

Dear Participant,

Our goal has been to come together as a Body of Believers to help everyone understand the experiences of people of color. When we see color and embrace our differences, we can work together to mend the inequalities in our world today. We want this month to direct us toward action steps. We ask that you prayerfully consider what you have learned during the time we have had together and what you possibly would like to see evolve and participate.

“Jesus’ constant pattern was to affirm the value of the people He ministered to rather than the human laws He may have been violating”- JR Hudberg

*“The Kingdom of Heaven is not devoid of culture.
My prayer is that that hope will inspire us all to do our most exceptional work for the glory of God and the good of others.” Jordan Raynor*

Our goal all along has been the following:

Take time to process all the things.
Take time to have uncomfortable conversations.
Take time to build up your empathy.
Take time to lament.
Take time to understand.
Take time to pray.
Then, take action.

It is our prayer that you are there with us,

J&JC Team

Mercy is the gas and Justice is the vehicle. Both are needed. “Pulling drowning people out of the river is compassion, but we have to walk upstream to solve the reasons they are falling in the river. That’s justice!”

David Batstone (Not for Sale)

MATERIAL LIST: (all required materials, all titles are hyperlinked)

Short Videos	
1. Uncomfortable Conversations with Black Man: Roger Goodell (Pt. 1)	9 min
2. Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man: Roger Goodell (Pt. 2)	10 min
3. Brandon Leake Performs Heart-Wrenching Spoken Word to his Mother	3 min
Written Materials:	
1. Devotionals (see page below)	10 min
2. McPherson, M. (2018), The Third Option: Hope for a Racially Divided Nation . Howard Books. New York, NY.	5-8 hrs
Longer Videos:	
1. The Third Option: interview with Miles Pherson @Thrive Conference	45 min
2. An Experiment with Jane Elliott (Hang in there 'till the end. This particular interview took place after the Rodney King riots, similar to today)	35 min
Check out Examples of Change	
<p>1. Civil Rights Movement in 1917: The US has always used the right to protest as a means for change. From the Boston Tea Party, to the protests of 1917 to the 1963 March of Washington, protests have been a reliable tactic to be heard on an issue. Take a look at the first silent protest of close to 10,000 people that launched the Civil Rights Movement in 1917.</p> <p>2. P&G is calling out racial bias and sparking the conversations that we need to be having with our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers in a series of short films; "The Talk", "The Look" and "The Choice". Through their funds and initiatives they are focused on supporting Black Americans who face racism, bias and brutality.</p> <p>3. Chicago rowing Team: A new documentary focuses on the nation's first Black high school rowing team. But it's what they did in 2019, teaming up with Chicago police, that's still resonating today.</p> <p>4. Camden Police Department: Seven years ago, Camden, N.J., dismantled and then rebuilt its police force. In doing so, the city tried to take a lighter approach to minor offenses and defuse tense encounters. And it seems to have worked, for the most part. While some problems persist, both excessive-force complaints and crime have plummeted in the city, where over 90 percent of residents are Black or Latino. In recent weeks, dozens of other departments around the country have reached out to Camden to ask for advice.</p>	
Upcoming Event:	
<p>1. Christian Community Development National Conference - 10/1-10/3 (contact: BENITA HOPKINS for discounted rate)</p> <p>2. Human Race with Jane Elliott (a virtual event) 10/3; 2 pm. \$12.</p>	

DEVOTIONALS

Invitation to Solidarity by Richard Rohr

Throughout human history, countless people have been poor, vulnerable, or oppressed in some way. Those holding positions of authority within systems of power secure their own privilege, comfort, and wealth—almost always at the expense of those most on the margins. Much of history has been recorded to hide this fact and instead celebrates the so-called “winners.” I call this systemic reality a form of sin, or what the apostle Paul describes as the “the world” (Ephesians 2:1–2). This type of corporate evil is often culturally agreed-upon, admired, and deemed necessary, as is normally the case when a country goes to war, spends most of its budget on armaments, admires luxuries over necessities, entertains itself to death, or pollutes its common water and air.

The hidden nature of systemic oppression makes it all the more remarkable that the revelation of God in the Bible is written from the perspective of the oppressed. The Bible reveals a liberating path of humility, compassion, and nonviolence in the face of oppression that culminates in the life, ministry, and state-sponsored execution of Jesus.

We see in the Gospels that the people who tend to follow Jesus are the ones on the margins: the lame, poor, blind, prostitutes, drunkards, tax collectors, and foreigners. He lived in close proximity to and in solidarity with the excluded ones in his society. Those on the inside and at the center of power are the ones who crucify him: elders, chief priests, teachers of the Law, scribes, and Roman occupiers. Yet we still honor people in these latter roles and shun the ones in the former.

For the first three hundred years after Jesus’ death, Christians were the oppressed minority. But by the year 400 C.E., Christians had changed places. We moved from hiding in the catacombs to presiding in the basilicas. That is when we started reading the Bible not as subversive literature, the story of the oppressed, but as establishment literature to justify the status quo of people in power.

When Christians began to gain positions of power and privilege, they also began to ignore segments of Scriptures, especially the Sermon on the Mount. Our position in society determines what we pay attention to and what systems we are willing to “go along with.” This is what allowed “Christian” empires throughout history to brutalize and oppress others in the name of God. Sadly, this is still the case today.

But when the Bible is read through the eyes of solidarity—what we call the “preferential option for the poor” or the “bias from the margins”—it will always be liberating, transformative, and empowering in a completely different way. Read this way, Scripture cannot be used by those with power to oppress or impress. The question is no longer “How can I maintain my special and secure status?” It is “How can we all grow and change together?” I think the acceptance of that invitation to solidarity with the larger pain of the world is what it means to be a “Christian.”

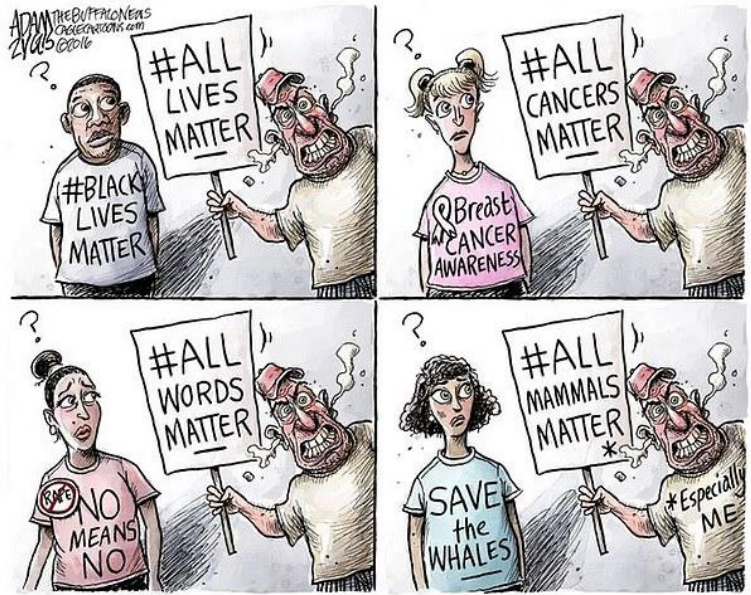
I say "Black Lives Matter" because "all" didn't cover Black when they said "All men are created equal."

I say "Black Lives Matter" because "all" didn't cover Black when they said "With liberty and justice for all."

I say "Black Lives Matter" because they're still struggling with the definition of "all."

- unknown

Black lives matter



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