I am a person of color at FUMC. How do I navigate this season?

We are approaching this season with an acknowledgment that our church is predominantly white. The pastors have held conversations with people of color in the church to discuss ways to navigate this season. If you would like to talk more, we invite you to reach out to one of the pastors.

Why didn’t we invite any people of color to teach us?

It is important, as Layla Saad writes in her book, *Me & White Supremacy*, that we have made efforts to ensure that people of color entering a predominantly white community are not on the receiving end of racial microaggressions or white fragility. That we have done the grueling work as a community and that we are not merely using behaviors such as tokenism, white saviorism, white centering, and so on to create an optical illusion of allyship rather than the honest and disruptive work of anti-racism. That the exhausting burden of teaching white people about their racism is not put on people of color.

Where is this going? Do you have any goals for this season?

Our overall goal is to make progress toward becoming an anti-racist church—a church that is actively participating in the healing of racism. We hope all who participate will come away from this season having identified a couple of key points of understanding and one key action through which they can join that effort in an ongoing way.

In addition, we hope to build a solid foundation of education, so that, as a congregation, we can move toward tangible acts of solidarity with people of color.

What can I do to prepare?

Pray for God to give you an open spirit to receive whatever God wants to show you in this season, so that you might be a part of the story this church is telling the world. Print editions are available today or you can read online at fumcaustin.org/workofresistingracism.

**FAQ ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL WORK OF RESISTING RACISM (Continued)**

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**What can I do to prepare?**

Pray for God to give you an open spirit to receive whatever God wants to show you in this season, so that you might be an even greater part of God’s work! Then, show up!
In her book *White Fragility*, Robin DiAngelo writes, “White progressives can be the most difficult for people of color, because to the degree that we think we have arrived, we will put our energy into making sure that others see us as having arrived. None of our energy will go into what we need to be doing for the rest of our lives: engaging in ongoing self-awareness, continuing education, relationship building, and actual anti-racist practice. White progressives do indeed uphold and perpetrate racism, but our defensiveness and certitude make it virtually impossible to explain to us how we do so.”

**Are we just doing this to be politically correct?**

We are taking on the subject of racism because we believe our faith compels us to grow in understanding the ways we contribute to the broken systems in our world. Rather than (even unintentionally) being a part of what is harming others, we must do the hard work of learning, reflection, and action to become part of healing. The United Methodist Church recognized this twenty years ago when the General Conference passed a resolution for every congregation to implement “a strategy and program which educates and supports systemic and personal changes to end racism.” We believe church is a safe place to do hard work, and FUMC is ready for this step.

**I don’t see color, I just see people. What’s the big deal?**

Laarya Saad writes, “When you say “I don’t see color” to a [person of color], you are saying “Who you are does not matter, and I do not see you for who you are. I am choosing to minimize and erase the impact of your skin color, your hair pattern, your accent, or other languages, your cultural practices, and your spiritual traditions as a [person of color] existing within white supremacy. Sho Baraka says “all of creation, all of our differences is a beautiful reflection of who God is and to ignore that is not just ignorant, but it is also a spit in the face of our Creator.”

**Doesn’t talking about racism make it worse?**

Carolyn Hebel writes, “Not talking about race and racism has been a strategy our society has used in the past, but it has not worked. People continue to have biases that they act on, with the biggest impact falling upon communities of color. If religious leaders do not talk about it, and if our congregants are not able to talk about it, our biases will continue to harm others. Also, by not talking about it, we are discounting the stories of men and women of color who experience their race as having a daily impact on their lives. If we do not talk about it, it feels as if we are ignoring their pain. As people of faith, we are all called to attend to the suffering of one another. In order to attend to this suffering, we need to first acknowledge that it exists. Racism continues to exist, and refusing to name it will not make it go away.”

Continued...
All are invited to join a Lenten small group for our churchwide study of Robin DiAngelo’s White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism. Antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo deftly illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and “allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to ‘bad people’” (Claudia Rankine). Referring to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially, white fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialogue. In this in-depth exploration, DiAngelo examines how white fragility develops, how it protects racial inequality, and what we can do to engage more constructively. Small groups will meet four times during Lent. Books will be provided for purchase in the foyer today or from the church office prior to the start of the study. Register at fumcaustin.org/lent. Unable to attend one of these small groups? Join Pastor Cathy for a discussion of White Fragility on Sunday, April 5, from 4:30–6:30 p.m. in FLC Garrison Chapel where Conversations on Racial Justice are held.

UPCOMING EVENTS
FEBRUARY 25, TUESDAY
Feed My People 4th Tuesday Breakfast
4:45–7:00 a.m. FLC Great Hall
Come help serve breakfast to 300 of our homeless neighbors. Preparing, cooking, and setting up begins at 4:45 a.m.; serving begins by 6:00 a.m. and clean-up is done by 7:00 a.m. You may arrive and leave to meet your schedule.

FEBRUARY 26, WEDNESDAY
Worship Services
7:00 a.m. and 12:10 and 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary
We begin our Lenten journey by confronting our own sin and mortality. Ashes marked as a cross remind us that we will die, and yet we will always belong to God.

Ashes to Go
8:00–10:00 a.m. Church Parking Lot
For those whose schedule prevents them from attending the Sanctuary worship services, and as a witness to passers-by, pastors will be outside of the church marking people with ashes.

Cheers Event: Community First! Village Tour
10:30 a.m. 9301 Hog Eye Road
Get an up-close, personal look into the life-giving development at Community First! Village in East Austin. We will see the amazing opportunities offered to the residents and explore volunteer opportunities. Please note the tour is an outdoor walking tour. We recommend that you come prepared for the weather that day and in comfortable walking shoes. In the event of light rain, the tour will still commence. This is a meet-up, drive-yourself event. Register at fumcaustin.org/cheers.

Simple Soup Supper
6:30 p.m. SAN Wesley Hall
Join us for dinner and fellowship prior to our evening Ash Wednesday worship service. If you plan to attend and/or are able to bring a crockpot of soup, register at fumcaustin.org/ash-wednesday.

MARCH 1, SUNDAY
Sneaker Sunday
Our Children’s Ministry Team invites everyone to wear their walking shoes/gear to church to show support for those walking in today’s CROP Hunger Walk.

CROP Hunger Walk
2:00 p.m. Camp Mabry, 2200 West 35th Street
This friendly, interfaith community event raises funds for hungry people around the world and here in Austin. This year’s walk is focusing on providing animals for people in the Dominican Republic, so Austin is featuring a petting zoo for all ages to enjoy. Be a partner in this fun event by joining our First Church Walk Team and/ or by making a contribution. Sign up in the Foyer or at fumcaustin.org/crop.

Conversations on Racial Justice
4:30–6:00 p.m. FLC Room 104
Join us as we work to be antiracist, seeking to undo racism in ourselves and to recognize and understand our participation in systemic racism. This group meets monthly and is currently watching and discussing the video web series The Next Question: Imagining How Expansive Racial Justice Can Be, hosted and produced by Austin Channing Brown and co-hosted by Jenny Booth Potter and Chi Chi Okwu. Register at fumcaustin.org/conversations.

Mobile Loaves & Fishes (MLF)
3rd Sunday 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. SAN MLF Kitchen
MLF serves daily, but this day is for those who want to try face-to-face service working with experienced volunteers. Join the Make-Ready Team from 4:30–5:00 p.m. (preparing food and loading truck) and/or the Truck Team from 5:00–6:30 p.m. (delivering food around Austin). Sign up at fumcaustin.org/mlf.

FEAST Happy Hour
5:00–7:00 p.m. Scholz Garten 1607 San Jacinto
In addition to our monthly FEAST dinner gatherings for young adults (ages 20-45), we are adding a monthly happy hour that we are calling TOAST! Come join us. Registration requested at fumcaustin.org/FEAST, but not required.

MARCH 15, SUNDAY
Manna Bag Sale
9:30–11:00 a.m. Sidewalk
Our 4th and 5th graders show the love of Christ to those in need through the making and selling of Manna Bags for a $5 donation, with proceeds going towards the purchase of more supplies. Bags contain nutritious snacks, a pair of socks, and a note with God’s blessing. You can buy a bag to hand out to those you see on your path or donate toward additional bags that are heavily needed at the front office during the week. Your generosity helps fund this weekday part of our Manna Bag Ministry here at FUMC!

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Worship Services
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PRAYER
WITHIN OUR CONGREGATION
Stephanie Benold; Sandy Bowles; Herb and Shirley Canada; Michele Fenton; Jeremy and Victoria Grogan; Doug Hagemeier; Marcia Houston; Nancy Littlejohn; Sue Norris; Mari Perez; Debbie Rippetoe; and Dan Wood.

Condolences to Catherine Waggoner on the death of her father.

BEYOND OUR CONGREGATION
Curt Ashmos’ friend, Elissa Marek; Grady Basler’s sister, Tonya Basler Stout; Tracey Beadle; Cheryl Bias’ niece, Lauren Stafford; Bob Block’s friend, Tim Sullivan; Jim and Jane Bowen’s friend, George Barnette; Fay Brown’s sister, Jo Rene Allenburg; Holly DeLeon’s daughter, Danielle Menoskey; Truman Fenton’s father; George Gaston’s friend, Dr. Robert Wooton; Mary Heckman’s sister-in-law, Susi Tyler; Marcia Houston’s mother, Johnnie; Liz Kilday’s friend, Emilia Williams; Melanie Miller’s and Jen Stuart’s father, Doak Thomas; Annemarie Potts’ student, E; Andrew Pyle’s aunt, Mary; Cindy Reidland’s friends, Tonya Basler Stout; and Dick Young’s nephew, Jeff Young.

CHURCH NEWS
GIFTS TO FUMC
- To our Appalachia Service Project (ASP) Ministry in memory of Leo Garrett, given by Tom and Robbie Audley.
- To our Feed My People Ministry in memory of Janelle HadSELL, given by Olivia Weldon.
- To our FUMC Endowment Fund in memory of Melba Cox, given by Tom and Robbie Audley.
- To our FUMC Endowment Fund in memory of Shirley Brooks, given by Tom and Robbie Audley and Dizie Houston.
- To our Ministry Plan in memory of William Berger, given by Bruce and Debra Apperle.
- To our Ministry Plan in memory of Shirley Brooks, given by Samuel Fisher and Rayburn and Mary Ann Reid.
- To our Ministry Plan in memory of Melba Cox, given by Janice Jones.
- To our Ministry Plan in memory of Janelle Hadsell, given by her sister, Otha Anderson.
- To our Mobile Loaves & Fishes Ministry in memory of Shirley Brooks, given by Margaret McGee Gobin.
- To our Mobile Loaves & Fishes Ministry in memory of Janelle Hadsell, given by Sally Watkins.
- To our Music Ministry in memory of Melba Cox from Katie Platt.

DOWNLOAD CHURCH LIFE
Church Life allows members to review their contact information, access a church directory, schedule one-time or recurring giving, view commitment, and access the church calendar. Plus, the Church Life mobile app—conveniently at your fingertips—provides similar access to church information using your same Church Life login. Visit fumcaustin.org/churchlife.

EASTER BUNNY NEEDS HELP
In preparation for our annual Easter Egg Festival on Saturday, April 11, we will begin collecting candy, empty Easter eggs, and toy trinkets on Sunday, March 1. We are in more need of candy and trinkets than empty Easter eggs. Please make sure all candy is nut-free and small enough to fit inside an Easter egg. (Laffy Taffy, Starbursts, and Skittles are good examples.) Please place donations in the “Bunny Barrels” located in the Church Office, Sanctuary Foyer, Preschool Hallway, or Wesley Hall. Thank you for your donations!

To help stuff eggs, contact Chloe Conner at chloe@fumcaustin.org.

SIGN UP FOR ALTAR FLOWERS
Honor someone you love and appreciate, remember a departed loved one, or celebrate special days or events in your life or the life of the church. The arrangement cost is $65 and available dates for the next few months are April 19 and 26; May 3, 10, 17, and 24; and June 14, 21, and 28. To sign up, contact Tami Kellberg at tami@fumcaustin.org or 512-478-5684 (ext. 226).

FUMCAUSTIN.ORG