



Northern Illinois Conference

OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Anti-Racism Task Force Learning Path for Becoming Anti-Racist

This Learning Path provides many resources to help individuals and groups learn more about race, racism, and becoming anti-racist.

Getting Started



Every person attending the Northern Illinois Conference's anti-racism workshop "Becoming the Beloved Community" receives a homework assignment. The assignment's first three items are a good place for beginning to learn more about racism and its consequences.

1. Get our definitions straight.

Read over these ["11 Terms You Should Know to Better Understand Structural Racism,"](#) from the Aspen Institute.

2. Begin to understand white privilege.

Read Peggy McIntosh's ["White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"](#) (National SEED Project on Inclusive Curriculum; © 1989 Peggy McIntosh). McIntosh's article describes the concept of white privilege, connects the women's movement to the civil-rights movement, and touches on systemic racism. This version includes an appendix of notes for those who are facilitating discussions of the material. Note that the concept of "white privilege" does not assume that all white people have had it easy, have had all basic needs met, or haven't worked hard. It means, in part, that their skin color is not an obstacle to their obtaining social and economic opportunities to which all people should have access.

3. Learn about the racial wealth gap.

Watch the episode [“The Racial Wealth Gap”](#) in Vox Media’s documentary series *Explained* (aired on Netflix). This account of economic disparities among Americans along racial lines points out that black households hold only one-tenth of the wealth that white household have. It describes how history and systems brought about this consequence of racism.

4. Pray for peace, justice, and equity among all races.

As you begin your journey of learning, seek out resources that will help you pray for God’s guidance and spirit. You may find many resources online, such as from the [Social Justice Resource Center](#), [United Methodist Discipleship Resources](#), and, as will be noted again, the [United Methodist General Commission on Religion and Race](#).

Going Deep



Explore the seven categories below. With some we have suggested resources. Note that under spirituality we recommend reading more theologians of color, Howard Thurman (one of Martin Luther King Jr.’s professors).

- **Privilege:** *Who has the power and why?*

Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*. (Random House, 2020)

[“White Privilege 101”](#) (White Privilege Conference video)

[“What is ‘race literacy’?”](#) by Milagros Phillips (TED video)

- **Justice:** *Creating a more equitable world*

- **Courageous conversations:** *Being both tough and inviting about race*

[“Color blind or color brave?”](#) by Melody Hobson (TED video)

- **Healing:** *Overcoming the trauma of race*

Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing, by Joy DeGruy. (joy degruy publications, 2005)

[Introductory video](#)
[Lecture](#)

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies, by Resmaa Menakem. (Central Recovery Press, 2017)

["How Racism Makes Us Sick,"](#) by David R. Williams. (TED video)

- **Spirituality:** *How Christians have both promoted and fought against racism*

We recommend reading the work of theologians of color.

Jesus and the Disinherited, by Howard Thurman (Beacon Press, 1996)

["Race, Trauma, and the Doctrine of Discovery,"](#) by Mark Charles. (Calvin College January Series)

- **Bias:** *Why we're quick to judge*

[Implicit Association Test:](#) a measure of implicit racial bias (Project Implicit)

- **Children & Youth:** *Raising a justice generation*

Going Deeper



Many organizations have already compiled comprehensive lists of resources having to do with race, including the United Methodist General Commission on Religion and Race. Here you will also find an archive of previously released resources.

[General Commission on Religion and Race](#)