2017 Annual Luncheon Committee](#)

2017 Walking the Walk Honoree

Louis Black

2017 Samantha Smoot Activist Honorees

Liz Hostetler & Krista Noland

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

October 10: [Anthony Graves](#), who spent more than 12 years on death row before being exonerated, will speak at Texas State University in San Marcos on October 10 as part of the Common Experience. The event will be 7 p.m. in the Alkek Teaching Theater. It is free and open to the public.

October 11: The TCADP San Antonio Chapter will host a member meeting at the Law Alumni Room in the Sarita Kenedy East Law Library ([1 Camino Santa Maria St.](#)) at St. Mary's Law School. The meeting will begin at 6:30 PM. For more information, please contact sanantonio@tcadp.org. The TCADP San Antonio Chapter meets on the second Wednesday of every month.

October 11: St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish in Spring is hosting an event featuring speaker Anthony Graves and Deacon Richard Lopez on October 11, 2017 at 7:30PM. Please view this [flyer](#) for more information.

October 14: Join Witness to Innocence, Catholic Mobilizing Network, Journey of Hope, TCADP, and the Texas Defender Service for the Texas premiere of the film, "The Gathering;" which tells the story of Witness to Innocence, the only national organization of 159 exonerated death row survivors and their families. A panel discussion with death row exonerees and a murder victim's family member will follow. The event will begin at 7PM at the Parsley Center Auditorium at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory ([8900 Bellaire Blvd., Houston, 77036](#)). Please RSVP for this event at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-gathering-texas-film-premiere-and-panel-discussion-tickets-38156637530>.

October 17: "Justice Without Death" is an event at First Congregational Church in Houston. Hear and meet Journey of Hope storytellers and representatives from the Office of Kim Ogg, Harris County District Attorney, Tuesday October 17, 7pm – [9pm, 10840 Beinhorn Road, Houston](#).

October 22: Travis Park United Methodist Church in San Antonio will host a presentation by the Journey of Hope on 10:00am Sunday October 22 in the Labyrinth Room. Led by family members of murder victims joined by families with loved ones on death row, the exonerated, and others, the Journey of Hope puts a human face on the issue of the death penalty. Contact Shirley Watkins, sswat428@aol.com, for information on this event.

Scheduled Executions

The State of Texas is scheduled to execute three people this month:

- On October 12, Robert Pruett is scheduled to be put to death for the murder of Corrections Office Daniel Nagel in the McConnell Unit in Beeville, Texas in 1999. Pruett has steadfastly maintained his innocence. No physical evidence connects him with the crime, and recent DNA analysis of the murder weapon revealed a DNA profile belonging neither to Pruett nor to Officer Nagle. Pruett has faced six execution dates in the past five years. Take Action: Contact Governor Abbott and the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles to stop the execution of Robert Pruett.
- On October 18, Anthony Shore is scheduled to be put to death for multiple murders in Harris County. Sentenced in November 2004, Shore is the last white defendant to receive a death sentence in Harris County. If it proceeds, his execution would be the first out of Harris County this year. [Harris County](#) accounts for 127 executions since 1982 (more than any state except Texas).

- On October 26, [Clinton Young](#) is scheduled to be put to death for the murders of Doyle Douglas and Samuel Petrey in 2001 in Midland County. He is currently the only Midland County offender on death row.

Texas accounts for 5 out of the 18 executions nationwide thus far in 2017. Currently, there are three additional executions [scheduled](#) in Texas in the remaining months of 2017.

Attend a [vigil](#) in your community on the day of executions. Information and updates on cases are available on our [website](#) and through [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Out Youth

In Honor of Robin and Connor Richard



For 27 years, Out Youth has been a safe place for youth of all sexual orientations and gender identities to be themselves. At the September meeting of Rio Texas MFSA, Robin Richard shared with us some of her family's journey of learning that their child is transgender. Connor has been living as a female for this past year and is keeping the name Connor.

Robin praised the efforts of Out Youth to provide a safe place for young people to be themselves. In honor of Robin and Connor, Rio Texas MFSA will donate \$100 to Out Youth. Here is the website, if you are interested in donating: <https://www.outyouth.org/>

Time for Pumpkins!



Watch for Pumpkin Patches in October at area churches:

Austin:
Bethany UMC
Manchaca UMC
St. Luke UMC
St. Mark UMC
Saint John's UMC

Tarrytown UMC

Buda UMC

Notes from Third Coast Activist

“CLIMATE CHANGE DENIAL: WHY HISTORY MATTERS”

Date: October 5, 2017

Time: 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm

University of Texas history professor [Megan Raby](#) will examine how and why historians should use our research and teaching to historicize climate change, climate science, and climate denial. Raby is an environmental historian and author of the forthcoming book *American Tropics: The Caribbean Roots of Biodiversity Science*.

The event is sponsored by the Institute for Historical Studies in the Department of History. More [information online](#). RSVP to cmeador@austin.utexas.edu.

Location: University of Texas, [Garrison Hall](#) (GAR 4.100), Austin

“AFTER THE STORM: BUILDING RESILIENT AND EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES”

Date: October 6, 2017

Time: 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

This University of Texas [Opportunity Forum](#)'s Lunch Series program will focus on the rebuilding after Hurricane Harvey. What needs to be done to help the most vulnerable survivors rebuild their lives? How can we protect all residents from future flooding and exposure to other hazards? And what lessons have we learned from prior disasters to ensure that disaster recovery funds are spent more equitably and effectively?

Panelists include Rebecca Elliott, Reporter, Houston Chronicle; Tom McCasland, Director, Housing and Urban Development, City of Houston; Chrishelle Palay, Houston Co-director, Texas Housers; Dr. Shannon Van Zandt, Professor of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning, Hazard Reduction & Recovery Center, Texas A & M University; and moderator Heather Way, Clinical Professor and Director, Entrepreneurship and Community Development Clinic, UT School of Law.

The event is free, with lunch provided, but seating is limited and an [RSVP is required](#).

Location: Francis Auditorium in Townes Hall (TNH 2.114), University of Texas School of Law, Austin

CODENEXT FROM MULTIPLE DISTRICT PERSPECTIVES

Date: October 7, 2017

Time: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

A panel will discuss CodeNEXT, the City of Austin's proposed land development code, which was recently published in a second draft version. Speakers include: Jimmy Flannigan, Council Member, District 6; Jeff Travillion, County Commissioner, Precinct 1; Elizabeth Mueller, Associate Professor of Community and Regional Planning, UT Austin School of Architecture.

The event is sponsored by [Common Ground for Texans](#), a nonpartisan nonprofit based in Austin, Texas.

Location: Yarborough Library, 2200 Hancock, Austin

PANEL ON EQUITY IN THE 2017 AUSTIN SCHOOL BOND PACKAGE

Date: October 11, 2017

Time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

This summer the Austin school board called for a \$1.05 billion bond package for voters' approval in November. Panelists will discuss whether enough equity was built into the package and how equity is shaping the future of education in Austin.

Panelists include: Ted Gordon, Austin ISD Trustee, District 1; Peggy Vasquez, Save East Austin Schools; Jayme Mathias, Austin ISD Trustee, District 2; Paul Saldana, former Austin ISD Trustee, District 6; Tam Hawkins, President/CEO, Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce; and moderator Alberta Phillips of the Austin American-Statesman.

The forum, sponsored by the [East Austin Coalition for Quality Education](#), is free but please [RSVP online](#).

Location: [Huston-Tillotson University](#), 900 Chicon St., Austin, 78702

“MEXICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT” WITH PRISCILLA SOLIS YBARRA

Date: October 19, 2017

Time: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

[Priscilla Solis Ybarra](#), a professor of English and Latina/o and Mexican-American Studies at the University of North Texas, will discuss her recent book, *Writing the Goodlife: Mexican American Literature and the Environment*, with University of Texas professors John Morán González and Domino Perez.

The event is sponsored by Environmental Humanities @ UT, Department of English, Center for Mexican American Studies, and Department of Mexican American & Latina/o Studies. More information on the [Facebook event page](#).

Location: University of Texas at Austin campus, CLA 1.302E, Julius Glickman Conference Center (first floor, [CLA Building](#)). Paid parking in the Brazos Garage, 210 E. MLK Blvd.

AI-JEN POO SPEAKING ON “IMMIGRATION AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN FAMILIES”

Date: October 19, 2017

Time: 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

[Ai-jen Poo](#) will discuss the role of immigrant women in the American care economy, featuring the stories and solutions of immigrant women for a more caring economy and democracy.

Poo is Executive Director of the [National Domestic Workers Alliance](#) and Co-director of [Caring Across Generations](#). She also was a co-founder of [Domestic Workers United](#) and led a seven-year legislative campaign that resulted in the nation's first Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights in New York City. Her 2015 book, *The Age of Dignity: Preparing for the Elder Boom in Changing America*, outlines a road map to create a more caring nation, providing solutions for fixing our fraying safety net while also increasing opportunities for women, immigrants, and the unemployed.

The lecture, sponsored by the [Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice](#), will be followed by a reception. Free registration and more [information online](#).

Location: Eidman Courtroom, University of Texas School of Law, 727 E Dean Keeton St., Austin, 78705

“FREE SPEECH ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES: WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE?”

Date: October 20, 2017

Time: 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

Recent incidents on college campuses involving controversial speakers have sparked a surge in disruptive and sometimes violent protests by activists. How should college campuses respond to hate speech? What are the constitutional limits on restricting speech on college campuses?

Panelists include: Brianna Davis, Educational Leadership and Policy; Robert Jensen, Journalism; Peniel Joseph, History and Public Affairs; H.W. Perry, Jr., Government and Law; Shetal Vohra-Gupta, Institute for Urban Policy Research and Analysis; Sharon Watkins Jones, Texas ACLU; and moderator Leonard Moore, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement.

The event—sponsored by the University of Texas' Institute for Urban Policy Research and Analysis and the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, with co-sponsorship of the [Opportunity Forum](#)—is free, with lunch provided, but seating is limited and an [RSVP is required](#).

Location: Avaya Auditorium, [POB 2.302](#), 201 E. 24th St., University of Texas, Austin

VALERIA LUISELLI ON CHILD MIGRANTS

Date: October 26, 2017

Time: 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Mexican novelist and essayist [Valeria Luiselli](#) will discuss her book [Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in 40 Questions](#), which recounts her experience working as an interpreter for child migrants seeking entry into the United States. Luiselli explains that work in an interview on [Democracy Now!](#)

More [information online](#). The event is co-sponsored by Senior Fellows, the honors program of the Moody College of Communication, the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, the Plan II Honors Program, and the Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas.

Location: University of Texas, [Belo Center for New Media](#) (BMC 1.202), 300 W. Dean Keeton, Austin

Justice For Our Neighbors

Mark your calendars, you are invited to JFON Austin's 3rd Annual Benefit Dinner!
Take a Stand with Austin Region Justice for our Neighbors!



[Stand with Us!](#)

3rd Annual Benefit Dinner

Sat, **November 11**, 2017

6:30 PM – 9:30 PM

Asian American Resource Center
8401 Cameron Road
Austin, TX 78754

Austin Region Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON Austin) is a non-profit law office, welcoming refugees and immigrants into our communities by providing free, high-quality immigration legal services, education, and advocacy.

In the last year, JFON Austin provided twelve Know Your Rights Information sessions and over 80 individual immigration legal consultations. We also represented 110 refugees and immigrant clients in 140 cases. Our core programs offer consultations, emergency preparedness, and immigration legal representation to immigrants across Central Texas. JFON Austin aims to strengthen our individual representation of clients and our education to the immigrant community regarding steps to mitigate harm to their families in the event of raids, detention, or removal.

We invite you to experience how JFON Austin keeps immigrant families together. We hope that you will be able to join us for this event!

Foundation for the Homeless Fundraiser



8th Annual Spirit of Compassion Awards
Nurturing Seeds of Success
Honorary Chairs, Pat & Jane Durbin



8th Annual Spirit of Compassion Awards
Saturday, November 19, 6:00 p.m.
Archer Hotel at the Domain

This awards ceremony recognizes donors, community leaders and business leaders who make a difference in our community. Spirit of Austin Honors donors who have modeled a spirit of generous giving to Foundation for the Homeless and other community organizations engaged in the fight against hunger, homelessness and poverty.

There is a good seed in every heart. Attend to it with compassion. Shower it with hope. Warm it with love. And it will grow and bloom abundantly for generations to come.

Equality Texas Legislative Scorecard

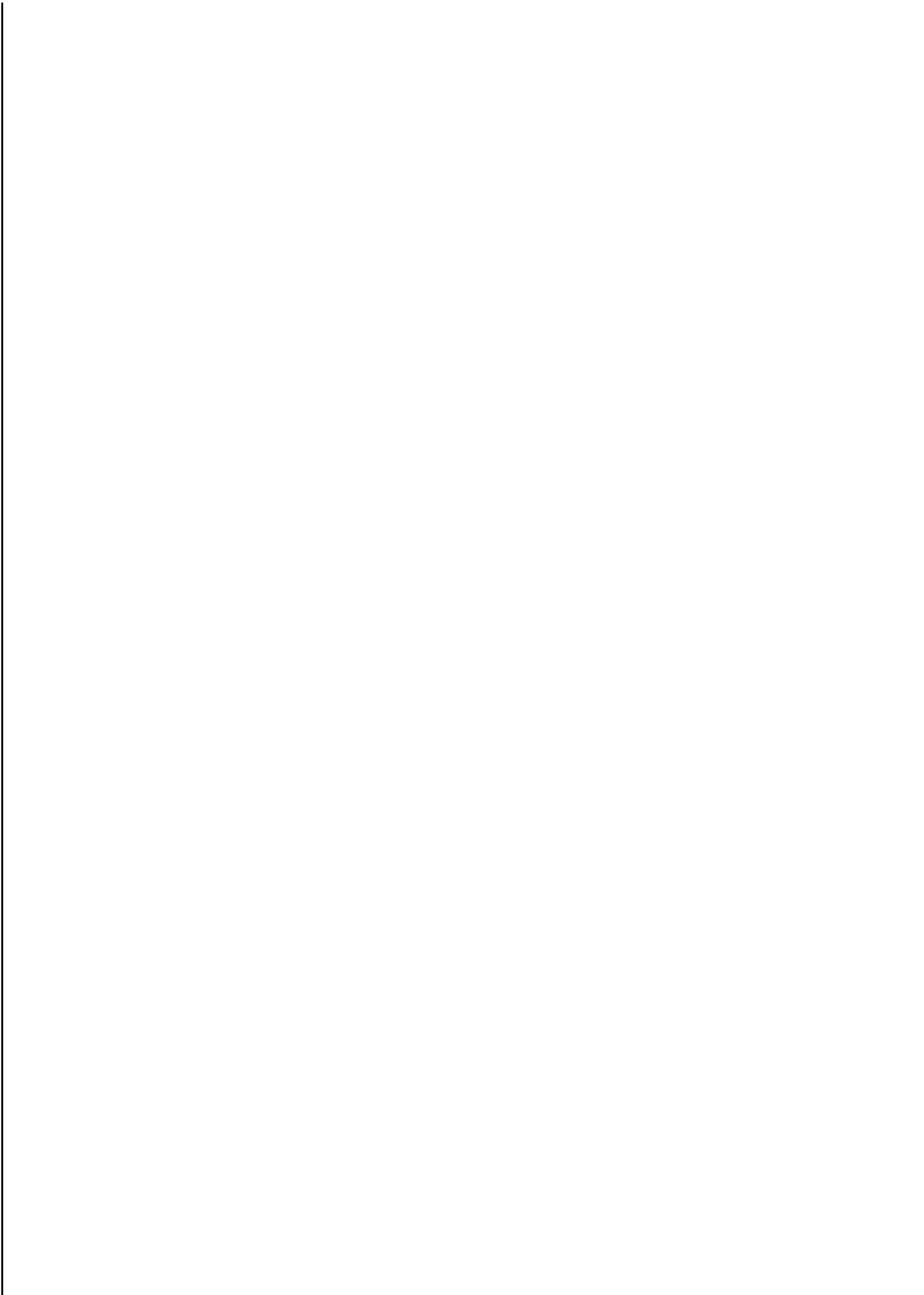
LEGISLATIVE REPORT & SCORECARD 2017

During what is now being called the “session of oppression”, the Equality Texas team and its members have been on the ground fighting for the very heart of our mission and guiding principles. This session, over two dozen bills targeting LGBTQ people have been filed. Many of these bills target our most vulnerable and marginalized communities.

<https://www.equalitytexas.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2017LegislativeReportScorecard.pdf>

Southern Poverty Law Center

The Little Rock Nine – and America – 60 Years Later



Sixty years before [Colin Kaepernick](https://www.splcenter.org/news) took a knee, nine black teenagers in Little Rock, Arkansas, took a stand. <https://www.splcenter.org/news>

MFSA Depends On Your Help For Its Programs and Activities

How to join or support MFSA

Please join with us as we connect progressive United Methodists in putting faith into action!



Membership in MFSA is not predicated on ability to pay. We do not have “dues”. However, our local unit and the National Office need funding each year for programs and activities. Membership gifts and special giving are always appreciated. MFSA is classified as a 501(c)(3) organization by the IRS. Membership gifts to MFSA are tax deductible as provided by law.

There are several easy ways to join or support MFSA.

- You can log onto the national MFSA website, <http://www.mfsaweb.org> and follow the instructions there (you can safely use a credit card). Please indicate that you are part of the Rio Texas MFSA.
- Or, you can mail a check made out to “Rio Texas - MFSA” to our Treasurer, Janice Curry, at 1509 Mearns Meadow Blvd, Austin 78758. The suggested donation is \$60, but any amount is welcome. Thanks for your support!

Historically, we have had eight monthly meetings per year, generally on the second Thursday of the month (this may change in the future). We communicate using monthly electronic newsletters & updates to our website and Facebook page.

Stay Connected with MFSA

MFSA - Conference Website: <http://riotexasmfsa.org/>

MFSA – National Site: <http://www.mfsaweb.org>

Check out our [Facebook Page](#) Rio Texas Chapter MFSA

What Does The Lord Require Of You?