



Connect
Unite
Act

ARRJ

ALLIES for RACIAL JUSTICE

September 2026

Welcome to September— learning time for folks of all ages! This month's newsletter is filled with discovery opportunities to expand horizons for you, your family, and small groups. By participating in these educational, cultural, and entertainment events, you build your awareness of the African American experience – their struggles, achievements, contributions, and hopes for our communities and the nation.

Step out of your comfort zones and see how new experiences lead to knowledge and understanding. They are the foundation for creating meaningful relationships and uniting us to take action that creates a better, kinder world.

Love God – Love Your Neighbor

ARJ PRESENTS



KANSAS CITY BLACK HISTORY BUS TOUR

SUNDAY, SEPT. 20 – NOON - 4:30 PM
Tour Departs & Returns to St. James Church
5540 Wayne Ave., KCMO 64110

Travel through time with Kansas City Black historian Erik Keith Stafford as he takes us through the streets, sites, and stories that have formed the city and its history. The tour features historic locales, timeworn structures, and notable developments throughout the KC metro – from the city's founding during slavery, through the Civil War, Jim Crow, the Roaring 20s, Redlining, the Civil Rights era, and more. Mr. Stafford will show and explain the connections between the past, present, and future through the telling of true history.

Everyone, including middle and high school students, will benefit greatly from this experience. Discounted tickets are just \$20 per person (box lunch and snack included). Lunch is available from Noon until the bus tour departs from St. James Church at 1 pm; return at approximately 4:30 pm.

Space is limited to 50 people. Don't wait; [sign up now.](#)



Bringing people together to **CONNECT** through engaging educational events.

Let's start a conversation.

PRAIRIE DAY CELEBRATION



GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER NATIONAL MONUMENT

SATURDAY, SEPT. 12 – 10 AM – 3:00 PM
5646 Carver Road – Diamond, MO

Explore what life on the Missouri prairie was like when George Washington Carver was a child in the 1800s. Walk along the 1-mile loop that leads into woodlands, across streams and along a tall-grass prairie restoration area. And partake of the many event activities. This festive day features basket weaving, candle-making spinning, quilting, storytelling, musical groups, Civil War history, interactive exhibits and more. A concession stand will be available.

For more information about this event and renowned agricultural scientist, educator, and humanitarian, Dr. George Washington Carver, go to:

<https://www.nps.gov/gwca/index.htm>

CHILDREN OF THE PROMISED LAND



KANSAS AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 30 – 10-11:30 AM
601 N. Water St., Wichita, KS 67203

Through a pictorial history, Angela Bates will share the stories of mothers and children in Nicodemus, Kansas, the only remaining western town established by African Americans during the Reconstruction period following the Civil War. Many of the children highlighted in this presentation were among the first in their families born free.

Our speaker is the executive director and past president of the Nicodemus Historical Society. Working with the Nicodemus community, the National Park Service, and Senators Dole and Roberts, Angela Bates helped designate Nicodemus as a National Historic Site. She presents educational programs to cultural organizations across the nation covering the history of Nicodemus, Exodusters and black towns in the West, Buffalo Soldiers, and black women in the West.

This event is free and open to the public. Coffee and pastries provided. Validated parking. Register to assure seating. This program is made possible by Humanities Kansas.

LEARN MORE

KC MELTING POT THEATRE PRESENTS



SEPT. 17-26
3051 Penn Valley Dr., KCMO 64108

This month, KC MPT features *Jitney*, the first play by African American playwright August Wilson. Set in Pittsburgh's Hill District in the late 1970s, the story unfolds inside a struggling gypsy cab station serving the community. There, working-class drivers face generational conflict, economic displacement, and the threat of urban renewal. As livelihoods hang in the balance, *Jitney* becomes a powerful testament to the dignity of work and the strength of brotherhood in the face of erasure. [Get details and tickets by clicking here.](#)

CLASSIC BLACK LITERATURE SEPTEMBER BOOK STUDY

Featured: *Black Like Me* by John Howard Griffin
Wednesday, Sept. 23 – 6:30 – 8 PM
Resurrection Leawood, Room B256

There is much to be learned about the Black experience and perspective by reading and discussing classic Black literature. This month we turn to a nonfiction memoir by a white man who made an undercover journey through the racially segregated American deep South in 1959.

Frustrated by white Southerners claiming race relations were harmonious, white journalist John Howard Griffin decided to experience life on the other side of the color line. Using medications, UV treatments, and skin dyes, he darkened his skin and passed for Black. Over six weeks he faced constant rejection, suspicion, and intense hatred from white strangers. The sheer weight of racial discrimination dehumanized and exhausted him. His

groundbreaking book became a best seller and exposed the world to the realities of systemic racism, injustice, and the harshness of Jim Crow laws that targeted Black Americans.

You may have read this classic in high school or college. It's worth a re-read, especially in today's environment. The discussion will be mighty – [come join us!](#)

NEXT MONTH: October 28 – *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison



Bringing people together to **UNITE** by growing authentic relationships through interactive programs.

Let's learn from each other.

A COMMUNITY KINDNESS EVENT

Saturday, Sept. 12 – 5:30 PM
KCMO Crossroads District



Resurrection Downtown is kicking off **Love One Another**, a new campaign for kindness in the heart of the city, and it starts with music. *Worshippers United One Voice*, a multicultural choir and band, is joining Resurrection Downtown's worship team for a night at 1601 Grand that brings different voices, styles, and traditions together on one stage. Expect a full evening of it, running from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, with an ice cream social

afterward to keep the conversation going. All are welcome – no registration required.

ANOTHER GREAT 18TH & VINE DISTRICT WEEKEND

SEPT. 25-27 - KCMO



ARJ encourages you and everyone you know to experience together the fun and friendly spirit of this annual event.

Three days of music, visual arts, fashion, food, and creativity in Kansas City's historically and culturally recognized "heart and soul" – the 18th & Vine District. Experience over 100 local and national artists, live performances, cultural storytelling, immersive art, plus community connections. It's the perfect Fall outing for small groups, family, and friends. Get full details at <https://www.18thandvineartsfestival.com/>

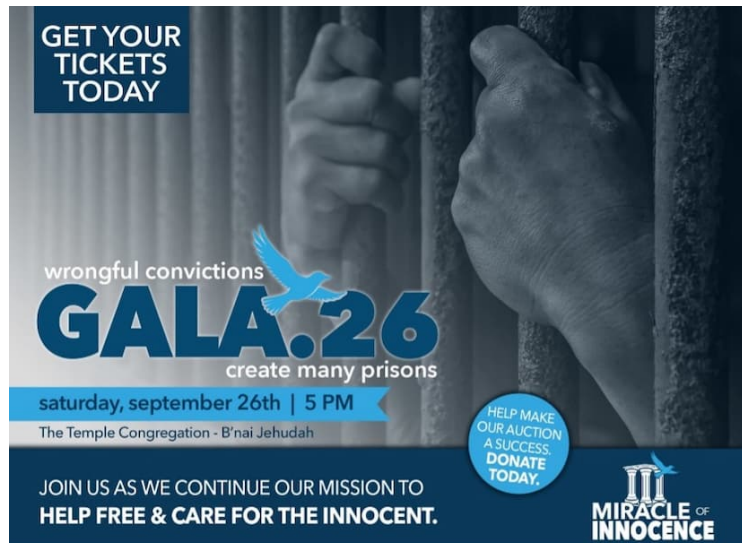


Bringing people together to **ACT** by supporting racial justice activities throughout our churches and communities.

Let's act together.

MIRACLE OF INNOCENCE ANNUAL GALA

SATURDAY, SEPT. 26 – 5 PM
The Temple Congregation – B'nai Jehudah
12320 Nall Ave., Overland Park, KS

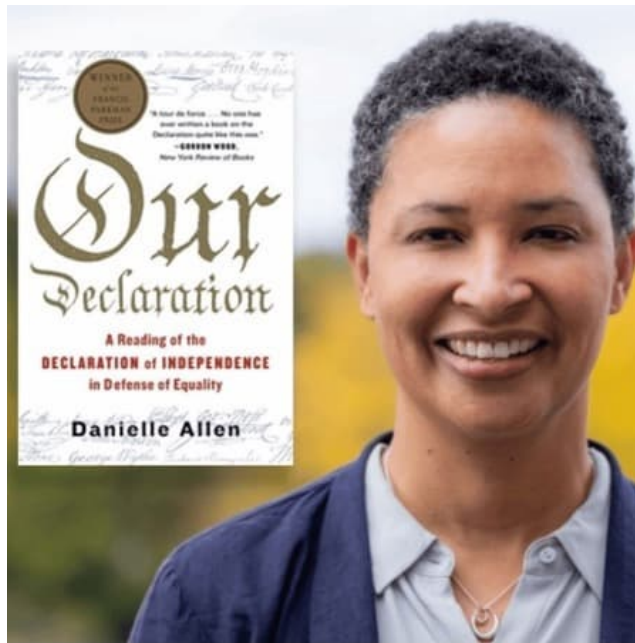


Miracle of Innocence co-founders, Darryl Burton and Lamonte McIntyre, invite you to join the wrongly convicted and their families for an elegant evening of fundraising, dinner, and fellowship. Hear heartfelt testimonials as we honor the extraordinary gifts of resilience, hope, and triumph. Register to participate in various fundraising activities, including Silent & Live Auction, Fund a Need, and Book Sales. For details email info@miracleofinnocence.org or call 913-717-5080 Ext. 102.



**Kansas City
Public Library**

THURSDAY, SEPT. 10 – 6-7 PM
Unity Temple on the Plaza 707 W. 47th St., KCMO



American Public Square and the Kansas City Public Library present an author talk with author and political theorist Danielle Allen. Allen discusses the Declaration of Independence and perhaps the most important 35 words in American political history: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Often cited as the epitome of American ideals, it is rife with contradictions. How can a collection of slaveholding men claim that ALL men are created equal? And is it just men? And what is the “pursuit” of happiness? Allen discusses her understanding of the founding document and explains that the Declaration of Independence makes it clear that equality and liberty are the “twinned foundations of democracy.”

[REGISTER HERE](#)

GET OUT THE VOTE - A MESSAGE FROM BOOTS ON THE GROUND MIDWEST



Boots on the Ground is a non-partisan, volunteer-led grassroots organization in the Midwest supporting economic, social and racial justice issues in the Heartland. From rural crossroads to city blocks, they organize locally, lead with actions, and show up for one another. In their August newsletter, Boots on the Ground provided the following guidance and resources to help Kansans and Missourians get out the vote to defend democracy.

1. Start talking. Tell everyone you know how important it is to vote in November. Also, know that social pressure gets people to the polls. (A well-known study documented this.) Kansans — stay tuned for information about how to join our *Voter to Voter team*.

- a. Oct. 13. **Last day to register to vote in Kansas.**
- b. Oct. 7. **Last day to register to vote in Missouri.**

2. Learn who's running. We focus a lot of attention on federal races — and we should! But the folks we send to the statehouse have a profound impact on our quality of life.

- a. In Kansas, all 125 House of Representative seats are up for re-election. See the full list of candidates [here](#). Find out what house district you're in [here](#).
- b. In Missouri, 17 Senate seats and every state Representative seat is up for election. [Here's a list of all candidates](#). Find out your district [here](#).

3. Give something. Every candidate needs one of two things from us: our time or our money. Figure out what you can give — then follow through. The stakes have NEVER been higher.

THE ARJ SUMMER OF 2026

KC Monarchs & Juneteenth



ARJ kicked off the summer with a gathering on the covered party patio at Legends Field for ARJ Night at the Ballpark. Folks got to know each other during the pregame socializing before digging into the all-you-can-eat-buffet. The game was a hit (a lot of hits, actually) as the KC Monarchs took on the Gary Southshore RailCats for a 17-3 win.

Juneteenth 2026: A Celebration of Black History, Freedom and Hope



ARJ held this year's 5th annual St. James & Resurrection Juneteenth Celebration in a new location, Resurrection Lee's Summit – and we packed the house with over 450 enthusiastic participants!

ARJ Spiritual Leader and Pastor of Resurrection Community Justice Cheryl Jefferson Bell welcomed everyone with a greeting and a responsive prayer. Together we sang "Lift Every Voice and Sing," one of the most cherished songs from the Civil Rights Movement, often

referred to as the Black National Anthem. This set the tone for an afternoon of joyous worship, music, dance, storytelling, and learning.

Isaac Cates and the *One Accord Choir* had the congregation lifting their hands and raising their voices in song. *The Praising Grace Dance Team* and *Devion Williams* shared their gifts through dance and music, keeping the congregation on their feet. Sandra Lamb introduced her exhibit, *The Hidden History of the Black West*, inviting attendees to learn stories that are often overlooked. Linda Hughes of *Lead to Read KC* spoke about the organization's work, the book *Ruby Bridges Goes to School*, and the ways volunteers can make a difference in the lives of children across the Kansas City area. Keynote speaker Dr. James Leiker explored Kansas history in his presentation, *How Free Was the Free State?* offering historical context that encouraged thoughtful reflection.

If you missed this amazing event, or want to revisit it, [click here for the replay](#).

SAVE THE DATES

LEGACIES OF REDLINING 2026 SUMMIT – JOHNSON COUNTY MUSEUM

Friday, November 13 – 8:00 AM- Noon

Half-day event will explore how the federal policy of redlining continues to shape our communities today. This year's theme, *Home, Opportunity & Community: The Housing Legacy of Redlining*, looks at the impacts of redlining on our region's housing affordability, homeownership, and community opportunity. Tickets are \$25.00. More details next month.

CHRISTMAS AT RESURRECTION – RESURRECTION LEAWOOD

Thursday-Sunday -- December 10-13

Christmas at Resurrection marks its 20th year this December, and this year's theme, "Anticipation, Awaiting the Coming of Christ," brings together the 120-voice Resurrection Choir, a full orchestra, the Kansas City Dance Collective, and a cast of actors and soloists for a night unlike anything else on the calendar this season. [Christmas at Resurrection - Resurrection Church](#)

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

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

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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