

## Change for Change - February 2024

### East Mount Airy Neighbors (EMAN)

The Justice Council has designated East Mount Airy Neighbors (EMAN) as our February recipient for Change for Change. EMAN has a long and rich history in the community surrounding UUs of Mt Airy. In a recent article in the Mt Airy Local, EMAN's Board Chair and lifelong resident of East Mount Airy, Linda Bell, opened her article titled "Building on Generations of Effort in East Mt. Airy", saying that the founding of EMAN was sparked by a 1966 sermon by our very own pastor, Rev. Rudi Gelsey "East Mt Airy: Slum, Ghetto or Good Place to Live" (link below). This sermon led to a "transformative movement" that pulled the community together to promote fair housing, quality public schools, parks and services in a community threatened with the "block busting" tactics of racist realtors. Numerous UUs of Mt Airy (formerly Restoration) congregation members were active in EMAN from its founding through the 1990s. <https://chestnuthilllocal.com/stories/building-on-generations-of-effort-in-east-mt-airy.30755?>

Now, almost 60 years later, EMAN is building on its foundation of "making a great community even better" through increased community involvement in their projects and activities and forming new partnerships, one of which is UUs of Mt Airy. EMAN has active committees focused on promoting housing and economic development that serves community needs and is the neighborhood's Registered Community Organization (RCO), hosting community meetings to learn about and comment on development projects which raise zoning issues. In addition, EMAN is active in the Mt. Airy Schools Committee supporting area public schools and has received funds to work on issues around youth development, housing improvement and community resources.

EMAN recently established an office on the campus of the United Lutheran Seminary which is open through the week from 10 - 2 pm to increase community engagement in their work. EMAN's organizational boundaries are from Germantown to Stenton Avenues and Johnson Street to Cresheim Valley Road. Learn more about their community organization here: <https://www.eastmountairy.org/>