



Allies For Racial Justice September Newsletter1 message

**September 2025****ARJ SUMMER 2025 RECAP**

Before we jump into Fall activities and resources, here is a recap of some of the activities ARJ participated in over the Summer. Click the links in each section to see photos.

Juneteenth Commemoration – For This We Give You Praise

This year, we came together at St. James Church for this exuberant annual commemoration of the end of chattel slavery in the USA. The performances were outstanding! From George Pettigrew's stirring oral history of the Buffalo Soldiers, S.T.E.P. Movement Troupe's African percussive dancing, the St. James Praise dancers, and Lauren Thompson's interpretive dance, through VP3's saxophone solo, Charlie Harris's guitar solo, Kami Wood's vocals, and the powerful musicians and singing groups from St. James & Resurrection, and the informative display of Black military memorabilia...the day was a mighty success.

A giant round of applause and thanks to Anita Maltbia and the entire Juneteenth event

team.

[View the ARJ Juneteenth 2025 photo gallery.](#)

[Watch a Juneteenth message from Pastor Cheryl here.](#)

ARJ NITE AT THE BALLPARK

ARJ welcomed attendees to the nice-and-shady Monarch Stadium Party Patio for some social time to kick off the Monarchs Jurassic Park Night. We shared a tasty meal and a fun summer evening of American Association of Professional Baseball League baseball. The KC Monarchs and the Milwaukee Milkmen served up some competitive play (and the Monarchs won!) Entertainment even included a few dinosaurs.

[Click here to see photos from the game!](#)

BLACK ARCHIVES OF MID-AMERICA

Members of the Resurrection-St. James Men's Group and ARJ toured the Black Archives of Mid-America. James Watts, Ombudsman, conducted a tour of the facility, and Erik Stafford, from KC Tours, provided insights into the preserved Lucy Willis slave cabin and the history of slavery in Missouri and Kansas.

The Black Archives is a non-profit organization that serves as a repository of every facet of African American culture. The institute collects and preserves the history of African Americans in the central United States, with particular emphasis on the Kansas City region. The archives are an impressive educational resource, and access is provided for research, exhibition, and publication.



GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER CELEBRATION

ARJ members took a day trip to Diamond, MO, for the annual summer festivities at the George Washington Carver National Monument and Museum. We toured Dr. Carver's birthplace, walked the forests he explored as a child, and watched a stirring film that covered his life from slave to scientist and educator.

We even participated in a science experiment in the laboratory, making peanut milk! The Carver National Memorial and Museum brings true history to life. It's well worth exploring. [Check out these photos here.](#)

CONNECT

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



WHAT PUT THE BRAKES ON DEI?

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 5:30-7:30 PM

IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL

Rockhurst University – 5251 Forest Ave, KCMO 64110

DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) efforts have become a cultural and political lightning rod in recent election cycles, yet many people struggle to agree on what DEI is actually trying to accomplish. It means different things to different audiences—from HR departments to college campuses to the federal government.

This American Public Square program asks whether recent DEI policies in corporate and academic spaces have yielded real progress or gone too far. Was the backlash against DEI overdue, or did it set equity efforts back decades? Panelists will explore how to empower diverse perspectives in workplaces and on campuses without virtue signaling, and how legacies of racism continue to shape and polarize conversations around DEI.

Moderator: **Yvette Walker** - *The Kansas City Star* opinion editor and editorial board leader

Panel: **Monica Harris** - Executive Director of "Fair For All", a nonpartisan multidisciplinary organization bridging the ideological divide, focusing on shared values and interests

Graham Parsons - visiting professor of philosophy at Vassar College, adjunct instructor at the Bard Prison Initiative

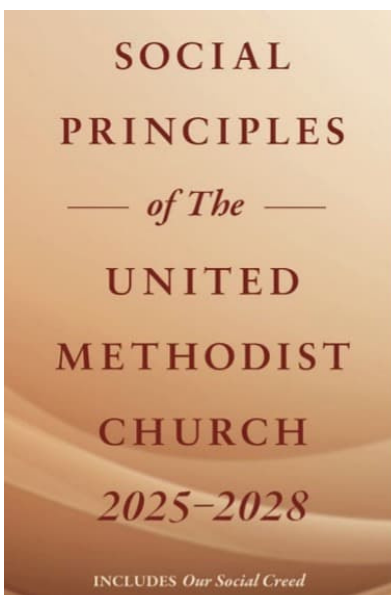
Mary Ann Villarreal - Vice President of the American Association of Colleges and Universities

REGISTER IN PERSON

REGISTER VIRTUALLY

**'Dismantling Racism' Initiative Now Study Booklet**

A feature series on The United Methodist Church's five-year initiative to combat racism in the United States has developed into a 52-page study booklet from its publisher, United Methodist Insight. The four-part series explores how the anti-racism initiative evolved to become part of the worldwide denomination's ministry. The study resource is available free [online here](#).



First adopted by the 1972 United Methodist Church General Conference, the official Social Principles document stands in the Wesleyan tradition of forthright moral witness and ethical action. They are the touchstone of ARJ's mission. Through these principles, we seek to love God with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength and to desire for our neighbors what we also desire for ourselves.

This resource is a timely reflection of the Church's official teaching positions on social,

economic, and political concerns of the worldwide community. It succinctly covers a wide spectrum of topics, including poverty, racism, justice, income inequality, government, and more, connecting them to Wesleyan history, Scripture, and theology. We encourage you to read this timely publication.

The full text is posted online in nine languages at www.umcjustice.org.

The newly revised printed English edition from Cokesbury can be found below.

FIND IT HERE

WALK WITH ARJ IN OUR AREA PARKS STARTS SEPTEMBER 27

Looking for a refreshing way to connect with others and grow spiritually?

Look no further because ARJ's 'Walking with Jesus' is back—and we'd love for you to join us! You'll find friendly faces, meaningful conversations, and peaceful walks through several of our community's beautiful parks. There's no prep work—just show up and enjoy! We walk in a different local park each week.

Whether you are new or returning, this is a great way to start your Saturday with purpose and connection. Jesus walked—and so shall we. Come walk, talk, and be inspired. We can't wait to see you there!

Contact: Crystal Johnson – Crystal.H.Whitmore@gmail.com

Arrival Time: By 7:30 AM Walk Begins: 8:00 AM (for one hour)

- September 27 - Loose Park Pavilion – 5200 Wornall Road, KCMO (meet at the shelter pavilion)
 - October 4th - Mill Creek Park – W. 43rd Street and Broadway Blvd. KCMO (meet by the Fountain)
 - October 11th - Liberty Memorial - 1 Memorial Drive KCMO
 - October 18th - Swope Park – Meyer Blvd and Swope Parkway, KCMO (meet at the entrance)
 - October 25th - Lowenstein Park 1901 NW Lowenstein Dr Lees Summit, MO 64081 (meet by the shelter house)
 - November 1st – TBD Weather Permitting
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Bringing people together to **UNITE** by growing authentic relationships through interactive programs.

KANSAS CITY REP PRESENTS



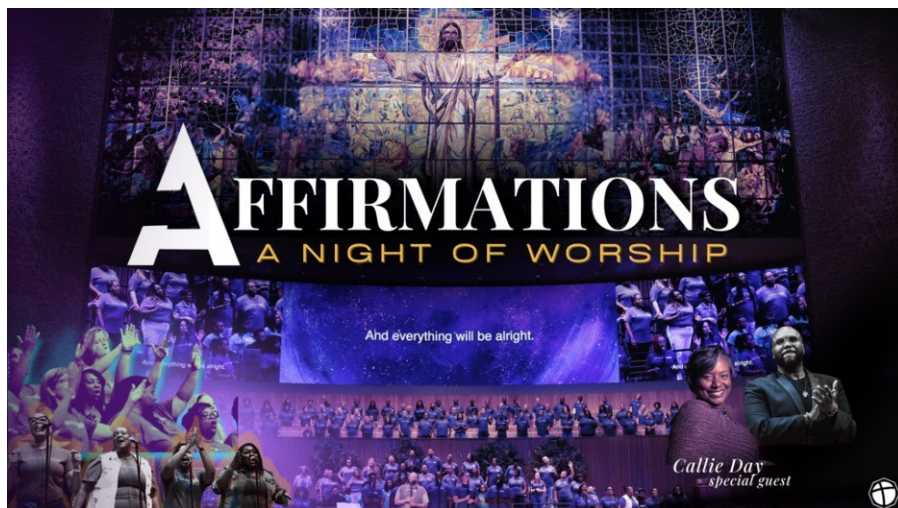
SEPTEMBER 2-21 THE SPENCER THEATRE
4949 Cherry Street, Kansas City, MO 64110 UMKC

This award-winning stage musical is based on Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. The breathtaking tale of courage and transformation reminds us of the power of love to overcome adversity. It explores mature themes of abuse, racism, and sexism, but ultimately centers on a journey of self-discovery, the finding of one's voice, and the importance of relationships in the face of oppression. The rich score blends gospel, jazz, and blues into a remarkable and memorable performance.

For more information and tickets, [click here.](#)

The Color Purple contains mature themes, including sexual and domestic violence, strong language, and depictions of racism and abuse. Emotionally intense content that may not be suitable for all audiences. Recommended for ages 14 and up, though every family and individual should use their own judgment based on the themes outlined.

AFFIRMATIONS CONCERT RETURNS



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 6:30 PM
Resurrection Leawood Sanctuary
5009 W. 137th St., Leawood, KS 66224

Don't miss this inspiring evening dedicated to uplifting music and heartfelt performances. Isaac Cates, Director of Music Outreach, will be leading an amazing group of musicians and vocalists from across Kansas City and beyond.

Join us for this extraordinary family-friendly production featuring multiple choirs and ensembles. This event is free, with no registration needed. Invite your small groups, family, and friends to join us! [CLICK HERE](#) to view the Affirmations webpage for event details.

IT'S TIME FOR THE 18TH & VINE FALL ARTS FESTIVAL



SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025
Friday: 5 PM - 10 PM Saturday: 10 AM - 10 PM
Sunday: 10 AM - 5 PM
In the historic KCMO 18th & Vine District

Here is your opportunity to experience the vibrancy of Black art and culture! Kansas City's grandest art fete, the 18th & Vine Arts Festival, celebrates Black creativity and the

humanities. The event provides an exceptional platform for artists to showcase their work, connect with the community and peers, and honor the transformative power of Black art.

This three-day event draws a wide and diverse audience by featuring a variety of disciplines, including music, dance, visual and literary arts, fashion, digital media, and film. From Friday night's Black film and fashion showcase to a Saturday full of live music and art, and Sunday's soulful gospel and culinary celebration, this festival has something for everyone. Get your group together now. For full details, [click here](#).



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

Let's act together



ANNUAL GALA – LIVE & SILENT AUCTIONS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 – 6 - 9 PM

**New Location: Temple, Congregation B'nai Judah
12320 Nall Ave, Overland Park, KS 66209**

Helping free the innocent and providing care when they come home. That is the mission of Miracle of Innocence. Please support their efforts by attending the annual fundraising gala and participating in the auctions. This year focuses on the stories of four women who represent a total of 96 years lost for crimes they did not commit.

For details and tickets, [click here](#).



DIVIDING LINES IMMERSION EXPERIENCE

Saturday, September 20, 2025 – 9 AM – 1 PM
Hillcrest Covenant Church
8801 Nall Ave. Prairie Village, KS, 66207

Step onto the bus and into Kansas City's history.

The Dividing Lines Immersion Experience is a half-day interactive journey that explores the racial divisions that shaped our city – and the people working to heal them today. Through powerful documentary storytelling, site visits, and guided conversation, we'll trace the legacy of redlining and housing discrimination from Prairie Village to Marlborough to 18th & Vine.

This isn't just a history lesson – it's a chance to see our city with new eyes, meet neighbors with shared hope, and reflect on how we can help build a more just and unified community. This experience includes bus transportation, walking tours, film screenings, and lunch. Space is limited – register now to reserve your spot.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

In a July 7, 2025, court filing, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) declared that Churches and other houses of worship can endorse political candidates in certain circumstances without risking the loss of their tax-exempt status, despite a decades-old Congressional statute that bans political candidate endorsements.

In a Position Statement on Church Endorsements of Political Candidates, the General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church strongly opposes the use of

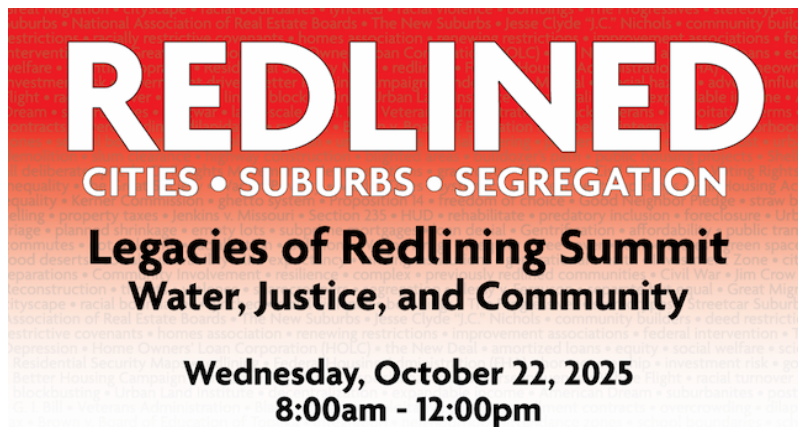
churches and houses of worship for partisan political affiliations and endorsements. As United Methodists, we affirm the independence and integrity of both institutions, and we advocate for a relationship of mutual respect in which neither institution seeks to dominate or unduly influence the other.

We believe the state should not attempt to control the church, nor should the church seek to dominate the state... Separation of church and state means no organic union of the two, but it does permit interaction.

Take Action – Here's What You Can Do

- Review the 2025-2028 Social Principles, The Political Community, Government Responsibilities
- Stay abreast of Congressional actions impacting the separation of church and state
- Read and share the Faith and Facts Card on [Christian Nationalism](#)
- Contact your elected officials in support of policies that do not cross lines between Church and State

SAVE THE DATE



Many of you will recall ARJ's involvement in supporting the Johnson County Museum *REDLINED: Cities, Suburbs, and Segregation* exhibit and digital release. Those programs have helped spark important conversations about how the past continues to shape our communities today. The museum is about to take the next step in that journey, and we're all invited to be part of it.

On Wednesday, October 22, 2025, the Johnson County Museum will host the inaugural Legacies of Redlining Summit, a half-day gathering focused on this year's theme: "Water, Justice, and Community." Together, we'll explore how historic housing discrimination continues to influence environmental outcomes and what we can do to build more equitable futures.

Event Details:

- Wednesday, October 22, 2025 | 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- Johnson County Arts & Heritage Center | 8788 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park, KS
- Featuring keynote speaker Queen Wilkes, regional environmental advocate, plus a

panel discussion, Action Lab, and networking

- \$25 per person

Learn more and reserve your spot today: [Legacies of Redlining Summit](#)

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 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>

Allies for Racial Justice (ARJ) is a partnership between St. James Church and Resurrection, two United Methodist churches. ARJ exists to build authentic relationships to eliminate the existing racial divide in our churches and communities. Inquiries are received at allies4racialjustice@gmail.com



No longer want to receive these emails? [Unsubscribe.](#)

Resurrection 13720 Roe Ave Leawood, KS 66224