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*A partnership between St. James UMC and Church of the Resurrection*  
**You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.**  
**Matthew 22:39**

## YEAR IN REVIEW



Throughout 2023, ARJ continued our work to build relationships, inform and educate people on racial issues, and take actions that help build the Kingdom Jesus intended.

And a busy and fruitful year it has been!

We take a few minutes to look back on some of our accomplishments and thank you for your participation.

\* 2023 started off with a presentation to the St. James Super Sunday Adult Bible School. ARJ Leader Team members shared the history of the St. James and Resurrection partnership that created ARJ and provided information, personal insights, and our plans for the coming year.



\* During January, we also promoted the National Day of Racial Healing and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's national "Changing the Narrative" digital series.

\* In February and March, we sponsored two important live theatre events. The first play was "Only One Day A Year", at the Coterie Theatre. Inspired by Kansas City history, the play intertwined present-day issues with the last segregated days of the infamous KC Fairyland Park.

\* Also, in March, we brought you a performance of "A Raisin in the Sun"; the first play written by a Black woman to be produced on Broadway. The play, by Lorraine Hansberry, tells the story of a South Chicago Black family's experiences as they attempt to improve their financial circumstances with an insurance payout following the death of their father. This heartfelt play dealt with continued relevant issues such as housing discrimination, assimilation, generational divides and racism.

\* Our senior pastors, Emanuel Cleaver III (St. James Church) and Adam Hamilton (Resurrection) joined us in April for "Truman's Aha! Moment – Awareness to Action Workshop". In association with the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library &

Museum, we took a historical look at how President Truman was moved to repudiate his own apathy and our country's officially sanctioned discrimination policies. By making use of his personal power, the US military and federal agencies were desegregated. The workshop also explored how participants could discover their own personal power and use it for the betterment of all.



\* That same month, a virtual class, “The Color of God’s Love”, brought insights to multiracial foster care and adoption. The program included a thoughtful panel discussion with professionals, parents and caregivers on how multiracial adoptions and fostering work and its impact on children, teenagers, families and communities.

\* In May, ARJ promoted a special webinar from UMC Religion and Race entitled “White Allyship” that delved into the issues of what it means to be an antiracist ally.

\* June brought our annual St. James & Resurrection Juneteenth Celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. Held at St. James, it proved a lively, joyful and inspiring fête! The two music ministries partnered to bring us a stirring program led by Tyrone Yarbrough (St. James) and Justin Huey (Resurrection) featuring soul-filled soloists, choral singers and musicians. Speaker and historian Erik Stafford took questions from teen church members and provided insights to the often overlooked but miraculous achievements realized by the Black community during Reconstruction – before the devastation of Jim Crow. We also enjoyed a creative art exhibition featuring outstanding local artists, a compelling Spoken Word presented by award-winning poet Glenn North, and an uplifting dance performance.



\* ARJ's Summer Connections event was held in August at KCK Legend's Field and Ballpark as we cheered on the Kansas City Monarchs in a win over the Fargo Morehead Redhawks. ARJ Spiritual Advisors, Pastor Jacqueline McCall (St. James) and Pastor of Community Justice, Cheryl Bell (Resurrection) threw out the ceremonial first pitches. In 2024, we plan to hold another ballgame gathering in the Spring.



\* When September rolled around, we encouraged people to participate in the United Methodist Church General Commission on Religion & Race "30 Days of Antiracism" campaign. Supporting materials included daily activities to help us become more antiracist in the ways we think and act. That same month we kicked off the popular "Walks with Jesus" program, meeting on Saturday mornings to share casual walks and interesting conversations in the beautiful surroundings of different area parks.





\* Working with the two church Adult Disciples ministries, ARJ brought members of St. James Church and Resurrection together for four consecutive Monday evenings in October to talk about race. The “Strength to Love” series, led by Resurrection Location Pastor Robert Johnson and St. James Associate Pastor Jacqueline McCall, proved highly successful with over 135 participants. Breakout groups addressed the perennial and perplexing questions of love, faith, racial healing and social justice. Based on the strong participation, we’re planning more joint congregation classes and gatherings in 2024.

ARJ thanks everyone who worked on and participated in our 2023 programming. We’re finalizing our 2024 calendar and look forward to welcoming you as we connect face-to-face and heart-to-heart. Together, we can create racial healing, cooperation, understanding, and togetherness. We can intentionally think and live as Jesus taught us – loving our neighbors as ourselves.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!**

**JOIN US FOR NORTH –**

# THE MUSICAL

**Saturday, January 27 at 2 PM**  
**Yardley Hall,**  
**Johnson County Community College**



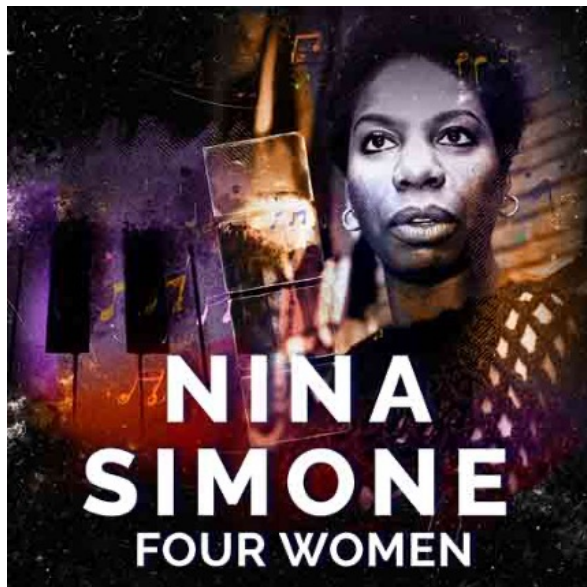
ARJ continues to bring you informative and entertaining educational opportunities to understand the Black experience from new perspectives. Next month, we invite you to join us to see **North – The Musical**. It is Ashli St. Armant's powerful musical about a teenage boy and his mother who escape slavery in the Deep South through the Underground Railroad.

The moving story explores the multi-faceted reality of Black life during the antebellum period, and brings out the full range of experiences of freedom seekers. While acknowledging the realities of slavery, the narrative and original musical compositions explore themes of optimism, bravery, playfulness, wonder, suspense and mystery. The musical is intended for intergenerational audiences, ages 10 and up.

ARJ has purchased a block of **\$20 discount tickets for the January 27 performance**. Purchase yours now while quantities last by [clicking here.](#)

**SAVE THE DATE ANOTHER LIVE**

## THEATRE OPPORTUNITY



**Sunday, February 18 at 2 PM**  
**Presented by KCRep at the Copaken Stage**

Described as “riveting, relevant and oh so real” (Broadway World), this deeply personal play imagines how the iconic songstress gave voice to countless Black women fighting to overcome stereotypes and racism. The bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL on September 16, 1963 led Nina Simone to shift her career from artist to artist-activist.

The play uses the framework of one of her most blistering songs, “Four Women”, to look at an artist and the women around her as their journey leads them down a path of discovery and healing. **Watch for discount ticket information in our January 2024 ARJ newsletter.**

## LOOKING AHEAD



While January seems a long way off, Allies for Racial Justice encourages you to plan ahead to commemorate the prophetic voice and work of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. This National Holiday falls on the third Monday in January and this year it actually coincides with what would be MLK's 95th birthday. Think now about how you might spend the holiday in a "Day of Service" ... doing something for others that will also be so very good for your soul after the hectic holidays. We'll list local service opportunities in the January newsletter.

We also ask you to **SAVE THE DATE** of **Saturday, January 14** and join ARJ at the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration** hosted by the greater Kansas City metro area's **Methodist Ministers Fellowship**. It starts at 5 PM at the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, 2828 Prospect Avenue, KCMO 64128. Full details coming in the January ARJ newsletter.

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR PARTNER CHURCHES BETTER

Forging authentic relationships to eliminate the existing racial divide  
in our communities and churches.





**Christmas Services at St. James and Resurrection are open to everyone.** Bring your family and friends and celebrate the birth of our Lord together. Check websites for service times and for information on Advent and Christmas activities at both churches.

## Stay Connected

**Visit our church's web pages and sign up for pastor newsletters.**

**Resurrection** [resurrection.church/next](https://resurrection.church/next)

**St. James Church** <https://sjumckc.org>

Sign up for the weekly Senior Pastor messages for updates and to better connect within our two congregations.

**St. James Church** [Sign up for Pastor Cleaver's Newsletter](#)

**Resurrection** [Sign up for Pastor Adam's Newsletter](#)

## OTHER INFORMATION & ACTIVITIES



### **“ADVOCATE THIS ADVENT” Virtual Event**

Join United Methodist Church & Society for a four-week webinar series as we partner with the South Carolina Christian Action Council (SCCAC) to discuss how to be an Advocate during Advent, reflecting on the four themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. Rev. Regina H. Moore, the Executive Director of the SCCAC and Rev. Kendal L. McBroom of the General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) will be hosting this event via Zoom every Wednesday at 12 pm EST/11 am CST and restreaming at 7pm EST/6pm CST on the GBCS YouTube page.

The dates for the webinar are Wednesdays, December 6, 13 and 20. Register using the link below and feel free to share with friends, colleagues, and members of your community to be a part of advocating for the change we all deserve.

[Register Here](#)

## **ALLELUIA! EVERYBODY SING**



Here's a fun holiday activity to consider. As we go to press, we've identified two opportunities for you, your family, your friends, your small groups, your co-workers, everyone to come together for a Handel's Messiah Sing-Along this Christmas season.

Check this out!

#### **Grace Holy Trinity Cathedral**

Saturday, December 9, at 4 pm  
415 W, 13th Street, KCMO 64105  
For details call 816-474-8260 or  
[office@kccathedral.org](mailto:office@kccathedral.org). Free.  
Bring score or purchase at door.

#### **St. Paul's Episcopal Church**

Sunday, December 10, at 4pm  
416 SE Grand Avenue, Lee's  
Summit, MO 64063.  
For details call 816-524-3651 or  
[Music@StPaul'sLS.org](mailto:Music@StPaul'sLS.org) Free.  
Reception follows program. Bring  
score or borrow one with a  
refundable deposit.

## **HOW UNITED METHODISTS CAN STAND AGAINST RACISM**

Those living in the United States exist in a culture permeated with racial bias. We may not be able to avoid racism, but we don't have to accept it. If God's kingdom is to come, and God's will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven, things need to change. We United Methodists can be agents of that transformation by changing our beliefs, changing our actions, and working to change the world. This archive article by Joe Iovino from [UMC.org](https://www.UMC.org) provides valuable insights and actions on how to stand against racism.

[Learn More](#)

## Read, View and Learn



Visit the Allies for Racial Justice website for great video and book suggestions that can help us better understand our differences, appreciate our similarities and establish Christ-centered solutions to end racial and social injustices. Terrific selections for ARJ Small Groups!

[Click HERE](#) for all our recommended reading and video resources

**For more information on Allies for Racial Justice, visit our website:**

<https://resurrection.church/arj>

**or join the conversation on Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AlliesForRacialJustice>

Allies for Racial Justice Team

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