



B.R.E.A.D. update

October 22, 2021

### Important Dates

Monday, November 15, 2021 – “Annual Assembly”. This meeting is to hear about the results from the “Listening Process” and to join with hundreds of others to commit to follow up on those conversations with the “Issue Work”.

We will always highlight important dates at the beginning. Please read on to find out more.

### Update

Redeemer and B.R.E.A.D., an origin story

Every summer, Redeemer has a book study. In July of 2019, the book was *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo. Normally, the book study meets weekly in July and then it is finished. But the 2019 book study took hold and nobody wanted to stop meeting. The group continued to meet, approximately monthly, to learn about various topics related to race. They read more books, they had speakers, they watched movies, and they had discussions. In addition to learning about the issues, they researched various groups that are working on solutions. One of those groups was the B.R.E.A.D. Organization.

B.R.E.A.D.’s mission, per their website, is to build the power of people of faith to solve community problems. In meetings with thousands of community residents, the organization presses targeted decision-makers to implement solutions to those problems. Every year, the organization:

- Conducts a listening and voting process to choose one new community problem that is added to the organization's list of issues
- Dozens of leaders are trained to research that problem and identify proven solutions
- Along with identifying solutions, the research committee identifies the appropriate decision-maker in the community with the authority to implement that solution
- At the annual Nehemiah Action Meeting, B.R.E.A.D. congregations bring out thousands of people to press those decision-makers for specific commitments
- Throughout the year, B.R.E.A.D. leaders follow up with those officials to ensure that the solutions are implemented

On April 14, 2021, Redeemer’s Anti-Racism Group voted to recommend to Council that Redeemer join B.R.E.A.D. because it is an established organization with a proven history of getting results. B.R.E.A.D. would give Redeemer a chance to truly make a difference and allow various entry points for members. Those entry points include reading the Reflections articles and B.R.E.A.D. bulletin board, attending meetings at Redeemer, attending city-wide B.R.E.A.D. meetings, joining the B.R.E.A.D. Organization as a



## B.R.E.A.D. update

Justice Ministry Network Member, joining the research groups...the opportunities are limitless. One Redeemer attendee commented that they have been so frustrated by feeling powerless especially after George Floyd's murder and they are overjoyed to finally be doing something constructive.

On April 20, 2021, Council followed the recommendation of the Anti-Racism Group and joined B.R.E.A.D.. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, Redeemer was welcomed into B.R.E.A.D. membership. Redeemer has now entered into B.R.E.A.D.'s yearly cycle. B.R.E.A.D. is currently in the listening phase where individual faith communities hold "house meetings" to listen to what people are concerned about. Redeemer jumped right in, holding 5 "house meetings". People were great! They attended and spoke freely about what is on their minds. They passionately voiced concerns about education, access to food and housing, neighborhood safety, rising utility bills, policing, climate change and other issues.

A quick note about Jargon. Redeemer benefits from B.R.E.A.D. being established and extremely organized. Naturally they come with a new vocabulary that is unfamiliar to us at the moment. A couple of examples:

**B.R.E.A.D.** – Building Responsibility Equality and Dignity. Name of the organization.

**House meetings** - listening sessions that happen in homes, coffee shops, churches, synagogues and on Zoom when people share what their greatest struggles are.

**Team Members** - People that lead their faith community in their B.R.E.A.D. efforts are called Team Members.

**Justice Ministry Network Members (JMNM)** - People that commit to engage with a handful of asks:

1. Bring at least 3 people to the big Nehemiah Action in May 2022
2. Attend three other city-wide assemblies
  - a. Annual Assembly Monday, November 15, 2021
  - b. Rally in April, 2022
  - c. Celebration in June, 2022
3. Consider investing \$200 or more

What's next? We are just starting out. The main thing is that the B.R.E.A.D. group wants to keep the lines of communication open between B.R.E.A.D. and Redeemer. They will let you know when there are events going on and progress being made. The opportunity is always available to get more involved. The B.R.E.A.D. group is always available to talk if you want to learn more.

The next officially sanctioned B.R.E.A.D. event is the Annual Assembly on Monday, November 15<sup>th</sup>. This meeting is to hear about the results from the Listening Process and to join with hundreds of others to commit to follow up on those conversations with the Issue Work. You could consider coming to that. You can just keep reading Reflections articles about B.R.E.A.D. and checking the bulletin board and see where it goes.

This is how we have begun, but it is just the beginning of a hopefully long and fruitful partnership!