

Community Conversations on Race Timeline

Spring/Summer 2015: Began our own internal church conversations, including watching and discussing the film *Selma* together and taking a guided tour of the Banneker-Douglass Museum in Annapolis to learn about local African-American history

August 2016: Hosted a viewing and discussion of Henry Louis Gates' *Many Rivers to Cross* open to the community; to our astonishment, 80-100 folks from around the peninsula came each of the three Sunday nights. This level of interest made us realize that there was a need for learning and discussion like this in our community on an ongoing basis.

February 2017: Second Sunday Community Conversations on Race began—a monthly gathering open to the community. A core of about 10-12 folks from that initial August 2016 gathering have been involved consistently from the beginning, with many other in and out of the group from month to month. Some of the things we've watched/discussed (in mostly chronological order):

- Henry Louis Gates' *Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise*
- A conversation between Rev. Jim Wallis and Rev. William Barber about race and the church
- Rev. Steve Tillet led discussion of his book *Stop Falling for the Okey Doke*
- Film based on work of James Baldwin, *I Am Not Your Negro*
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s later work, such as *Where Do We Go From Here*
- Rev. William Barber's sermon on legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the idea of America being in a "third reconstruction", learning more about his Poor People's Campaign
- Documentary *Broken On All Sides: Race, Mass Incarceration & New Visions for Criminal Justice in the U.S.*
- Discussion of Bryan Stevenson's book *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* (also attended a screening of the film when it came out)
- Screening and discussion of *Set the Captives Free*, a webinar exploring how churches and other community groups can bring change to the prison system
- Watched and discussed Marvel's *Black Panther*
- "Racial Justice Through Community Organizing" discussion with leaders of ACT (Anne Arundel Connecting Together)
- Performance and discussion of play *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf*
- HBO Documentary *King in the Wilderness*
- HBO Documentary *Baltimore Rising* about the uprising after the death of Freddy Gray
- Henry Louis Gates/PBS Documentary *Reconstruction*
- Walking tour of Black Annapolis led by Carl Snowden
- Netflix mini-series "When They See Us"

Spring of 2020: With the onset of the pandemic, we, like the rest of the world, switched our conversations to Zoom. So many new folks connected via Zoom—especially after George Floyd's death—that we have (mostly) remained on Zoom since. Some of the things we've covered over Zoom:

- Read and discussed articles about how COVID-19 impacted communities of color differently than white communities, revealing inequalities even more starkly

- Read and discussed articles about policing: its history in America and roots in slavery, learning more about what “defund the police” really means, studied examples of police departments trying to do things differently
- Read and discussed articles about racial inequalities in our education system and how COVID has exacerbated deep historical inequalities
- Sought to educate ourselves about voting rights issues, including watching documentary *Rigged: The Voter Suppression Playbook*
- Processed the results of the 2020 election and the January 6 events at Capitol and how they connect with issues of race
- Invited teens and young adults involved in working for racial justice to lead conversation and share their stories and ideas
- Learned about bills before our county council and state legislatures connected to racial injustice and how to advocate
- Read and discussed articles looking at overlap between racism against Black Americans and Asian Americans
- Welcomed Annapolis Police Chief Ed Jackson for a conversation about policing
- Learned more about what Critical Race Theory really is and how it’s become a hot-button issue
- Watched and discussed Henry Louis Gates’ PBS Documentary *The Black Church*

Spring of 2022: Engaging in local pilgrimages, to the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor’s Center and Trail on the Eastern Shore, and doing a walking tour to learn about racial history of Eastport.