

Temple Judea

RJI Newsletter

March 2021



במקום שאין אנשים, השתדל להיות איש

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

Pirkei Avot 2:5

CURRENT EVENTS

The following bills are expected to be introduced shortly in the House of Representatives. Call your Congressperson to represent your view on these matters. (See contacts for representatives near the end of this newsletter.)

H.R. 1 - For the People Act

To expand Americans' access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen ethics rules for public servants, and implement other anti-corruption measures for the purpose of fortifying our democracy, and for other purposes.

Why does this matter?

From the non-partisan law and policy institute [Brennan Center website](#): "The For the People Act would transform our democracy by making it fairer, stronger, and more inclusive."

H.R. 51 - Washington, D.C. Admission Act

To provide for the admission of the State of Washington, D.C. into the Union.

Why does this matter?

The following statement can be attributed to Monica Hopkins, Executive Director, ACLU of the District of Columbia:

"The more than 712,000 people who call Washington, D.C., home are just like every other American. We work hard, not just as federal workers, but also as teachers, nurses, mechanics, grocery store clerks, members of the military, and small business owners. We raise families, go to church, volunteer in our communities, pay our taxes, and spend time with our neighbors. Residents of D.C. deserve the same rights and privileges as Americans living in every other U.S. state." "Denying full voting rights to D.C. residents,

most of whom are Black or Brown, is rooted in racism and dates back to well-documented efforts to limit the power of the Black people after the Civil War. Not only are D.C. residents denied voting representation at the federal level, Congress' authority over the District's local laws and budgets also creates deep, and racially disproportionate harm to the District's criminal justice and public health systems. Granting Washington D.C. statehood is a necessary step in our nation's long journey towards racial justice and equality, and the only path to equal civil rights and full citizenship for D.C. residents."

UPCOMING EVENTS

As part of our "Uncomfortable Conversations" series

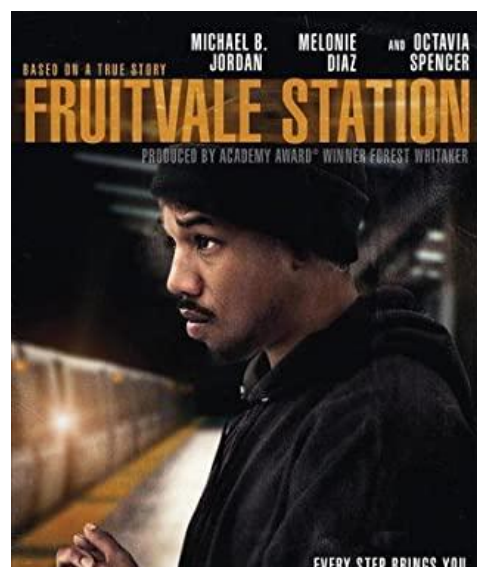
Uncomfortable Conversations meets approximately twice a month, on Tuesday evenings at 7:30pm. We convene with the intention of creating a community of conversation in our exploration of race and racism through offering a series of challenging and sometimes provocative films, books, magazine articles and other media. Each meeting is moderated by a member of our clergy. We hope that people will participate consistently as we learn together, and for those who cannot, please participate whenever you can.

Fruitvale Station film

March 2, 2021

7:30 - 9:00pm via Zoom ([REGISTER](#))

The Racial Justice Initiative's ongoing education series discusses the award winning film, "Fruitvale Station" directed by Ryan Coogler. This biographical film depicts the events that led up to the 2009 killing of Oscar Grant by a BART police officer in Oakland. Available for streaming on Netflix, YouTube, and Amazon Prime. Please



view the film prior to this event for a more comprehensive discussion.

RJI Panel Discussion

March 8, 2021

7 - 8:30pm via Zoom

([REGISTER](#))

The Racial Justice Initiative opens the first of three upcoming panels on policing and criminal justice in Los Angeles. This panel features Chief John Thomas (Chief of Public Safety, USC) and Dr. Josh Sides (Professor of History, CSUN) for a

historical look at the criminal justice system in Los Angeles and the significant turning points and figures that brought us to today. This panel will set the stage for our two subsequent conversations exploring policing reform and criminal justice reform. (The dates of the subsequent panels on this topic are April 13 and May 24.)

UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATIONS
A PANEL CONVERSATION
MODERATED BY RABBI ERIC ROSENSTEIN

THE TEMPLE JUDEA
RACIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

**UNPACKING LA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:
HOW OUR PAST INFORMS THE PRESENT - PART 1**

Panelists:

Dr. Josh Sides
Professor of History, CSUN

Chief John Thomas
Chief, USC Dept. of Public Safety

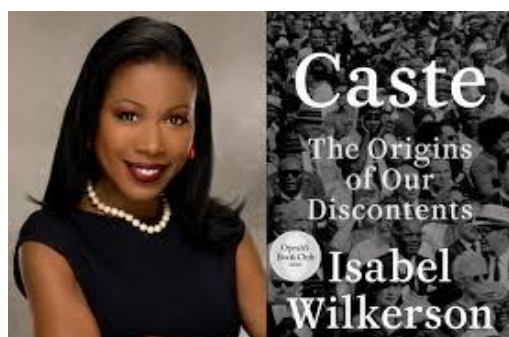
For details and ZOOM registration - templejudea.com/rji
Monday, March 8 at 7pm

Save the Date for Parts 2 & 3:
Police Reform Beyond the Slogans - Tuesday, April 13 at 7pm
Criminal Justice in the 21st Century - Monday, May 24 at 7pm

***Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* article and book discussion**

March 16, 2021

7:30 - 9:00pm via Zoom ([REGISTER](#))



The Racial Justice Initiative's ongoing educational series will be discussing the New York Times Magazine article by Dr. Isabel Wilkerson, entitled

"America's Enduring Caste System." For those inclined toward a more comprehensive understanding, we'll be referencing the book as well. [Link to article.](#) [Link to site with Black-owned bookstores in L.A.](#)

Jill Nagle of Evolutionary Workplace conducts several workshops in March

"White on White: Engaging Other White People in Race Conversations"

March 2, March 17, March 21, 2021 *times and formats differ*

Info and registration

Learn how — and why — to have transformative and vital conversations with white people in your life who think differently from you. Learn a range of tools for engaging the “other white people,” while also growing your own self-awareness by leaps and bounds.

You'll discover:

- The real (and completely logical) reasons you and other white people react the way you do
- Ways to handle your own discomfort, and have productive, transformative conversations
- How to step with confidence into your unique and vital leadership role in dismantling white supremacy



Facilitator Jill Nagle is the founder of Evolutionary Workplace and Wisdom of the Body. She is a widely published author, and has been working with social justice, leadership, and personal transformation for more than three decades. Along with Cleo Manago, she is leading the upcoming 22nd Century Leaders program starting in April, 2021.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Our focus in March is on the connection between racial justice and policing. We recommend the following resources:

ACLU

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwfdTKcPIB5nle47H4GDipmlxDm1Cy-Rm>

In this series entitled, “100 Years of Racism in U.S. Policing,” the ACLU takes a critical look at post-riot policing commissions over the last 100 years in four short films, noticing that the trends seen today in police violence are the same trends that have been present over the last 100 years.

Feature film “13th” (trailer: <https://youtu.be/BOUtfhjJAJ4>)

Filmmaker Ava DuVernay explores the history of racial inequality in the United States, focusing on the fact that the nation's prisons are disproportionately filled with African-Americans. This film is available to view on Netflix and free on YouTube. RJI “Uncomfortable Conversations” participants may remember our discussion of this film in one of our first installments of the series.

Podcast: “Scene on Radio” <http://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/>

From the podcast website: “Just what is going on with white people? Police shootings of unarmed African Americans. Acts of domestic terrorism by white supremacists. The renewed embrace of raw, undisguised white-identity politics. Unending racial inequity in schools, housing, criminal justice, and hiring. Some of this feels new, but in truth it’s an old story. Why? Where did the notion of “whiteness” come from? What does it mean? What is whiteness for? *Scene on Radio* host and producer John Biewen took a deep dive

into these questions, along with an array of leading scholars and regular guest Dr. Chenjerai Kumanyika, in this fourteen-part documentary series, released between February and August 2017. The series editor is Loretta Williams..” Listen on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or NPR.

Grassroots Law Project (<https://www.grassrootslaw.org>)

From the website: “Grassroots Law Project bridges the gap between grassroots organizing and legal expertise in criminal justice reform by bringing millions of us together to address the most pressing and egregious failures of the system, to hold powerful actors accountable, and advocate for deep structural change.”

Undoing White Supremacy Austin

(<https://undoingwhitesupremacy.org/unlearning-circles/>)

From the website: “UWSA seeks to undo racism in many ways, including educating ourselves on racial oppression, mobilizing other people of European descent to dismantle white supremacy, and supporting social justice organizing led by people of color communities, including indigenous people. The Unlearning Circles are an opportunity for white identifying people to explore white supremacy culture and our role and responsibilities in undoing racism.”

Standing Up for Racial Justice

(<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/>)

SURJ is a national network of groups and individuals working to undermine white supremacy and to work for racial justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ moves white people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for justice with passion and accountability. It works to connect people across the country while supporting and collaborating with local and national racial justice organizing efforts. SURJ provides a space to build relationships, skills and political analysis to act for change.

Educational Resources con't

The Mothers Who Raised Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and James Baldwin

<https://www.npr.org/2021/02/17/968695922/the-mothers-who-raised-martin-luther-king-jr-malcolm-x-and-james-baldwin>

A 22-min listen about Anna Malaika Tubbs' new book.

TAKE ACTION

ACLU petition

<https://action.aclu.org/petition/divest-police-invest-black-and-brown-communities>

The ACLU is urgently committed to a bold reimagining of the role police play in our society. Sign this petition to support their solutions.

Indivisibles

<https://indivisible.org/resource/making-democracy-reform-priority-people-act-and-dc-statehood>

From Indivisibles: "Passing H.R. 1, the For the People Act, and H.R. 51, the D.C. Statehood bill, are essential first steps toward achieving any of our policy goals during the Biden administration. We must begin to unrig our democracy so every American has an equitable voice in our government. Call your Representative and demand they support and move swiftly on the For the People Act and the D.C. statehood bill. Then, call your Senators and demand the same thing."

RAC/CA - Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (national) & RAC-CA (state)

RAC: Building on RAC's commitment to combat voter suppression during the Reform Movement's 2020 Civic Engagement Campaign, the Reform Movement, led by the

Religious Action Center, is moving forward to continue its racial justice work. Hear about and weigh in on the selection of our forthcoming racial justice legislative campaign that will bring us closer to a world in which all people experience wholeness, justice, and compassion.

You can join either one of two identical webinars on March 22 at 8 p.m. ET (RAC.org/TownHall1) or March 23 at 3 p.m. ET (RAC.org/TownHall2) to help decide what the Reform Movement's racial justice issue campaign in 2021 should be.

RAC-CA's Research Team has been hard at work looking into potential opportunities for the 2021 legislative campaign. On March 10 and 11, the Research Team will present these opportunities for the statewide network to bring Jewish values to bear on important racial justice policy decisions. Members of California Reform congregations will then have the chance to share which campaign our congregation wants to support. Join one of two identical RAC-CA campaign selection webinars (RAC-CA then suggests spreading the word to others in our congregation to join.)

- Wednesday, March 10, 7-8:30 p.m. PT. [Register here.](#)
- Thursday, March 11, 12-1:30 p.m. PT. [Register here.](#)

About RAC: For nearly six decades, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC) has been a hub for Jewish social justice work. As a joint instrumentality of the Union for Reform Judaism and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, RAC represents the values of the largest and most diverse Jewish Movement in North America.

SURJ - Standing Up for Racial Justice

<https://solidaritycenter.ourpowerbase.net/civicism/petition/sign?sid=20>

Support Amazon workers in AL to unionize

From February 8 to March 29, the approximately 6,000 warehouse workers are voting on whether they will be represented by the Retail, Wholesale Department Store Workers Union (RWDSU). Despite bitter opposition from Amazon, a recent NLRB ruling allowed the vote to take place by mail, to ensure proper anti-COVID measures. This is groundbreaking organizing -- Alabama is an at-will, right-to-work state with union membership of only 8%. Lowndes County is actively collaborating with union-busting efforts like [changing the traffic light pattern](#) so workers can't speak to each other.

Take Action con't

Call your representatives - locally and nationally

U.S. Senators

Dianne Feinstein (310) 914-7300 / (202) 224-3841

Alex Padilla (202) 224-3553

U.S. Representatives

Brad Sherman (818) 501-9200

Tony Cardenas (818) 221-3718

CA State Legislators (senate and assembly)

Adrin Nazarian (CA ASM) 818-376-4246

Bob Hertzberg (CA SEN) 818-901-5588

City Council

Nithya Ramen (213) 473-7004

City Council: [City Council | City of Los Angeles \(lacity.org\)](http://lacity.org)

LA County Board of Supervisors: [1031546_BoardContactInformation.pdf \(lacounty.gov\)](#)

CA Assembly and Senate: [Find Address \(ca.gov\)](#)

Where to Donate

As we continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, many are still suffering physically, mentally and financially. These are a few non-profits that can help.

Click to be taken to their websites.

[Hope of the Valley](#)

[Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services](#)

[World Vision Coronavirus Emergency Relief](#)