
AUGUST. 2020, ISSUE 1

Racial Justice Initiative Newsletter



במקום שאין אנשים, השתדל להיות איש

In a place where no one is acting human, strive to be human.

Pirkei Avot 2:5

"Do not stand idly by while your neighbor's blood is shed..." Leviticus 19:16

In the wake of the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others, Temple Judea, along with our partner congregations in the Union for Reform Judaism and our movement's social justice arm, the Religious Action Center, are mobilizing to add our voices to the chorus calling for racial equality by establishing the Temple Judea Racial Justice Initiative.

Under the leadership of Sarah Whitman and David Altschul, the Racial Justice Initiative will focus the energies of the Temple Judea community to amplify Civil Rights and the voices of people and communities of color to strive for equitable treatment in, and access to, legal, social and economic systems. We are committed to bringing diverse points of view together to promote racial equity and racial justice, encouraging active listening, while generating transformative ideas, information, and experiences. We define racial justice as social, legal, political, and economic equality of all races. We will achieve our mission by:

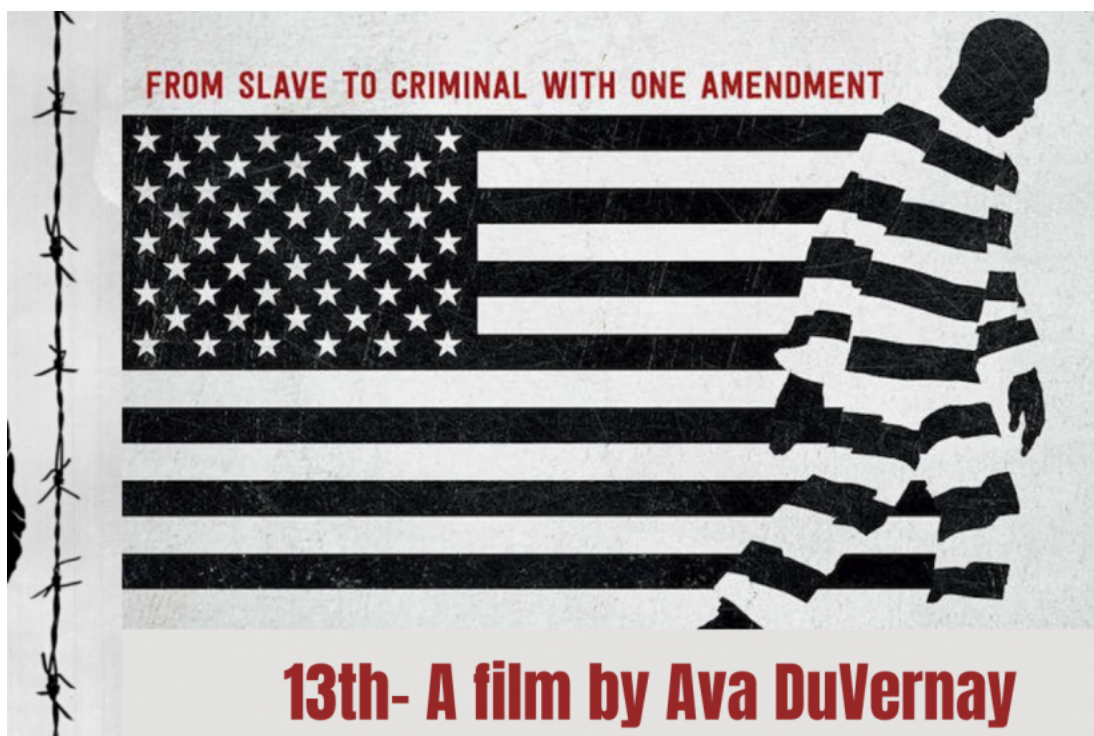
- **Continuous Learning:** Deepening our individual and communal understanding of racism and how it impacts our society through **Uncomfortable Conversations: An Exploration of Race and Racism**, a new Temple Judea program of communal discussions centered around selected readings, films, and a series of conversations with visiting guests from the greater Los Angeles area. In addition, we will work with Temple Judea's educational staff to focus on issues of racial justice and equity in our existing programs, including early childhood education, the religious school, and the youth group.
- **Advocacy and Activation:** Creating opportunities for members of the Temple Judea congregation to invest in interrupting racism, bigotry, and prejudice whenever encountered. The Initiative will find and create opportunities for the members of our congregation. Members of the Racial Justice Initiative are committed to eliminating policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce inequitable treatment based on race. We will create space to learn, heal and organize to take action together.

Each month, those who "opt in" will receive a newsletter with current event information, resources for further education, relevant Temple events, actions to take, and places to donate. Thank you for committing to anti-racist work.

Upcoming Events

Our **Uncomfortable Conversations** series starts August 18th. Join us for a discussion of the film *13th* from Ava Duverney at 7:30. [REGISTER HERE:](#)

Uncomfortable Conversations will be meeting approximately twice a month, on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 from August through June 2021. We hope to create a community of conversation in our exploration of race and racism through offering a series of challenging and sometimes provocative films, books, magazine articles and other media. Each meeting will be moderated by a member of our clergy. We hope that participants will want to participate regularly as we learn together, and for those who can't make that kind of commitment, please feel free to participate with us whenever you can.



Here is a list of dates and events through the end of this calendar year:

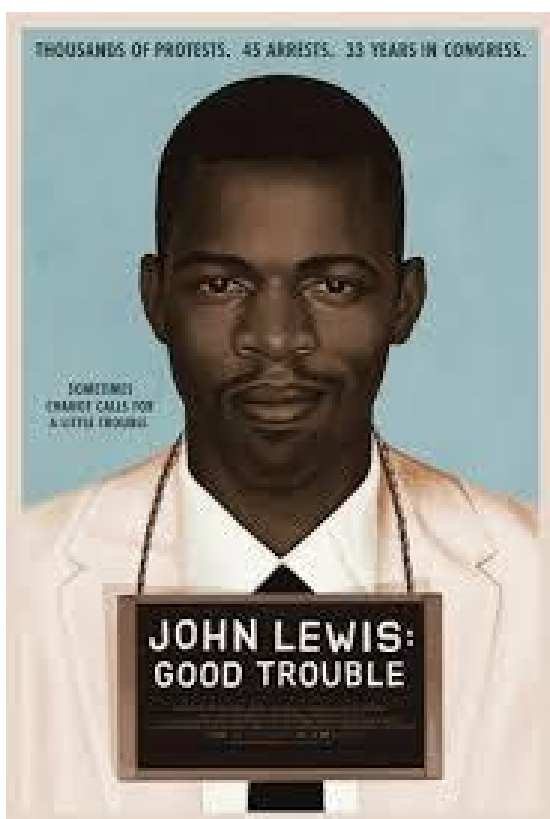
- 8/18/20: *13th* (a documentary film by Ava DuVernay)
- 9/1/20: *I Am Not Your Negro* (a documentary film about James Baldwin)
- 10/6/20: *So You Want to Talk About Race* (a book by Ijeoma Oluo) (Part 1)
- 10/20/20: *So You Want to Talk About Race* (a book by Ijeoma Oluo) (Part 2)
- 11/10/20: *Selma* (a film directed by Ava Duverney)
- 12/1/20: *Americanah* (a novel by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie) (Part 1)
- 12/15/20: *Americanah* (a novel by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie) (Part 2)

Educational Resources

Movie: *Good Trouble*

Congressman John Lewis passed away on July 17th after a battle with pancreatic cancer. John Lewis was not only a leader in Congress but a Civil Rights leader. Growing up, he was inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. and ended up working closely with him as a demonstrator, organizer, and speaker. Congressman Lewis organized sit-ins, participated in Freedom Rides, marched and was brutalized by the police, and spoke at the March on Washington. He was also the Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee for three years. He was arrested more than 40 times. He was elected to Congress in November 1986 and has served as U.S. Representative of Georgia's Fifth Congressional District since then.

John Lewis is a Civil Rights icon and we wish to honor his memory. Our movie of the month is "John Lewis: Good Trouble". From the website, "Using interviews and rare archival footage, JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE chronicles Lewis' 60-plus years of social activism and legislative action on civil rights, voting rights, gun control, health-care reform and immigration. Using present-day interviews with Lewis, now 80 years old, Porter explores his childhood experiences, his inspiring family and his fateful meeting with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1957. In addition to her interviews with Lewis and his family, Porter's primarily cinéma vérité film also includes interviews with political leaders, Congressional colleagues, and other people who figure prominently in his life."



Watch Here:

<https://www.johnlewisgoodtrouble.com/watch-at-home/>

Educational Resources

Article: 100 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice

Read Here: <https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234>



Book: So You Want To Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo.

"In this New York Times bestseller, Ijeoma Oluo offers a hard-hitting but user-friendly examination of race in America. Widespread reporting on aspects of white supremacy--from police brutality to the mass incarceration of Black Americans--has put a media spotlight on racism in our society. Still, it is a difficult subject to talk about. How do you tell your roommate her jokes are racist? Why did your sister-in-law take umbrage when you asked to touch her hair--and how do you make it right? How do you explain white privilege to your white, privileged friend?"

Reminder: So You Want To Talk About Race is the first book in our Uncomfortable Conversations series. We will discuss this book on October 6th and October 20th.

Podcast: 1619

"1619 is a New York Times audio series, hosted by Nikole Hannah-Jones, that examines the long shadow of American slavery." Listen on Spotify or Apple Podcasts.

Where to Donate

This month, we are highlighting **The Loveland Foundation**, in honor of Breonna Taylor and other Black women who are still waiting for justice. “Loveland Foundation is committed to showing up for communities of color in unique and powerful ways, with a particular focus on Black women and girls. Our resources and initiatives are collaborative and they prioritize opportunity, access, validation, and healing. We are becoming the ones we’ve been waiting for.”

Donate Here: <https://thelovelandfoundation.org/>

Take Action

On March 13, 2020, 26 year old Breonna Taylor was asleep in her bed when LMPD officers Brett Hankison, Jonathan Mattingly and Myles Cosgrove arrived at her apartment in plain clothes and unmarked vehicles. Using a battering ram, they entered her apartment executing a no knock warrant. Thinking they were intruders, Breonna's boyfriend Kenneth Walker fired at the officers in self defense. The officers fired over 20 times, shooting Breonna eight times while she was still in bed. The officers were looking for a suspect that had already been arrested in connection with drug crimes. The suspect did not live in Breonna Taylor's building, and there were no illicit substances found at the home of Breonna Taylor. As an EMT, Breonna was working on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic. Over four months later, only one of the officers involved in the shooting has been fired, and none have been charged or arrested. For our first action item as a committee, we decided to work together to help bring justice to Breonna Taylor and her family. We are doing this by urging the Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer to immediately fire all the officers involved, and divert some of the LMPD funds to other community programs.



Please join us in these calls for justice by following the links below:

- Sign this petition: https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/2005_email_blm_breonna
- Call and email to ask for justice for Breonna:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vmHYgj_ePUIvtM31fK_2OWN6kk7z01uIV7NRC_L3qrYI/edit?usp=sharing