

Towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Community of Faith  
Assembly Mennonite Church  
June 5, 2020

The national response to the murder of George Floyd has raised the possibility of systemic and lasting change, which the murders by police of so many other Black and Brown people has not brought. Many of us are searching for how we can join the Holy Spirit's movement to change our hearts as well as the policies and systems that keep so many of our sisters and brothers oppressed. There is no one right thing for us to do; in fact, some of what we do may later feel misguided. But let us all, as best we're able, take steps to be a part of God's liberating movement.

Here is a partial list of suggested actions:

- **Donate:**
  - To Black Lives Matter South Bend - <https://www.paypal.me/BLMSouthBend>
  - To Black Lives Matter Global Network - [https://secure.actblue.com/donate/ms\\_blm\\_homepage\\_2019](https://secure.actblue.com/donate/ms_blm_homepage_2019)
  - To the Movement for Black Lives - <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/movement-4-black-lives-1>
  - To National Bail Out - <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/freeblackmamas2020>
  - To the [NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund](#)
  - To the National Police Accountability Project - <https://www.nlg-npap.org/donate/>
  - To Color of Change - <https://secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/support-us>
  - To one of these [Minneapolis organizations working for justice recommended](#) by [the Minnesota Freedom Fund](#) and [Reclaim the Block](#)
- **Contact US House Rep. Jackie Walorski (By Phone or By Email)**
  - Demand that she support Congresswomen Pressley, Omar, Bass, and Lee's resolution condemning police brutality ([for info click here](#)).
- **Join the Elkhart County branch of the NAACP** (contact [Gayle Gerber Koontz](#))
- **Support the movement to Defund the Police (and reinvest in our communities)** led by [Black Lives Matter](#)
- **Join the moral movement, [Repairs of the Breach](#)**, led by the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II and others, to focus our national attention on issues of racism and poverty
- **Share invitations to local rallies and marches, or help organize one. Then participate** (in as safe a way as possible given the pandemic)
- **Pray, intercede, expand your connection to the infinite love of God.**
  - [Some prayers of lament can be found here.](#)
- **Teach anti-racism and anti-white supremacy to your children**, using resources including the following:
  - ["100 Race-Conscious Things You Can Say To Your Child To Advance Racial Justice"](#)
  - [Raising White Kids: Bringing Up Children in a Racially Unjust America](#), by Jennifer Harvey
    - [Here is an NPR interview with Jennifer Harvey](#) about her book
  - Sat. June 6, 10 AM Eastern – [Coming Together: Standing Up to Racism](#), a 1-hour free online streamed Town Hall hosted by CNN and Sesame Street.

- June 23, 1 PM – [“For Moms who want to be allies: Talking with Kids about Racism”](#), a webinar by Parenting Forward (Registration Cost \$47)
  - Tips for [“How White Parents Can Use Media to Raise Anti-Racist Kids,”](#) including a link to [Coretta Scott King Book Award-winning children’s books](#)
  - Plus other resources also listed in [this email from Lora Nafziger to Assembly’s parents from 6/4/2020](#)
  - Also, see: [“7 Ways to Highlight Resistance Efforts When Discussing Oppression with Children”](#)
- Display a [“Black Lives Matter”](#) yard sign.
  - Listen to a sermon by a black preacher as part of your household or small group’s worship time.
    - Such as: [Otis Moss III, “The Cross and The Lynching Tree: A Requiem for Ahmaud Arbery” \(Trinity United Church of Christ, Chicago, Illinois\)](#)
  - Read some of the many important books on anti-racism. Suggestions include:
    - [How to Be an Antiracist](#), by Ibram X. Kendi
    - [The History of White People](#), by Nell Irvin Painter
    - [Choke Hold: Policing Black Me](#), by Paul Butler
    - [White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#), by Robin DiAngelo
    - Any of the other books also found on this list: [“17 Books On Race Every White Person Needs To Read”](#)
    - Or, any of these 16 more books from [Ibram X. Kendi’s “An Antiracist Reading List”](#)
    - [Trouble I’ve Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism](#), by Drew G. I. Hart (published by the Mennonite Church’s Herald Press)
    - [Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.](#), by Lenny Duncan (of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America)
- [Anna Yoder Schlabach](#) is currently reading **White Fragility** and invites anyone interested to read and discuss this book with her. [Contact her](#) if you’re interested.
- Further Suggested Actions:
    - Take the actions listed in [this Black Lives Matter Resource Toolkit](#) (which also includes film, podcast, articles, and children’s book recommendations)
    - **Especially For Busy People:** Make use of [this “Justice in June” Google Doc](#) which suggests readings, TED talks, podcasts, and also actions that you can take daily or weekly, whether you have just 10 minutes, 25 minutes, or 45 minutes a day to invest in taking action on racial injustice. (Shared with us by Hively Avenue Mennonite Church in Elkhart) ([Link to PDF version](#))
    - For a list of further actions you can take, we recommend: [“75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice”](#), (which is part of the inspiration for the “Justice in June” Google Doc linked above).
  - Further Educational Resources:
    - Make use of [Tori Williams Douglass’ “White Homework” collection plus recommended Podcasts, Books, Articles](#)
    - Explore resources found in [this working list](#) of Books, Podcasts, and Articles that was once maintained by Assembly’s Racial Justice Ministry Team: [click here](#).
    - You may also find appropriate resources shared by the Center for Congregations here: [https://thecrg.org/collections/Let\\_s\\_Address\\_Racism](https://thecrg.org/collections/Let_s_Address_Racism).