

## Black Lives Matter at the First UU Society of Albany

Before Michael Brown's killing in Ferguson last summer #BlackLivesMatters was created by four women of color as a movement, not a moment in time. From their website, [www.blacklivesmatter.org](http://www.blacklivesmatter.org), one goal is: *to work for a world where Black lives are no longer systematically and intentionally targeted for demise*. Many people in our congregation also have wanted to respond, as UU's, to the killing of Michael Brown and other Black men by participating in marches; by working with CAAMI (Capital Area Against Mass Incarceration) and Interfaith Impact; by promoting actions of other UU congregations and our Unitarian Universalist Association; and by educating ourselves more about racism using resources from our UUA.

We hear strong support for Black Lives Matter from our congregation and the larger UU world.

- Rev. Sam explained how UU's have a leadership position to identify and dismantle the institutionalized racism pervasive in our society in his column in the May edition *Windows*
- Jean Poppei, chair of the Social Responsibilities Council shared Rev. Daniel S. Schatz' response to being asked to change a banner from "Black Lives Matter" to "All Lives Matter"  
<http://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/being-asked-change-black-lives-matter-all-lives-matter>
- The Social Responsibilities Council has formed a Black Lives Matter Task Force
- Rev Peter Morales, President of our UUA responded to the statement of UU Professionals of Color regarding the delay in saying anything about the killing and aftermath in Baltimore, "...we want change," said Rev Morales, "—not tomorrow, not next month, not next year. Now."  
<https://www.uua.org/news/press-release/statement-events-baltimorel>.

On Sunday, May 17, after the service and before the Annual Meeting, we will install our Black Lives Banner at the front of our building.

With help from fellow UU Religious Educators and our SRC members, I've created a list of resources for you to use to educate yourself and your family about racism, about ways it can be addressed, and about healing. (See below.) If these reading these resources on racism troubles you, Rev. Sam and I are available to you for pastoral care.

From <http://blacklivesmatter.com/> *Three years ago a group of friends got together to share their grief and frustration. Now, they've sparked a national conversation about racism and unlawful police force and inspired people across the country to stand up and fight against injustice.* May we join together to make a commitment to join in that conversation and fight. And may we hold each other gently as we move forward, even if we are unable to see a clear resolution or even to see all the issues that are a part of it.

In faithful service,

Leah

**Lifespan Religious Education Resources**  
**Compiled by Kenny Wiley, Director of Faith Formation,**  
**Prairie Unitarian Universalist Church**  
**As part of the UU Ferguson Response Team**

**UU-Specific Stories of Justice Seekers**

- [Frances E.W. Harper: Black Woman, Unitarian, Writer--From UUA Tapestry of Faith](#)
  - [The Call For Courage: Youth Workshop on Faith Activism](#)
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**Parenting Resources**

- Talking about Racism
  - [The Murder of Sean Bell: From Pain to Poetry](#)
  - This piece explores fears of black middle school students. Really powerful, eye-opening read for teens & parents, and this definitely promotes, invokes importance of empathy.
  - [A Little White Girl's First Experience of Racism](#)
  - An essay which uses narrative to explore themes of racism and inequality.
- Ferguson-specific parenting, teaching resources
  - [PBS: Talking to Kids About Ferguson](#)
  - [Educators use Twitter to Teach About Ferguson](#)
  - [Know Your Rights: Demonstrations and Protests](#)

**General Education on Systemic Discrimination**

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- Essays
    - Blake, John: [When You're the Only White Person in the Room](#). Here's a REALLY good one, recently released. Strong, yet opens dialogue instead of closing it.
    - Rimington, Jess: [What Side of History Are You On?](#) This recent piece is worth the read and has a lot in it to at least consider.
    - Smith, Sharon: [Black Feminisism and Intersectionality](#). A great, GREAT essay that is readable, and packed with facts.
    - Coates, Ta-Nehisi: [The Case For Reparations](#). From a senior writer at *The Atlantic*, this is a long essay and was shared hundreds of thousands of times. It may be the best essay on race thus far in the 21st century. It is worth every minute.
    - Hammer, Mitchell R.: [The Intercultural Development Inventory](#). An academic description of intercultural competency, which includes ideas
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about where you might be and where our culture is.

- McIntosh, Peggy: [Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#). A seminal essay in the study of race and whiteness. It's pretty readable and very thought provoking.
    - Alexander, Valerie: [The Erasing of Women & Their Athletic Achievements](#). While it's "about" the Women's & Men's World Cups, this essay truly calls us to examine our language and broaden our perspectives.
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- Books

- Morrison-Reed, Mark D.: [The Selma Awakening: How the Civil Rights Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism](#). From a UU minister and historian, a new book on the story of UU involvement in the Civil Rights movement and our more recent history
- Razor, Paul: [Faith Without Certainty: Liberal Theology in the 21st Century](#). By a UU theologian, includes an analysis of race and justice
- Rosenberg, Marshall B.: [Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life](#)
- Takaki, Ronald: [A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America](#). An excellent history of the stories of different immigrants to this country
- Thandeka: [Learning to Be White: Money, Race and God in America](#). From a UU theologian, a theological and social analysis of how race has developed and is embedded in economics and religion

**Addendum:  
More resources compiled by Leah Purcell**

**Books for Adults**

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander – described as “brave, bold and stunning”, Alexander explains that “today it is perfectly legal to discriminate against convicted criminals in nearly all the ways that it was once legal to discriminate against African American” – from the UUA bookstore. The New Jim Crow Discussion Guide: written to help groups reflect on the book and consider together what steps they are called to take, as people of faith, in response to Alexander’s call for awareness and action [http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/lfid/commonread/crow\\_discussion.pdf](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/lfid/commonread/crow_discussion.pdf)

Morris, Leslie Takahashi, Chip Roush and Leon Spencer: [The Arc of the Universe is Long: Unitarian Universalists, Anti-Racism and the Journey from Calgary](#). A lengthy look at the history of racism and justice in our Unitarian Universalist Association

**UU Programs for Adults**

Building the World We Dream About - a Tapestry of Faith curriculum designed to foster cross-cultural skill building and prepare participants to nurture a multiculturally competent and actively anti-racist congregation. <http://www.uua.org/multiculturalism/curricula/110030.shtml>

Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race and Ethnicity - an experiential and evocative curriculum that provides a container for exploring the spiritual and intellectual dimensions of racism in our lives. <http://www.meadville.edu/beloved>

**Parenting Resources**

Talking About Race: Start the Conversation (Blog from the UUA)  
<http://callandresponse.blogs.uua.org/talking-about-race-start-the-conversation/>

6 Things White Parents Can Do to Raise Racially Conscious Children  
<http://everydayfeminism.com/2014/08/raising-racially-conscious-kids/>

Why People Don’t Become Activists <http://www.tolerance.org/blog/exploring-why-people-don-t-become-activists>

I Have the Big Job of Teaching My Black Children About Police (Huff Post)  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rachel-garlinghouse/i-have-the-big-job-of-teaching-my-black-children-about-police\\_b\\_7186598.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rachel-garlinghouse/i-have-the-big-job-of-teaching-my-black-children-about-police_b_7186598.html)

What We Talk About When We Talk About Race (Huff Post)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lisa-page-rosenberg/what-we-talk-about-when-we-talk-about-race\\_b\\_6220188.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lisa-page-rosenberg/what-we-talk-about-when-we-talk-about-race_b_6220188.html)

An Open Letter to My Fellow White, Liberal Parents (Huff Post)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rachael-quinn-egan/an-open-letter-to-my-fellow-white-liberal-parents\\_b\\_5847154.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rachael-quinn-egan/an-open-letter-to-my-fellow-white-liberal-parents_b_5847154.html)

The Startlingly Profound (Yet Simple) Question My Daughter Asked About Racism (Huff Post) [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jennifer-harvey/the-startling-profound-yet-simple-question-my-daughter-asked-about-racism\\_b\\_5198339.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jennifer-harvey/the-startling-profound-yet-simple-question-my-daughter-asked-about-racism_b_5198339.html)

## **Picture Books for Children of All Ages**

Annotated Bibliography of Civil Rights Movement Picture Books by Emily Gage

*We March* by Shane W. Evans - Very simple word and picture book on the August 28, 1963 march on Washington. "We are hot and tired, but we are filled with hope. We lean on each other as we march to justice, to freedom, to our dreams."

*I Have a Dream* by Martin Luther King, Jr. -Some of the speech's text with beautiful illustrations by Kadir Nelson.

*We Shall Overcome: The Story of a Song* by Debbie Levy - Traces the story of this song from slavery to current day as inspiration for freedom fighters.

*Let Freedom Sing* by Vanessa Newton - A tour through major civil rights events using "This little light of mine" lyrics and how those lights changed things. (Includes Barack Obama's election.)

*Martin and Mahalia; His Words, Her Song* by Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney - The friendship and mutual inspiration of Martin Luther King, Jr and Mahalia Jackson.

*Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up By Sitting Down* by Andrea Davis Pinkney - The story of the Woolworth sit-ins in Greensboro, NC and its effects, with great language and inspiration.

*Martin's Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport - Life story of MLK, Jr. emphasizing the power of words to change things. Ends with: "His big words are alive for us today."

*Child of the Civil Rights Movement* by Paula Young Shelton and Raul Colon - Andrew Young's daughter gives her own perspective on her experiences of the freedom movement.

*This is the Dream* by Diane Shore and Jessica Alexander - Book in verse describing Jim Crow conditions, the leaders and people that changed it, and how things are now.

*Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-ins* by Carole Boston Weatherford - An account of the sit-ins from the perspective of African American 8 year old Connie.

*Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles - A story of two friends, one white and one Black, in the South in 1964.

For Older Readers (but still with lots of pictures)

*Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges – First-hand account of Ruby Bridges' experiences, integrating (by herself) a school in New Orleans in 1960; includes photos, news accounts and historical context.

*We are One: the Story of Bayard Rustin* by Larry Dane Brimmer - Biography of a sometimes overlooked activist, who helped make the 1963 March on Washington a reality.

*Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni - An account of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

*Freedom's Children* by Ellen Levine - No pictures, but first hand accounts by children actually involved in the freedom movement.

*We've Got A Job: 1963 Birmingham Children's March* by Cynthia Levinson - Stories of young people who were there help tell the stories from various perspectives.

*March, Book One* by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell - A graphic novel of John Lewis' civil rights activism, first in a trilogy (not all published.)

*A Dream of Freedom: Civil Rights Movement from 1954-1968* by Diane McWhorter - Year by year chronology with photographs with an epilogue of the "unfinished work".

*Heart and Soul: The Story of Africa and African Americans* by Kadir Nelson - Introductory history from slavery through the Civil Rights movement with ideals of democracy, freedom and independence.

*If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks* by Faith Ringgold - A young child gets on the bus and hears the story of that special seat.

*We Shall Not Be Moved* by Velma Maia Thomas - Covers the Passage from the Great Migration to the Million Man March with photographs and replica of original documents.

*Civil Rights Movement for Kids: A History with 21 Activities* by Mary Turck - Uses plays, crafts, songs to help make these stories come alive in different ways.