



SAINT MARK'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

Taking Up Our Responsibility for Racial Justice

*O God,
Keep our anger from becoming meanness.
Keep our sorrow from collapsing into self-pity.
Keep our hearts soft enough to keep breaking.
Keep our anger turned toward justice not cruelty.
Keep us fiercely kind.
And at every turn, O God, remind us that all this, every bit, is for love. Amen.*

—Bishop Mariann Budde

DESCRIPTION

At this critical moment in our nation's and community's history, we are confronted again with fresh knowledge of longstanding racial injustice – in policing, the justice system, health care, housing, education, the Church and many other sectors of our common life. The Saint Mark's community is grappling with important questions: How did this injustice come to be? What forces keep it in place? What are my biases? What do I do now? For those of us who are white, we also ask, "How have I benefited from systemic racism and also perpetuated it? What do I do to confront white supremacy?"

Saint Mark's has advocated for social justice since its founding and our work has always been grounded in our identity as Christians. It is an ongoing spiritual journey to confront racism, consider its role in our own lives and that of our community, and to resolve to change ourselves, repair hurts, and raise up those who have been harmed. This commitment is grounded in our baptismal covenant to respect the dignity of every human being and to seek and serve Christ in all people.

FORMAT

Over the course of four biweekly sessions (July 15, July 29, August 12 and August 26, 7-8:30 pm), we will gather as a community via Zoom to reflect on readings, videos, and podcasts that teach us about the history of racism in our country and how it manifests today. We will work in small groups to go deeper in our self-knowledge and understanding of the communal and interlocking patterns of injustice. We will consider our work as a church and as individuals to address racism, privilege, and ways we can respond appropriately. Although it can be painful for white people to confront white privilege, we must discuss it openly together. And it is painful for our community's people of color to see how much work we still have to do, even from those who are well-meaning. But we commit to the work, with love and faith, recognizing it is a lifelong commitment.

We ask that participants commit to attending all 4 sessions and complete the required reading for each week. Above all, we'll endeavor to create a "brave space", where people are both respected for who they are today and also encouraged to move into a new place of understanding and commitment. In all things, we pledge to tell one another the truth.

As preparation for the series overall, you are invited to read *So You Want to Talk about Race*, by Ijeoma Oluo and/or listen to the live re-Broadcast of ‘Ijeoma Oluo with Charles Mudede: So You Want to Talk About Race’ at Town Hall: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO3Ht9oqFRg>. You can also consult the Racial Equity Tools glossary here: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

FLOW FOR EACH SESSION

- ◆ Prayer: 5 minutes
- ◆ Guided Reflection on Resources: 5–10 minutes
- ◆ Small Group discussion: 25 minutes
- ◆ Plenary—regather for reflection: 10 minutes
- ◆ Small Group discussion: 25 minutes
- ◆ Plenary—regather for reflection: 10 minutes
- ◆ Collect it all and pray: 5 minutes

SESSION 1: JULY 15, 2020

What is race? What is racism? What is White Privilege?

THEMES:

- ◆ Establish a baseline of race as social construct, and of racism as bias reinforced by power
- ◆ Introduce the concept of privilege and consider white privilege in particular
- ◆ Understand the concept of systemic racism and the impact on people of color in all parts of life: housing, education, health, policing, criminal justice system, etc.

REQUIRED READING:

- ◆ “What is Racism” (Chapter 2 of *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo)
- ◆ “Whitest Big County in the US? It’s us.”, *Seattle Times*:
<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/data/whitest-big-county-in-the-us-its-us/>

REQUIRED VIEWING:

- ◆ “The Myth of Race, debunked in 3 minutes”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnfKgffCZ7U>
- ◆ Deconstructing White Privilege with Dr. Robin DeAngelo
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwIx3KQer54&t=754s>

SUGGESTED READING/VIEWING:

- ◆ “Explaining White Privilege to a Broke White Person” by Gina Crosley Corcoran
https://medschool.duke.edu/sites/medschool.duke.edu/files/field/attachments/explaining_white_privilege_to_a_broke_white_person.pdf
- ◆ “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” by Peggy Macintosh
<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf>
- ◆ Racial Equity Tools Glossary
<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

SESSION 2: JULY 29, 2020

A Theology of Race, Racism, & Racial Justice

THEMES:

- ◆ Consider how scripture and Church tradition have been interpreted to reinforce privilege and normalize racism
- ◆ Consider the role of the Church in repentance, healing, and transformation

REQUIRED READING:

- ◆ “Black Women’s Faith, Black Women’s Flourishing,” by Eboni Marshall Turman
<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/critical-essay/black-women-s-faith-black-women-s-flourishing>
- ◆ Christena Cleveland, “So Much of the Privileged Life is About Transcendence”
<https://onbeing.org/blog/christena-cleveland-so-much-of-the-privileged-life-is-about-transcendence/>

REQUIRED VIEWING:

- ◆ The Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, “Renouncing Privilege at the Well in Samaria” at Trinity Institute 2016. <https://www.trinitywallstreet.org/video/ti2016-renouncing-privilege-well-samaria>
- ◆ The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II sermon June 14, 2020
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eviTAayTGT4>

SUGGESTED READING/LISTENING:

- ◆ Radio story on the Slave Bible: transcript: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/bn6c2yaryvovo2r/> or listen to: <https://www.npr.org/2018/12/09/674995075/slave-bible-from-the-1800s-omitted-key-passages-that-could-ignite-rebellion>
- ◆ James H. Cone, “The Relationship of the Christian Faith to Political Praxis”:
<http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/blackspeech/jcone.html>
- ◆ “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” by Frederick Douglass
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/t1b81b4ssh70shm/>

SESSION 3: AUGUST 12, 2020

Some History of Racism in the United States

THEMES:

- ◆ Understand structural racism and some of its origins in American history, including the GI Bill, redlining, mortgage bias, predatory lending, selective debt collection, etc.
- ◆ Understand the origins and implications of mass incarceration

REQUIRED READING:

- ◆ Bryan Stevenson’s article on Mass Incarceration and the Prison Industrial Complex:
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/prison-industrial-complex-slavery-racism.html>

- ◆ Read Trymaine Lee’s article on the Racial Wealth Gap:
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/racial-wealth-gap.html>

REQUIRED VIEWING:

- ◆ Michelle Alexander TED talk on race and incarceration:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ6H-Mz6hgw>

SUGGESTED READING/VIEWING:

- ◆ Spend time exploring The 1619 Project, all essays available here:
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html>
- ◆ Listen to “Status Update” (predatory lending, wealth gap, etc.)—18-minute segment from the radio show “This American Life”, available at:
<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/573/status-update/act-three>

SESSION 4: AUGUST 26, 2020

Striving for Justice

THEMES:

- ◆ Understand that dismantling systems of racism is the work of white people and especially white people with power
- ◆ Connect the ability to do this work authentically with the work of understanding our own story of race and areas for growth

REQUIRED READING:

- ◆ Nikole Hannah-Jones, “What is Owed” NY Times, June 26, 2020
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/24/magazine/reparations-slavery.html>

and/or

- ◆ “The Case for Reparations,” by Ta-Nehisi Coates:
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

REQUIRED VIEWING:

- ◆ Austin Channing Brown TheoEd talk:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=27s&v=20Tgb1L5Bgw>

SUGGESTED READING:

- ◆ “Ta-Nehisi Coates Revisits ‘The Case for Reparations’” from *The New Yorker* (short article or longer interview): <https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-new-yorker-interview/ta-nehisi-coates-revisits-the-case-for-reparations>

SUGGESTED LISTENING:

- ◆ Ta-Nehisi Coates podcast with Krista Tippett, “Imagining a New America.”
<https://onbeing.org/programs/ta-nehisi-coates-imagining-a-new-america/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BOOKS

Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God, by Kelly Brown Douglas

The New Jim Crow, by Michelle Alexander

Just Mercy, by Bryan Stevenson

Between the World and Me, by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race and Being, by M. Shawn Copeland

The Cross and the Lynching Tree, by James Hal Cone

Evicted, by Matthew Desmond

Waking Up White, by Debby Irving

America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America by Jim Wallis

The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era, by Quintard Taylor

FILMS/VIDEOS

Unnatural Causes—PBS documentary on wealth, race and health in America. More information and resources of health disparities available here: https://unnaturalcauses.org/media_and_documents_video.php

13th—Documentary by Ava Duvernay, available on Netflix

LINKS

https://seattle.bibliocommons.com/item/show/3284134030_so_you_want_to_talk_about_race