

Connect
Unite
Act

ARJ

ALLIES for RACIAL JUSTICE

NEWSLETTER

February 2025

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



February is National Black History Month. This year's theme underscores the diverse and significant ways in which labor – whether voluntary or involuntary,

skilled or unskilled – has been at the core of the Black American experience.

African Americans and Labor focuses on the pivotal role Black Americans have had in the labor force throughout history, from slavery to the establishment of Black-owned businesses and the fight for labor rights through organized movement.

The theme explores Black contributions in everything from agriculture to entrepreneurship. It looks at history; the legacy of enslavement and its impact on the economy, as well as the resilience of Black communities in building economic power through initiatives like Black Wall Street.

The theme also examines the role of organized labor in challenging economic and social injustices faced by Black workers.

This month you will find many opportunities to connect, unite and act on behalf of and with our Black brothers and sisters. Check out several in this newsletter and let's all participate in the national recognition of America's Black workers.

CONNECT

Bringing people together to **CONNECT** through engaging educational events.
Let's start a conversation.



**BLACK
ARCHIVES**
OF MID-AMERICA
IN KANSAS CITY

BLACK HISTORY LUNCHEON

EMBRACING BLACKNESS: A HEALTHY CONVERSATION

Noon - Saturday, Feb 15
UMKC's Swinney Rec Center
5030 Holmes St. KCMO 64110

You won't want to miss this exciting event with keynote speaker, **Dr. Kiki Baker Barnes**. Recognized as one of the most energetic and dynamic leaders in collegiate sports, she is also an author and the first African-American female commissioner of both the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and the HBCU Athletic Conference.

Joanne Collins, considered the *Grande Dame* of local Kansas City politics, will receive the 2025 Horace M. Peterson II Legacy Award presented at the luncheon.

Scan here for sponsorship and single tickets



**JOIN ARJ ZOOM
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**



Tuesday, Feb 25 – 6:00-7:00 PM

Did you know that growing personally or professionally does not happen when we stay in our comfort zone? Learning how to have conversations about uncomfortable subjects builds our capability to help bridge differences to find common ground.

Please consider joining our small group discussion to talk about what we can learn from each other when we truly care enough to listen to differing perspectives.

Prior to joining on February 25th, please watch previews of the TV series, “You Can’t Ask That” on YouTube [HERE](#).

To receive the Zoom link for this small group discussion, send a request to Debra Jarvis at djjarvey60@gmail.com with “You Can’t Ask That” in the subject line.

INVISIBLE CHANGE MAKERS OF INDUSTRY



The National Smithsonian invites you to educate yourself, your groups, friends and family by sharing the National Museum of African American History & Culture [website and other available resources.](#)

As a citizen workforce, African Americans continue to chart new paths toward economic stability, personal growth, and racial uplift. Black men and women have always been vital to transforming and tooling America. During Black History Month, the museum celebrates Black people's often invisible labor of all kinds — across time, industry, and community.



Bringing people together to **UNITE** by growing authentic relationships through interactive programs.
Let's learn from each other.

**JOIN US AT ARJ'S LIVE
THEATRE EVENT**



2 PM SUNDAY, FEB 16

3051 Penn Valley Dr. KCMO 64108

KC Melting Pot Theatre presents **Fences**, an award-winning play that explores the evolving American understanding of race and family relations. It follows a working-class father, who is a former Negro League baseball player, as he tries to raise a family in the 1950s.

ARJ has reserved discount tickets for this Sunday matinee performance. Join us to learn more about the Black American experience. We'll have an interactive post-performance discussion with the play director and actors. We look forward to welcoming you!

Bring your small group, a friend, neighbors too!

For discount tickets **click here** [Fences at KC Melting Pot Theater | Resurrection Website](#)

If our discount tickets are sold out, you may still get regular priced tickets for this or other performances running through Feb. 22 at <https://kcmeltingpot.com/>

CLICK HERE

CIVIL RIGHTS TOUR REFLECTIONS

February 19 – 6:30-8:30PM

Resurrection Leawood – Foundry, Bldg. B
13720 Roe Ave. Leawood, KS 66224



Black History Month Civil Rights Trip Panel Discussion

Feb. 19 | 6 PM | Resurrection Leawood

The Adult Discipleship ministry at Resurrection will celebrate Black History Month with a special program featuring Associate Pastor Robert Johnson and members of a group who traveled together last fall to visit key sites, museums and exhibits that were important to the Civil Rights movement. The panel will share their learning, insights and meaningful experiences. The evening will include music and table discussions along with plans for upcoming programs with Allies for Racial Justice. [Register here.](#)

2025 HACK the DREAM



Feb 27 @ 9 AM - 12 PM
Central Library 14 W. 10th Street, KCMO 64105

Don't miss Hack the Dream and TECHuity - where Social Justice, Health Equity and Technology collide! It's KCs annual social impact hack-a-thon celebrating Black History Month, the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the vitally important cause of Digital Equity and Bridging the Digital Divide.

Join **i.c.stars*** for a comprehensive look at the social, cultural, historical, and political contexts that determine digital equity. See in real time how solutions can be identified through the lens of tech innovators and community partners.

For more information [CLICK HERE.](#)

To purchase tickets [CLICK HERE.](#)



Bringing people together to **ACT** by supporting racial justice activities throughout our churches and communities.
Let's act together.

A MESSAGE FROM THE UNITED METHODIST COMMISSION GENERAL SECRETARY “PURSUIT OF THE BELOVED COMMUNITY”

In a recent letter **Rev. Dr. Giovanni Arroyo**, UMC General Secretary of the Commission on Religion and Race, reminded us that there is still much to do to create the Beloved Community – a place where all people can share the abundance of wealth in the world; where all forms of discrimination, bigotry and dehumanization are eradicated; where all of us live a more inclusive, interdependent existence in harmony and love of one another.

Rev. Arroyo’s message very much aligns with the mission and commitment of Allies for Racial Justice. We urge you to be people of action. With courage, compassion, and a commitment to transformation we must respond to the injustices of our times. Consider the following action steps put forth by Rev. Arroyo:

1. **Engage in Sacred Reflection:** Commit to learning the histories of oppression that continue to shape our present realities. Read, study, and wrestle with the uncomfortable truths of our collective past and present. Use resources such as [GCORR’s study guides and tools](#) to foster deep and meaningful conversations in your congregations and community.
2. **Build Authentic Relationships:** Seek out relationships across racial, ethnic, and cultural divides. Listen deeply to the stories of those who have been marginalized, and allow these encounters to transform your heart and mind. Let us embody the spirit of Pentecost, where diversity is celebrated and unity is forged.
3. **Advocate for Systemic Change:** Move beyond the sanctuary into the public square. Advocate for policies that address racial injustice—whether in education, criminal justice, immigration, healthcare, or housing. Challenge laws and practices that dehumanize and marginalize. Let us keep at the center our theological understanding the sacred worth of all God’s creation.
4. **[Commit to Anti-Racism](#):** Make anti-racism an integral part of your discipleship journey. Engage in the ongoing self-awareness work to understand

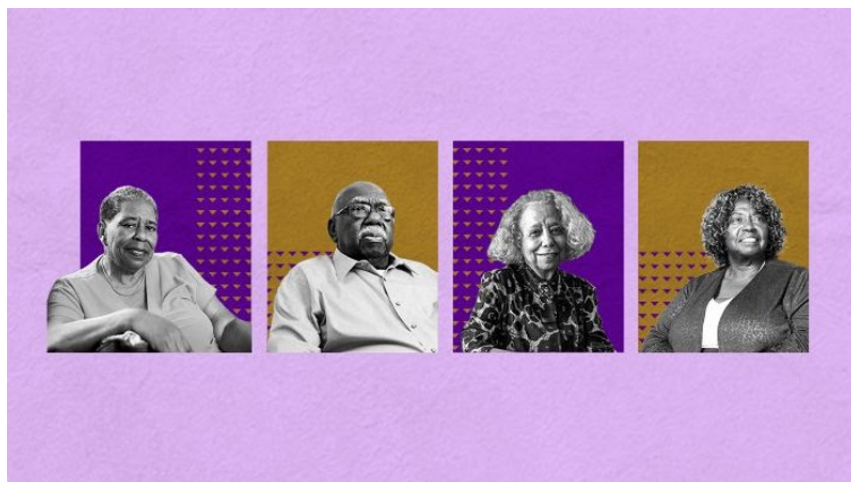
your own [cultural biases](#) and identify your growth areas that will lead you to build bridges across differences. Create intentional action plans to move toward greater intercultural competency.

5. **Pray and Act:** Lift your voice in prayer, but do not let it end there. As Dr. King said, “Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.” Let us be a praying and active Church, grounded in hope and propelled by love. Utilize [GCORR racial justice prayers](#) as part of your daily devotional time.

Let us become united in hope. Hope propels us to act, to speak, to stand, and to build. Hope assures us that though justice may be delayed, it is not denied.



HISTORY AND THE POWER OF PLACE



(From L to R: Jo Ann Bland, Selma AL, Charles Person, Atlanta, GA, Valda Harris,

Montgomery, AL, Helen Sims, Belzoni, MS)

Many of the rights and freedoms we have today – such as the right to vote – were achieved through struggles, risks and sacrifices of those who participated in the Civil Rights Movement.

Learning for Justice interviewed four activists who witnessed this history. Their video conversations can help us see the connections between race in our history and white supremacist ideologies today.

Their stories emphasize the importance of knowing the true and honest history of the movement and encourage us to embrace our various roles in the ongoing movement for equality and justice.

Such understanding is crucial to countering hate. View and share with others: [History and the Power of Place](#)

OUR PARTNER CHURCHES

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

St. James Church and Resurrection offer inspiring worship, fellowship, studies, and community volunteer activities throughout the year. Check the individual websites and weekly newsletters to stay up to date on all opportunities.



Stay Connected – Visit our church’s web pages and sign up for pastor newsletters.

Websites

Resurrection resurrection.church/next

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

Pastor Newsletters

St. James Church [e-News](#) from Senior Pastor Emanuel Cleaver III

(click the grey box to join the mailing list)

Resurrection [Weekly Updates](#) From Pastor Adam

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>





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Resurrection 13720 Roe Ave Leawood, KS 66224