

Temple Judea

RJI Newsletter

May 2021



במקום שאין אנשים, השתדל להיות איש

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

Pirkei Avot 2:5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Clicking on the headings or links below will take you directly to them in the newsletter

CURRENT EVENTS

[H.R. 1 - For the People Act](#)
[S.4263 - John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#)
[S.51 - Washington, D.C. Admission Act](#)
[SB 731 - Time Done](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

[If Beale Street Could Talk \(May 4\)](#)
[RAC-CA 2021 Campaign Launch \(May 5\)](#)
[Women, Race and Class by Angela Davis \(May 18\)](#)
[RJI Panel Discussion \(May 25\)](#)

FORMING ALLIANCES

[Jewbian Princess Workshops \(May 19\)](#)

FOLLOWING UP

[Segregated By Design \(2019\)](#)
[How Biden Can Free America From Its Zoning Straitjacket \(April 12, 2021\)](#)
[The Whiteness of Wealth: How the Tax System Impoverishes Black Americans – and How We can Fix It](#)
[You can find out more about the Advancement Project and the Urban Peace Institute, both of which Connie Rice founded.](#)
[You can learn about the Law Enforcement Work Inquiry System \(LEWIS\) Registry, which Dr. Erroll Southers directs as part of his work at USC.](#)
[“Police Reform Beyond the Slogans” recording](#)

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

[The Next Steps in Holding Police Accountable - addressing QUALIFIED IMMUNITY](#)
[Defund Police Resource Guide](#)

TAKE ACTION

[How to Have Any Conversation with Anyone at Anytime Without Fear...](#)
[Tools for Anti-Racism Conversations with Friends & Family](#)
[An Indivisibles Virtual Event on Saturday, May 15 at 9amPT](#)

Take Action con't

[Hollaback! is on a mission to end harassment - in all its forms](#)
[How to Help the Asian American and Pacific Islander \(AAPI\) Community](#)

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

Take Action con't

Call your representatives - locally and nationally

Where to Donate

CURRENT EVENTS

These bills in the House and Senate are currently under consideration by various committees. They are essential if we are to move forward with a more inclusive, democratic nation. Keep up the pressure. Call your Congresspeople to represent your view on these matters. (See contacts for elected officials 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.”

S.4263 - John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

What is the difference between this and the For the People Act?

The For the People Act deals with a lot of the mechanics of election administration issues, while the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act relates specifically to racial discrimination in voting. It directly targets this issue by addressing the aspects of the historic 1965 Voting Rights Act that were struck down by the Supreme Court's *Shelby County v. Holder* decision in 2013. (Info from [Brennan Center](#).)

S.51 - Washington, D.C. Admission Act

This bill passed the House of Representatives on April 22, 2021 and is now in the senate's Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs committee.

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

Why does this matter?

This 2½ minute video by Indivisibles makes the case for why D.C. statehood is a racial justice issue: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXQNWab7GMA>

SB 731 - Time Done

RAC-CA has chosen this bill as the top priority in its Racial Justice campaign for 2021.

This state bill, known as SB 731 Time Done, is a justice campaign to restore opportunity to millions of Californians with criminal records. 8 million Californians' lives are limited by prior convictions, often for their lifetimes and in various significant aspects of life. This bill will amend the penal code so that peoples' records will be sealed (except for heinous crimes) after they have served their time, successfully completed parole and then remained out of the system for several more years. [Register here for the May 5 Campaign Kickoff and Forum](#) where you can learn more details about this bill.

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.

If Beale Street Could Talk

May 4, 2021

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

[Click here to see the trailer](#)

In this 2018 film adaptation of James Baldwin’s novel, an early 1970s Harlem couple, Tish and “Fonny,” must navigate the upturned course of their dreams when Fonny is arrested for a crime he did not commit. Watch the film before this event so we can discuss it together. (Film is available to rent on most streaming platforms.)



RAC-CA 2021 Campaign Launch

May 5, 2021

7 - 8:15pm via Zoom ([REGISTER](#))

RAC-CA's Campaign Launch
Time Done: When will our sentence end?
May 5th, 7:00 - 8:15pm

8 million Californians' lives are limited by prior convictions. Learn about SB 731 "Time Done," a bill to restore opportunities for those who have served their time.

Featuring Edward Little, Californians for Safety and Justice Policy Advocate, and leaders directly impacted by the legislation.

Hear about the issues, opportunities for action, as well as RAC-CA's secondary campaigns.

Date & Time: **Wednesday May 5th, 7:00 - 8:15pm**
Register at: [RAC.org/CALaunch](https://rac.org/CALaunch)

"Once a person is labeled a felon, he or she is ushered into a parallel universe in which discrimination, stigma, and exclusion are perfectly legal... It is the badge of inferiority - the felony record - that relegates people for their entire lives, to second-class status."

Michelle Alexander
The New Jim Crow

TIME DONE
WHEN WILL OUR SENTENCE END?

California Religious Action Center
of Reform Judaism

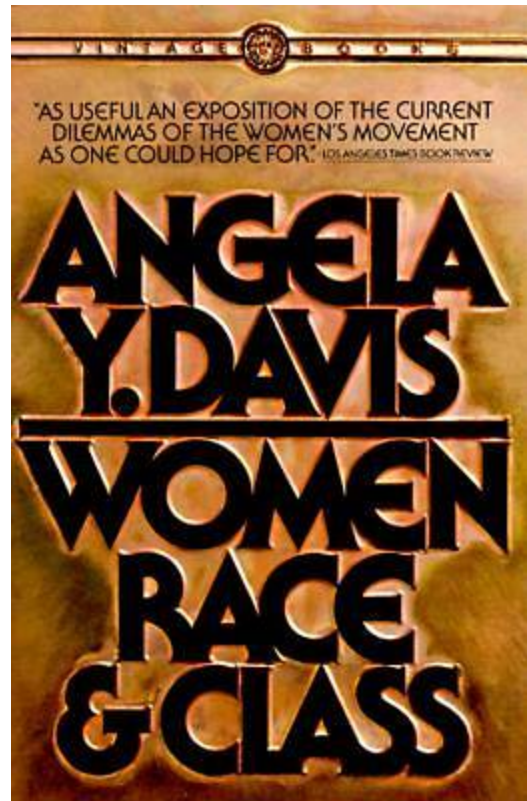
SB 731 Time Done is a justice campaign to restore opportunity to millions of Californians with criminal records. Also learn about RAC-CA's other campaigns, SB 62 and SB 467.

Women, Race and Class by Angela Davis

May 18, 2021

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

Join us for a discussion of Davis's 1981 book about the Women's Liberation Movement in America and how it is characterized by the racism and classism of its leaders.



RJI Panel Discussion

May 25, 2021

7 - 8:30pm via Zoom webinar ([REGISTER](#))

The graphic features a central white box with a blue border. At the top left, it reads "A Conversation With: Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon". To the right is the Temple Judea Racial Justice Initiative logo. Below the text is a photo of George Gascon in a suit. To the right of the photo is the title "UNPACKING LA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: PART 3 - CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY". Below the photo is the text "PART OF OUR UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATIONS SERIES". To the right of the photo is a white box with the text "For details and ZOOM registration - templejudea.com/rji Tuesday, May 25 at 7pm". At the bottom, it says "SPONSORED BY:" followed by logos for Temple Judea, OneLA-IAF, and California Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

A Conversation With:
Los Angeles County District Attorney
George Gascon

THE TEMPLE JUDEA
RACIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

**UNPACKING LA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:
PART 3 - CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN
THE 21ST CENTURY**

PART OF OUR
UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATIONS
SERIES

For details and ZOOM registration - templejudea.com/rji
Tuesday, May 25 at 7pm

SPONSORED BY:

Temple Judea OneLA-IAF California Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

Temple Judea's Racial Justice Initiative completes our three-part series on policing and criminal justice in Los Angeles. We, along with our partners at OneLA-IAF and RAC-CA, are honored to welcome LA County District Attorney George Gascón to share his perspective on criminal justice reform in Los Angeles. We look forward to the opportunity to ask him questions about the opportunities and challenges to reform that he experiences in his role as district attorney. You can submit questions for DA Gascón ahead of the event during registration. (Registration link above).

FORMING ALLIANCES

Jewbian Princess Workshops

What is Jewbian Princess? April Powers and Kiyomi Kowalski are Black, Jewish women on a mission to teach tolerance across the Jewish diaspora. Jewbian Princess (“JP”) tailors corporate level diversity, equity, and inclusion training for shuls that are invested in cultivating an inclusive atmosphere within their community. www.JewbianPrincess.com

Uncovering Unconscious Bias (May 19)

We make decisions about others in the first few seconds of seeing them. In this course we explore how those decisions impact our ability to have successful interactions with others and

how we can work to change our unconscious bias based on our preconceptions.

[Register for Or Ami Training Series HERE](#)

Kiyomi Kowalski, JD, is a mom, a Marine Corps veteran, an anti-racism educator, and a social justice advocate. Certified in Diversity and Inclusion by Cornell University, Kiyomi also serves the Jewish community as the creator and chair of the Valley Outreach Synagogue Social Justice Collective and the Anti-racism Task Force, she is also a member of Congregation Or Ami’s Inclusion Team, Mosaic. www.KiyomiKowalski.com



April Powers- Chief Equity & Inclusion Officer for the Society of Children’s Book Writers & Illustrators, April Powers is a bilingual, Bluish (Black & Jewish) citizen of the world. A proud Congregation Or Ami partner, she also trains various corporate clients on cultural navigation and inclusion through her DEI consulting practice.

www.FirstImpressionRx.com.



Or Ami Training Series | 

Cultural Navigation

with



April Powers & Kiyomi Kowalski
co-founders, JewbianPrincess.com
and Or Ami Partners

In a world of increasing awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), we seek to promote a commitment to DEI, expand our understanding, and avoid missteps. Join us for a high-level, in-depth training to prepare you for the world as it both is and is becoming.

Four Wednesdays 7:00-8:30 pm

April 14	Developing Empathy
May 19	Uncovering Unconscious Bias
June 9	Emotional Intelligence
July 14	Cultural Navigation

REGISTER BELOW

Sponsored by the Or Ami Center for Tikkun Olam

FOLLOWING UP

In April, RJI participants discussed Richard Rothstein's "The Color of Law". You are invited to go deeper by exploring the following related links:

[Segregated By Design](#) (2019)

This film, *Segregated By Design*, examines the forgotten history of how our federal, state and local governments unconstitutionally segregated every major metropolitan area in America through law and policy. It is based on the Richard Rothstein book "The Color of Law" (and is narrated by him, too).

[How Biden Can Free America From Its Zoning Straitjacket](#) (April 12, 2021)

NYT opinion. Edward L. Glaeser, an economist, has written extensively about urban America, infrastructure and housing policy. (A subscription to NYT online is free and allows access to a limited number of articles each month.)

[The Whiteness of Wealth: How the Tax System Impoverishes Black Americans – and How We can Fix It](#)

A conversation with author and law professor Dorothy A. Brown to celebrate the launch of her new book. [THE WHITENESS OF WEALTH: How the Tax System Impoverishes Black Americans – and How We Can Fix It](#) delves into how the U.S. tax code is one of the issues at the heart of the racial wealth gap. Presented by the Aspen Institute Financial Security Program.

Our second panel on policing with Connie Rice, Esq., Dr. Erroll Southers, and Deputy Chief Emada Tingirides, was riveting and enlightening. If you didn't get a chance to attend, or you've heard the buzz about it and want to see it for yourself, below is a link to a recording from Temple Judea's YouTube channel. Additionally, our panelists spoke about a variety of initiatives. You can find links to those below as well.

- You can find out more about the [Advancement Project](#) and the [Urban Peace Institute](#), both of which Connie Rice founded.
- You can learn about the [Law Enforcement Work Inquiry System \(LEWIS\) Registry](#), which Dr. Erroll Southers directs as part of his work at USC.
- You can start learning more about Deputy Chief Tingirides' work leading the **Community Safety Partnership Bureau** by reading a September 2020 [UCLA Impact Statement](#) or by following them on [Twitter](#).
- ["Police Reform Beyond the Slogans" recording](#)

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The Next Steps in Holding Police Accountable - addressing QUALIFIED IMMUNITY

This legal doctrine has shielded police officers and other government employees from being held responsible for many types of malfeasance. [Qualified immunity](#) makes it extraordinarily difficult for individuals to hold public officials responsible by requiring proof that they violated “clearly established law.”

[Read more from the ACLU](#)

Defund Police Resource Guide

A polarizing concept, ‘defunding the police’ simply means a community-led re-investing of police budgets into education, healthcare, and community safety. Given the inequity in policing ([Black people are five times more likely to be arrested than whites](#)) this is an urgent racial justice issue. The following resource guide - a comprehensive Google document from July 2020 - is authored by BLM and offered through SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice). SURJ has attempted to compile some of the best of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) work on abolition which has been generations in the making. SURJ is offering this for white folks who are newly politicized around abolition and defunding, and those who are trying to understand or deepen their understanding of what it means.

[Defund Police Resource Guide](#)

TAKE ACTION

How to Have Any Conversation with Anyone at Anytime Without Fear...

Via a large Facebook group called [White People. DOING Something](#), and their [associated website](#), Aja Davis and Molly Ola Pinney offer a free, 45-minute training that can enable you to better have those *uncomfortable conversations*.

[How To Have **Any Conversation** with Anyone at **Anytime** Without Fear or Making Things Worse](#)

Tools for Anti-Racism Conversations with Friends & Family

An Indivisibles Virtual Event on Saturday, May 15 at 9amPT

Interested in learning how to courageously and empathetically dialogue with your loved ones about anti-racism? Wishing you were more confident in talking about anti-racism with friends and family? On Saturday, May 15, join Indivisibles and other progressive activists across the nation for a customized, half-day workshop. This session is for everyone interested in playing an active role in dismantling white supremacy and its ever-present impacts on our communities. While white supremacy affects people differently, we have all been socialized within it -- and therefore, must continue to work against it. More information and registration at the link below.

[Tough Talk: Tools for Anti-Racism Conversations with Friends & Family](#)

Take Action con't

Hollaback! is on a mission to end harassment - in all its forms

They offer a [Bystander Guide](#) that teaches you how to intervene when you see harassment. They also offer myriad virtual, interactive harassment prevention and bystander intervention trainings including:

Bystander Intervention to Stop Police Sponsored Violence and Anti-Black Racist Harrassment

Monday May 17 at 11amPT

More information, including course description and registration, at the link above.

Bystander Intervention for Youth: How To Stand Up for Others

This one-hour training, recommended for grades 8 – 12, offers an adapted version of our 5D's of bystander intervention methodology especially for youth. (Check the calendar on their webpage for available dates.)

How to Help the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Community

Cnet has collected a list of resources, including educational tools, ways to report incidents, and contact info for organizations accepting donations. [HERE](#)

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

The Religious Action Center is moving forward to continue its racial justice work through the Reform Movement's Racial Justice Campaign. This campaign seeks to encourage our Movement to turn inwardly to examine and address our own behaviors, practices, and policies through the lens of racial equity, diversity, and inclusion (REDI) and outwardly to pursue targeted, strategic advocacy that could change laws and policies that impact our society.

Urge your members of Congress to support the bipartisan John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which would help restore protections against these restrictive voting laws. Fill out your info at [this link](#) and they'll send a letter for you!

Urge your elected officials to support the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act. Click [here](#) to send a letter!

For more information about RAC, contact our rep, coordinator Ellen Israel.

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.

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 \(lacity.org\)](#)

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

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

Where to Donate

Here are some non-profits that support communities who could use a spotlight:

Click to be taken to their websites.

[Black Led Organizations](#)

[AAPI Los Angeles](#)

[Hope of the Valley](#)

[Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services](#)

[World Vision Coronavirus Emergency Relief](#)