



**DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES**  
The United Methodist Church

# **Antiracism Discipleship**

**An Intentional Discipleship Pathway  
in the Face of Systemic Racism**

**WRITTEN BY**  
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# Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to *Discipleship Ministries* for their unwavering support and guidance in the development of this resource. Their dedication to empowering churches and nurturing discipleship has been instrumental.

A heartfelt thank you to the members of the *Antiracism Discipleship Task Force*, whose wisdom, insight, and commitment have shaped the vision and content of this project. Your passion for justice and love has inspired every page of this resource.

We celebrate the work of the General Commission of Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church and its helpful resources that support racial justice, cultural diversity, and antiracism.

Special thanks to the main author, whose theological grounding and leadership brought this project to life. We also deeply appreciate the contributions of the many writers, editors, and reviewers whose collaboration enriched this work. Your diverse perspectives, creativity, and dedication have made this resource a tool for transformation and growth.

We pray this work will equip disciples to follow Jesus in the path of love, justice, and reconciliation.



## INTRODUCTION

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# Antiracism Discipleship

The purpose of this booklet, *Antiracism Discipleship: An Intentional Discipleship Pathway in the Face of Systemic Racism*, is to equip local church leaders with theological and practical tools to address racism through the lens of Christian discipleship. Rooted in John Wesley's teachings on personal and social holiness, this resource emphasizes that the work of justice is central to following Christ. It helps leaders navigate the complexities of racism by offering biblical, theological, and actionable insights that challenge personal biases and systemic oppression. The booklet underscores that discipleship in the Wesleyan tradition involves inward spiritual growth and outward action to confront injustice.

In today's world, where racism continues to create divisions and harm within communities, this resource is timely and crucial. The church is called to witness to God's inclusive love, actively working to dismantle racial barriers and heal broken relationships. The guide reminds us that racism is a sin that distorts the image of God in others and that the work of confronting it is a vital expression of our faith in Christ. By addressing personal transformation and communal action, this resource supports leaders

in fostering a long-term commitment to antiracist discipleship within their congregations.

The booklet begins with an introduction to the theological foundations of antiracism, drawing on Jesus' ministry of love and justice and Wesley's emphasis on social holiness. It then moves to a deep dive into understanding racism in today's world, exploring its personal and systemic dimensions. Subsequent chapters address how Wesleyan discipleship connects to justice, emphasizing the call to "do no harm" and "do good," and guiding leaders to build inclusive communities that reflect the love of Christ.

The final chapters focus on the need for perseverance in antiracism work, recognizing that this long-term commitment requires ongoing accountability, action, and hope. The booklet concludes with a call to action, challenging church leaders to integrate antiracist discipleship into their ministries and offering practical steps and ministry ideas for sustaining this essential work.

This resource is designed to help local church leaders guide their congregations toward racial justice, helping them embody the inclusive, transformative love of Christ in tangible and faithful ways.

We invite you to explore this resource with a spirit of openness and hope, trusting that it will guide you in your journey of antiracist discipleship. As you study it, we encourage you to reflect deeply on the practical steps provided and share these insights with your fellow leaders.

As you review these suggestions, consider your congregation's readiness and context, recognizing that meaningful engagement in racial justice requires

thoughtful preparation, humility, and a commitment to ongoing learning. Approach these steps with discernment, ensuring they align with your community's capacity and willingness to grow.

For additional guidance on implementing the suggestions in this book and other antiracism practices, please see the suggested resources from The United Methodist General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR):

**<https://www.gcorr.org>**

**<https://www.r2hub.org>**

You can foster meaningful conversations, spark new initiatives, and create lasting change within your church. By working collaboratively, you will be better equipped to lead your congregation in embodying Christ's inclusive love and justice. May this resource inspire personal growth and a collective movement toward a more just and inclusive faith community.





# Confronting and Dismantling Racism: Our Call as Jesus' Disciples

*“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”*

—MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., *A Letter from Birmingham Jail*, 1963

Racism is a profound distortion of God’s creation. The Bible teaches that humans are made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26–27) and have inherent dignity and worth. Racism undermines this truth by claiming that some people are more valuable than others based on skin color, ethnicity, or nationality. Racism dehumanizes individuals, corrupts the divine image, and fractures the unity of God’s creation. Tolerating or perpetuating racism violates the sanctity of humanity and sins against God’s creative purpose.

Racism is more than individual prejudice; it’s a deeply embedded, systemic issue. Scripture shows that sin can take root in individuals, societal structures, and institutions (Ephesians 6:12). Racism manifests through laws, cultural norms, and practices that privilege some while oppressing

others, perpetuating inequality and division. As God's people, we are called to confront individual sin and unjust systems that harm the vulnerable, working toward repentance, justice, and restoration.

Scripture consistently calls God's people to uphold justice and righteousness (Micah 6:8). The Bible envisions a kingdom where people of every nation, tribe, and tongue are united (Revelation 7:9), reflecting Christ's inclusive love. Racism distorts this vision and corrupts relationships within God's creation. The prophets denounced societal sins that oppressed the marginalized, and the New Testament continues this call for justice, affirming that in Christ, "there is neither Jew nor Greek" (Galatians 3:28 ESV). These teachings provide a strong foundation for confronting racism as both an individual sin and a systemic evil that undermines the unity of God's creation.

At the heart of Jesus' ministry is the radical call to love God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-39). This love is not passive but an active commitment to seek justice, especially for the oppressed. In the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), Jesus crosses ethnic and social barriers to show what neighborly love looks like. This love compels Christians to confront injustice, including racism, and to stand against systems of oppression. Jesus' example challenges us to recognize the image of God in every person and treat them with dignity.

Confronting racism requires individual and communal repentance. Individually, we must examine our biases and acknowledge how we may have contributed to racism, whether actively or passively. Communally, the church must repent for its complicity in systems that uphold racial inequality. True repentance goes beyond confession.

It demands action—turning away from sin and pursuing reconciliation, healing, and justice. This includes listening to those harmed by racism, advocating for systemic change, and committing to the long-term work of creating a more just and inclusive society.

Without a shared understanding of what racism is and how it functions, conversations about racial justice can be hindered by misunderstandings and defensiveness. Defining racism as a system rather than personal prejudice allows for constructive dialogue and action toward dismantling injustice (Jemar Tisby, *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism*. Zondervan, 2020).

## **Questions for Small-Group Discussion**

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1. How does racism distort the image of God in others? How can we restore this understanding in our relationships?
2. How have you witnessed racism as a systemic issue rather than individual prejudice?
3. How does the biblical vision of unity in diversity challenge the racism and divisions we see in society today?
4. How do you understand Jesus' call to love and justice in your daily life? How does it challenge you to confront issues of racism?
5. How can your church engage in repentance and reconciliation concerning racism?

## **Suggested Ministry Ideas**

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- **Hold Prayer Vigils for Racial Justice:** Hold regular prayer vigils focusing on repentance for the sin of racism and prayers for healing and justice in the community and nation.
- **Integrate Antiracism in Discipleship Programs:** Ensure that antiracism is a regular part of the church's discipleship and spiritual formation programs, focusing on how following Jesus involves confronting societal injustices.
- **Incorporate Antiracism into Preaching, Teaching, and Worship:** Preach and teach on biblical justice, love, and equality, emphasizing racism as a sin. Embed antiracist themes in worship, teaching, and other learning experiences.
- **Host Study Groups on Systemic Racism:** Engage the congregation in small-group studies that explore systemic racism—how it operates, its impact on communities, and why addressing it is essential to faithful discipleship and the pursuit of God's justice.
- **Build Community Partnerships for Justice:** Build partnerships with local organizations that work against racism and involve the church in their justice efforts, demonstrating an active response to racism.

# **Pursuing Antiracism Discipleship: Embodying Christ's Love in Today's World**

*“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”*

—Quote often attributed to John Wesley, but source unknown

Wesleyan theology teaches that sanctification is the process by which we are made holy through the grace of God. As we grow in holiness, we are called to love more fully and inclusively. This includes loving those who are different from us, those who have been marginalized, and those who have been oppressed by systemic racism. Sanctification invites us to move beyond tolerance of diversity toward genuine inclusion and reconciliation. It challenges us to examine our hearts for any prejudice that may hinder our love for others and to actively seek ways to include and uplift all God's children, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Bishop Reuben P. Job presents three simple transformative principles: “do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God” in his book, *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of*

*Living.* Drawing from the wisdom of John Wesley, this book offers a timeless moral framework for Christian living, especially in pursuing justice. The call to “do no harm” compels Christians to resist actions and systems perpetuating injustice and inequality. Racism, more than an individual sin, thrives within societal structures that harm marginalized communities. To avoid doing harm, we must examine how we unwittingly participate in or benefit from these systems and take steps to confront racism in our institutions, communities, and personal lives.

The rule to “do good” challenges Christians to move beyond passivity and engage in intentional acts of justice. Wesley taught that faith and good works are inseparable, urging believers to right wrongs, uplift the oppressed, and advocate for equity. Today, this means supporting policies that promote racial justice, standing with marginalized communities, and working toward the flourishing of all people.

True discipleship calls us to pursue racial justice as an expression of love for God and neighbor, fulfilling the biblical mandate to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). The work of justice is important for living a holy life, individually and collectively, as followers of Jesus Christ.

Jesus modeled justice through his ministry of healing, inclusion, and confronting oppression. Following Jesus means confronting racism, advocating for justice, and building inclusive communities by embodying Christ’s love and working toward the transformation of the world.

## Questions for Small-Group Discussion

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1. How does Wesley's teaching on sanctification challenge you to grow in inclusive love and justice?
2. In what ways can the means of grace help you confront personal biases and grow in holiness? (For information about the means of grace, see "The Wesleyan Means of Grace," United Methodist Communications, <https://www.umc.org/en/content/the-wesleyan-means-of-grace>.)
3. What role does grace play in transforming our hearts and minds as we work toward racial justice?
4. What practical steps can you take to engage in action-oriented discipleship in the fight against racism?
5. How can we remain committed to justice work even when it is difficult or unpopular?

## Suggested Ministry Ideas

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- **Create a Justice Ministry:** Establish a justice ministry that focuses on taking concrete actions to combat racism and inequality, following Wesley's call to "Do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God."
- **Engage in Local Advocacy:** Involve your congregation in local advocacy efforts. Attend city council meetings or support community movements fighting for racial equity.



- **Support the Work of Marginalized Communities:**  
Identify ways to assist and uplift marginalized communities and participate in their efforts for justice and equity.
- **Hold a “Courageous Conversations” Event:** Organize a space where church members can discuss race, biases, and their journeys toward repentance and antiracism.
- **Commit to “Do No Harm” by Knowing Your Neighbor:**  
As a congregation, adopt practices that actively prevent harm to marginalized groups. First, seek to understand who your neighbors are and how to support them with justice and love.

# A Church for All: Reflecting the Diversity of God's Creation

*“The Church is the Church only when it exists for others...not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others.”*

—DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, *Letters and Papers from Prison*

The church is called to be a living witness of God’s kingdom on earth, reflecting Christ's inclusive and reconciling love. However, the reality is that many churches struggle with exclusion based on race, ethnicity, and other social barriers. Building inclusive communities is not just a social goal—it is a theological imperative grounded in the gospel.

When Jesus welcomed the marginalized, healed the outcast, and dined with those society rejected, he provided a model for the kind of inclusive love that the church is called to embody. If the church is to reflect the love of Christ, it must create spaces where all people, regardless of race or background, are fully welcomed and valued.

The Bible repeatedly calls us to welcome the stranger and care for the marginalized. In Matthew 25:35 (ESV), Jesus says, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

This is more than a call to hospitality; it's a call to create communities where the stranger is no longer a stranger but part of the family of God. In the context of race, this means welcoming people of different ethnicities into our churches and ensuring they have equal voice, leadership, and participation. It means confronting any biases that prevent us from fully embracing others as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians speaks of Christ breaking down the "dividing wall of hostility" between Jews and Gentiles, uniting them in one body (Ephesians 2:14). This imagery is as relevant today as it was in the first century. Racism and prejudice build walls that divide God's people and distort the image of the church as a unified body of Christ. Building an inclusive community involves tearing down these walls, whether they exist in personal relationships, church practices, or broader social systems. This is not a passive endeavor but one that requires intentional effort to recognize and dismantle the structures that contribute to exclusion and division.

Building inclusive communities involves creating spaces for honest dialogue about race and reconciliation. These conversations can be uncomfortable, but they are necessary for healing and growth. Churches can play a critical role in facilitating these discussions by fostering an environment where people can share their experiences and learn from one another. Inclusive communities are places where difficult truths can be spoken in love and where there is a shared commitment to mutual understanding and transformation.

Ultimately, the goal of building inclusive communities is to embody the reconciling love of Christ. Jesus reconciled us

to God and one another, and the church is called to live out that reconciliation in practical, tangible ways. This involves welcoming those who are different from us and actively working toward racial justice and equity within the church and society. By doing so, we bear witness to the inclusive, transformative power of the gospel.

## **Questions for Small-Group Discussion**

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1. What does it mean for the church to embody the inclusive love of Christ?
2. How can we work to break down “dividing walls” of racism and prejudice in our church communities?
3. How can the church create spaces where people of all races and backgrounds feel fully welcomed and valued?
4. What are the challenges to having open and honest conversations about race in the church, and how can we overcome them?
5. How does Jesus’ ministry of reconciliation shape our understanding of building inclusive communities today?

## **Suggested Ministry Ideas**

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- **Hold Diversity Audits for Church Ministries:**  
Conduct an audit of all church ministries to assess the level of inclusivity and representation from different racial and ethnic backgrounds; implement changes based on findings.
- **Offer Culturally Inclusive Worship Services:**  
Plan worship services that reflect the diversity of God's kingdom by incorporating distinct cultural expressions, languages, music, and traditions. Be conscious about avoiding cultural appropriation.
- **Develop a Multicultural Leadership Team:**  
Intentionally build a leadership team that reflects racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity, empowering voices that may not have been heard within the church's leadership.
- **Explore and Learn how to Facilitate "Table of Reconciliation" Conversations:** Regularly host meals and gatherings that encourage fellowship across racial and cultural lines, fostering a deeper sense of community and unity in Christ.
- **Create an Inclusion Policy:** Draft and adopt a formal inclusion policy that affirms the church's commitment to welcoming people of all races and backgrounds and addresses how to handle racial conflicts in the church.

# **Sustaining the Work: A Long-Term Commitment to Antiracism Discipleship**

*“I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.”*

—NELSON MANDELA, South African Anti-Apartheid Revolutionary

Antiracist discipleship is not a one-time event but a lifelong journey. Just as our spiritual growth requires an ongoing commitment to prayer, study, and action, racial justice work demands the same long-term dedication. While it may be tempting to treat antiracist efforts as a trend or a response to specific crises, true discipleship calls for enduring action. This involves consistent reflection, learning, and a willingness to grow in our understanding of racism and its impact on individuals, the church, and society. Sustaining this work requires a deep, abiding commitment to the values of love, justice, and equity that are central to the gospel.

The local church plays a critical role in sustaining antiracism work. Congregations must move beyond occasional events or one-time conversations about race

and make antiracism a regular part of their discipleship programs, worship, and community engagement. This can be achieved through regular teaching about justice and inclusion, creating spaces for honest conversations about race, and offering ongoing opportunities for action. Additionally, the church must hold itself accountable by evaluating its practices and policies to ensure they align with the gospel's call for justice. Sustaining this work means discussing racism and taking concrete steps to address it in all aspects of church life.

Sustaining antiracist discipleship also involves endurance through inevitable setbacks and fatigue. The work of justice is difficult and often slow, which can lead to frustration or burnout. However, as disciples of Christ, we are called to persevere. Paul's encouragement to "not grow weary of doing good" (Galatians 6:9 ESV) is essential to this journey. Churches and individuals should build self-care, rest, and renewal practices to sustain the work over the long haul. The fight for racial justice is a marathon, not a sprint, and the church must prepare for the long term by supporting one another and renewing its collective strength in Christ.

Finally, sustaining the work of antiracism is rooted in hope. As Christians, we believe in the power of Resurrection—the promise that God's justice will ultimately prevail and that all things will be made new. This hope sustains us when the work is overwhelming, or progress seems slow. By grounding our antiracist discipleship in the hope of Christ's resurrection, we can continue the journey with resilience, knowing that our efforts are part of God's larger plan for the reconciliation and renewal of all creation.

## Questions for Small-Group Discussion

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1. What practical ways can the church integrate antiracist discipleship into its ongoing ministries?
2. How can we create a culture of accountability within our church community to ensure we stay committed to racial justice?
3. What challenges or setbacks might we face in sustaining antiracism efforts long-term, and how can we overcome them?
4. How can the hope of Resurrection motivate and sustain us in the work of racial justice?
5. How can we practice self-care and support to avoid burnout in this lifelong work of justice?

## Suggested Ministry Ideas

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- **Identify and Evaluate Your Local Church Commitment to Racial Justice:** Periodically, review the church's commitment to racial justice. Evaluate ministries and determine what has been learned. Set new goals for deeper impact.
- **Establish a Racial Justice Task Force:** Form a task force that ensures the church continues its antiracism work long-term, setting goals, tracking progress, and holding the community accountable.



- **Offer Ongoing Antiracism Education:** Commit to offering ongoing antiracism workshops, book studies, and learning opportunities as part of the church's regular calendar of events.
- **Create a Mentorship Program for Marginalized Leaders:** Develop a mentorship program that lifts up and supports leaders from marginalized communities, ensuring their voices are central in the church's future and not reinforcing racist normative behaviors.
- **Build Long-Term Community Partnerships:** Partner with racial justice organizations and neighboring churches to create a coalition of sustained action, making a lasting impact on the community's fight against racism.

# **A Call to Action: Antiracism as a Journey of Christian Discipleship**

*“The work of dismantling racism is spiritual work. It’s about how we live out our faith in real, tangible ways, where justice is not just an idea but a practice. We must commit to being the hands and feet of Christ in a broken world.”*

—REV. JUNIUS B. DOTSON

In the journey of Christian discipleship, the call to confront and dismantle racism is not an optional task but an essential expression of living out the gospel of Jesus Christ. Rooted in theology and the pursuit of building a beloved community of God, antiracism work is inseparable from the call to love God and neighbor. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, insisted that personal holiness and social holiness must walk hand-in-hand. To be a true disciple of Christ, one must commit to personal transformation while seeking justice and wholeness for others. In the context of our present world, where racism continues to perpetuate injustice and division, the church is called to be a beacon of reconciliation and transformation.

At the heart of Christian discipleship is Jesus's call to love one another as he has loved us (John 13:34). This love is not passive or selective. It extends beyond the boundaries

of race, culture, and nationality, challenging us to confront systems, attitudes, or structures that dehumanize and marginalize others. Racism, in all its forms, stands as a direct contradiction to the gospel of Christ. It distorts the image of God in every person and creates barriers to the fullness of life that God intends for all creation. To follow Jesus authentically, Christians must engage in the work of antiracism.

Wesley's vision of social holiness compels the church to move beyond charity toward systemic justice. Wesley did not see holiness as a private or inward-focused endeavor but as a commitment to the flourishing of all people, particularly the oppressed. He engaged in issues of his time—such as poverty, slavery, and inequality—with a fierce commitment to justice, recognizing that the gospel calls for the transformation of both individuals and society. Wesley's teaching encourages modern disciples to view antiracism as a necessary component of their spiritual journey, calling for inward repentance and outward action.

In this sense, antiracism discipleship is a process of sanctification—a journey toward becoming more like Christ by confronting personal and societal sin. This work begins with self-examination, where individuals acknowledge their biases and prejudices. But it does not stop there. True discipleship demands that we repent of these biases and commit to advocating for justice and equity in the world. This includes standing in solidarity with marginalized communities, challenging oppressive systems, and working to build inclusive, loving communities that reflect the kingdom of God.

The Wesleyan approach also emphasizes the communal nature of discipleship. We are called not only to grow

individually in our walk with Christ but to do so in community with others. Antiracism work, too, is communal. It requires collective action, accountability, and support. Churches and Christian communities must actively participate in this journey, offering spaces for education, dialogue, and collaboration to dismantle racism within the church and society.

Antiracism and Christian discipleship are deeply rooted in the theology and practice of acts of mercy and justice. As disciples of Christ, we are called to embody love, justice, and reconciliation. Antiracism is not a separate or optional component of this call but is intrinsic to what it means to follow Jesus. Through the ongoing work of repentance, transformation, and justice, the church can faithfully live out its mission to make disciples for the transformation of the world, building a future where the dignity and worth of every person are fully realized.

## **Questions for Small-Group Discussion**

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1. What does it take for antiracism to be an integral and tangible expression of faithful discipleship?
2. How can we balance the inward pursuit of personal holiness and the outward commitment to social justice in our discipleship journey?
3. Given that racism and similar issues distort the image of God in every person and create barriers to building a beloved community, how can churches actively confront and dismantle these barriers both within the church and in society?

4. In what ways can Christian communities embody the communal nature of discipleship to address racism collectively?
5. How can the process of sanctification, which involves a continual journey of repentance, transformation, and justice, inspire and sustain us when the work for antiracism feels overwhelming and challenging?

## **Suggested Ministry Ideas**

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- **Antiracism Discipleship Devotional Guide:** Develop or use a devotional that combines scripture, reflections on justice, and prompts for personal and communal action.
- **Community Advocacy Days:** Organize churchwide days of action, partnering with local community groups to address racial injustice through service, advocacy, or public witness.
- **Sanctification and Justice Retreats:** Plan retreats where participants reflect on repentance, transformation, and justice through worship, storytelling, and practical strategies for antiracism work.
- **Antiracism Discipleship Learning Experiences:** Host monthly learning experiences combining Bible study, discussions on systemic racism, and actionable steps for living out justice as disciples of Jesus Christ.
- **Community Listening Circles:** Host facilitated dialogues with marginalized communities to hear firsthand experiences and discern ways to advocate effectively.

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# Join the Antiracism Discipleship Movement: Dismantling Racism, Demonstrating Jesus' Love

*“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

—MATTHEW 22:39 (NIV)

Welcome! We invite you to be part of a transformative movement of **antiracism discipleship**—where faith and justice unite. We can dismantle racism and create inclusive communities that reflect Christ’s love and justice.

## **Why Get Involved in this Work?**

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Racism remains a profound issue in our world, creating divisions and injustice within our communities. As followers of Christ, we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves and to stand against all forms of injustice.

The Antiracism Discipleship Initiative is grounded in the teachings of Jesus and John Wesley, emphasizing that faith is inseparable from the pursuit of justice.

Through this work, we are transforming personal faith into collective action by:

- Confronting personal biases and seeking repentance through Christ's transformative love.
- Challenging systemic racism by building more inclusive church communities that reflect the unity of God's kingdom.
- Pursuing justice and reconciliation, following Wesley's call to "do no harm...do good."

By supporting this work, you contribute to a movement that seeks to create lasting change within the church and society. Together, we can embody the love of Christ and stand in solidarity with marginalized communities.

## **Why Your Involvement Matters**

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The journey of antiracism is not short—it is a lifelong commitment to justice and love. This work requires perseverance, resilience, and the support of a community. By joining this network, offering your prayers, or contributing financially, you are helping to sustain the fight against racism and enabling the church to be a witness of God's inclusive love. Together, we can build a future where justice prevails, and every person is valued as a beloved child of God.

## **Sign Up for Updates and Opportunities**

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Stay connected with us to receive updates on upcoming events, resources, and ways to get involved.

For additional inquiries, contact Bener Baysa Agtarap at [bagtarap@umcdiscipleship.org](mailto:bagtarap@umcdiscipleship.org).



## **Additional Resources**

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*Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation* by Latasha Morrison (Waterbrook, 2019)

*Color-Courageous Discipleship: Follow Jesus, Dismantle Racism, and Build Beloved Community* by Michelle T. Sanchez (Waterbrook, 2022)

*The Color of Compromise: The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism* by Jemar Tisby (Zondervan, 2020)

*Courageous Conversations Resource Booklet* by M. Scott Hughes (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018)

*Doing Justice Together: Fresh Expressions Pathways for Healing in Your Church* by Michael Adam Beck and Stephanie Moore Hand (Abingdon Press, 2024)

*Freeing Congregational Mission: A Practical Vision for Companionship, Cultural Humility, and Co-Development* by B. Hunter Farrell with S. Balajiedlang Khylllep (IVP Academic, 2022)

*Multiplying Love: A Vision of United Methodist Life Together* by Paul W. Chilcote (Abingdon Press, 2023)

*Wait—Is This Racist? A Guide to Becoming an Anti-Racist Church* by Kerry Connelly with Bryana Clover and Josh Riddick (Westminster John Knox Press, 2022)

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# About the Author and Contributors

**Rev. Bener Agtarap**, the primary author, is an ordained clergy member of the California-Nevada Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. He serves as the Executive Director of Path 1: Community Engagement and Church Planting and the Director of Connectional Mobilization at Discipleship Ministries. In these roles, he provides visionary leadership for the church's efforts to establish new faith communities and revitalize existing ones. He also leads the Antiracism Discipleship Initiative at Discipleship Ministries, equipping congregations and individuals to confront racism and live out Christ's call to justice and inclusion. He is an accomplished coach, author, and a passionate billiards enthusiast. He resides in West Sacramento, California, with his wife, Clarita.

**Claire Cox-Woodlief** is a layperson from the North Carolina Conference of the UMC, where she has served as a delegate to Jurisdictional and General Conferences, Chair of the NCCUMC Board of Church and Society, and co-founder of the North Carolina Institute of Spiritual Direction and Formation. As she lives out her call to be a disrupter of unjust systems, she has led antiracism efforts in local churches, districts, and the North Carolina Conference and serves on the Antiracism Discipleship Task Force. She is a

qualified administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a Certified Facilitator of Sacred Conversations to End Racism (SC2ER), a spiritual director, and the founder of CCW Transformation Ministries, LLC. She also serves as the executive director of White Memorial Presbyterian Church in Raleigh, NC.

**Amania Drane** is a project manager of the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church. She has a B.A. in African Studies and an M.S. in Management & Organizational Behavior. She works with clergy and laity on antiracism, discipleship, the status and role of women, and young people's ministry strategy and goals. She has a deep love for the church and living a purposeful life.

**Micheal Pope** is a leader within the United Methodist Church and her community. She holds the title of president of the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders and Conference Lay Leaders of the California-Nevada Conference, and she serves as a board member of the General Commission on Religion and Race. Micheal has been an advocate for more than twenty-seven years and is a recognized social justice voice in California. Micheal believes that the "kin-dom" of God is inclusive and honors the beauty of humankind.

**Aabiskar Sharma** is from Nepal. She studies psychology in counseling, religious studies, and nonprofit management at Morningside University. After graduation in May, she will attend Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Chicago to study pastoral care counseling. Aabiskar believes that the work of antiracism discipleship is important for Christians who reflect Jesus' call for love, justice, and reconciliation. As Christ's disciples, we must treat all people with dignity and respect.

**The Antiracism Discipleship Initiative**

is a project by the Discipleship Ministries of  
The United Methodist Church in collaboration with  
an Antiracism Discipleship Task Force.

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