

Dismantling Racism through the Way of Love
A Six Week Introduction to a Lifelong Journey: June 21 - August 1, 2020
([Click here for more information from the Rector](#))

In the aftermath of George Floyd's murder and the entrenched systemic racism this has illuminated for many people, St. John's is awakening to God's call to address systemic racism--beginning with ourselves. We understand this to be a lifelong journey that is central to following Jesus' Way of Love. We'll engage this journey through a six-week "deep dive" in which we collectively make the following steps.

These steps are not "one and done." They are cyclical – and perpetual. We'll keep learning as we go. But we'll begin with June 21, the feast of our namesake St. John the Baptist--who called the world to repentance, then and now.¹

June 18-24: Week One, Listen: Listen to the lived experience of black and brown siblings and how the Holy Spirit is speaking through them

June 25-July 1: Week Two, Learn: Discover and share stories that uncover how we formed assumptions about race; connect those assumptions with sin, brokenness, and sickness

July 2 - 8: Week Three, Lament: Wrestle with the emotions of facing the great harm racism has caused; follow Jesus to the places of the world's pain until we realize it is our own

July 9 - 15: Week Four, Repent: After experiencing deeply that systemic racism dehumanizes and harms everyone, including those in power, decide to confess and turn from our complicity in it

July 16 - 22: Week Five, Commit: Choose to follow Jesus' Way of Love for the long haul, including dismantling racism; participate in God's work to create the Beloved Community

July 23 -29: Week Six, Discern: What does God call us to do next, as individuals and as a community?

(how to engage on next page)

¹ These steps are adapted from the [Mission Institute](#)'s curriculum called "Liberating ourselves from Racism". *The Mission Institute* is an organization rooted in the Episcopal Church whose "programs support congregations and groups in liberating themselves from racial inequities." The Rev. Katie Capurso-Ernst helped us shape the broad sketches of this six-week journey at St. John's. We are grateful for her experience and support.

Pastor Paul Slack of [Liberty Community Church](#) in North Minneapolis has also agreed to consult with us on this journey. He'll help us frame the questions we ask in discussion Sundays and Wednesdays, will meet with the core team weekly to process and debrief, and will help us to discern next steps. We are grateful for his leadership, wisdom and help.

How to engage:

- Purchase or borrow these three books (note: scholarships are available; Hennepin County Library made some of these available as e-books; and don't worry if you can't complete all the readings - just do what you can):
 - James Baldwin [The Fire Next Time](#)² (kindle version); you can also or alternatively watch the film [I Am Not Your Negro](#).
 - Robin DiAngelo [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism](#)
 - Emmanuel Katongole & Chris Rice [Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Healing and Peace](#)
- Listen to sermons on the theme of the week beginning June 21 (insert link)
- Commit to daily or weekly reflection, reading, prayer and practice
 - Open yourself intentionally to the work of God within you
 - Engage the weekly assignments for the St. John's community. You can find these:
 - in the Sunday worship emails
 - Thursday e-newsletter
 - on the new [Anti-Racism Work](#) page on our website
 - in the private members-only St. John's community Facebook page
 - request help from [Rachel Svihel](#) subscribing to the weekly newsletter or joining the Facebook group
 - [Subscribe](#) to an optional daily email which includes scripture, meditation and reflection / practice questions (these will begin on June 25)
- Commit to regular communal engagement with the St. John's community
 - Attend the weekly sermon discussions Sunday mornings at 9:30 on zoom. (You can just listen if you're not comfortable speaking)
 - And/or attend weekly Wednesday night discussion, 7:00 - 8:30 over zoom. (You can just listen if you're not comfortable speaking)
 - Participate in the communal discernment that concludes this summer's journey (details TBD)

² It is worth noting that our new Bishop Craig Loya is also asking all ECMN clergy to read this book and discuss it with him.